



16th January 2026

This Week at St Mary's...

Around school this week, it has been wonderful to hear children talking enthusiastically about their learning — whether that's exploring Mary Jackson's contribution to NASA and the challenges she faced, discovering different Jewish artefacts, or writing fantastic diary entries from Ernest Shackleton's perspective as he journeyed to Antarctica. A great week all round!

Whole school attendance this week...

98.6%

This week's awards go to...

Edith
Evanna
Belle
Evie

Maddison/Iver
Giorgio
Ernie
Joseph

Elliot 0



Dates and Events

January

- 20th Year 3/4 Football match
- 21st Class 3 Roman Trip
- 26th Storytelling week
- 30th Young Voices

House Leaderboard



Oak

488



Birch

500



Pine

410



Willow

452



School Dojo Leaderboard

Class 1: Edith

Class 2: Bleu

Class 3: Jude

Class 4: Jonathan

Celebrating wider achievements

Well done to Jude and Charlotte for being awarded a Headteacher's Award this week for their wonderful writing. They went above and beyond, researching additional information to enrich their work and putting in great effort to include a wide range of facts.



All The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- SLEEP DISRUPTION**
Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.
- REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**
Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.
- ONLINE PEER PRESSURE**
Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.
- EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION**
Fast-paced digital content can overwhelm young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.
- CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE**
Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.
- PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS**
Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES**
Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Using a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.
- ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE**
Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 15 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.
- MODEL HEALTHY HABITS**
Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.
- PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY**
Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert
Adam Gilbert is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.

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Online Safety

To read the full version [click here](#)

PARKING

We are experiencing some difficulties with the way cars are being parked at the top of the drive during school drop-off times. Please remember to be respectful of our neighbours and ensure you do not block anyone's driveway.

The safety of our children is paramount. Poor or inconsiderate parking makes it harder for other drivers to see clearly and significantly increases the risk to pedestrians. Please take care to park safely and responsibly: avoid stopping on double yellow lines or zigzags, leave enough space for cars to pass safely, and ensure you are not blocking access to any driveways. You are welcome to park in the craft centre carpark and walk around to either entrance.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Picture News

TAKEHOME

12th - 18th January



Can famous people help others make good choices?



In the news this week

Famous online creators have come together at the 1 Billion Followers Summit in Dubai to talk about how their influence affects people around the world. Influencers at the event use their fame to share kindness, as part of the '1 Billion Acts of Kindness' campaign. One of the most well-known creators, MrBeast, has encouraged millions of people to take part, using his videos and social media to inspire positive actions.

Things to talk about at home ...

- Talk to someone at home about the summit and the campaign. Do you think lots of people will choose to take part? Why?
- Share who influences you. Talk about how some of the people we admire or look up to are well-known or famous, and others may be family or friends.
- Ask someone at home about who influenced them when they were younger. What impact did they have?

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss



The Netherlands Turns Down the Bang!

Do you remember the Picture News pack from November 2025 which asked whether fireworks should be banned to help people and animals? The Netherlands has now decided to change its fireworks rules. From New Year's Eve at the end of 2026, most fireworks will no longer be sold or used by people at home there. Instead, big fireworks will be set off by trained professionals only at organised displays. Small items, such as sparklers, may still be allowed. The government made this decision after talking about it for many years. Fireworks can be very loud and bright, which can be upsetting for some



Pictured: A fireworks display. **Source:** Canva.

people, pets and wildlife. They can also cause injuries if they are not used safely. Some towns and cities in the Netherlands already have fireworks rules, but this new law will cover the whole country. 'I am happy about this change; it will be so much better for my dog!', said one person on social media. Leaders hope the change will make celebrations calmer and safer for everyone.

What is your opinion? Should fireworks have sound?

Say It Another Way!

There are so many different days for celebrations or things to remember on certain dates. Looking at the Picture News Calendar, we saw, noticed and spotted that on 18th January, it is World Thesaurus Day! A thesaurus is a book or tool that helps us find different words that mean nearly the

same thing. Instead of saying big, we might say large, huge or enormous! A thesaurus can help make our speaking and writing more interesting. World Thesaurus Day is held on this date because it's the birthday of Peter Mark Roget, who created the first Roget's Thesaurus many years ago. He loved words and wanted to help people use them in new ways. We can all use a thesaurus at school or at home. It can help when writing stories, letters or even jokes! 'A thesaurus is like a toolbox for words', said one teacher.

What new words could you discover, find or learn using a thesaurus?



Pictured: A page in a thesaurus. **Source:** Canva.

What does kindness look like?



Kindness can be in the small actions as well as the big ones!
Shannon

Let us know what you think about this week's news

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'Sensational' Surfboards

Plant-based 3D-printed Swell Cycle surfboards have been described as 'sensational' to ride. Surfers attended a special event to try out a new line of the bespoke, more environmentally-friendly surfboards, and they were very impressed with them! They're really



Pictured: Tyler James with Swell Cycle Surfboards. **Source:** Swell Cycle Surfboards on Facebook.



Pictured: Swell Cycle Surfboards on a beach. **Source:** Swell Cycle Surfboards on Facebook.

fast, they're really fun,' said surfer Keaton Mayo, 'They're not your traditional board. It was a blast.' The boards are made with almost no waste, compared with the regular surfboards that are cut out from blocks of petroleum-based foam, manufactured from fossil fuels. During production, 40% of the block's original weight ends up in landfill.

The demonstration and test day was held at a famous surf spot called Steamer Lane in Santa Cruz, California, USA. 'This is the future, I think, of surfing,' said big wave surfer and Swell Cycle ambassador, Tyler James. 'It's so important for surfers to understand that if we want to keep surfing, that we've got to care about our oceans, we've got to care about the process that's making our boards.' **Have you ever surfed? Would you like to?**

British Berries

The Summer Berry Company, in West Sussex, UK, is growing fresh British strawberries all year round. The company says that cutting-edge LED technology and climate-controlled glasshouses mean that people in the UK can enjoy strawberries without the carbon cost of flying them across the world. 'The LED lighting is the prime reason for successful growing,' said Bartosz Pinkosz, operations director of The Summer Berry. 'If it was not a sunny day, the LED lighting would create enough energy for leaves to absorb that energy, take it in and deliver the energy to the berries. We are able to have the right sweetness in the berries and the right shape, right size.' They expect to produce 1.5 million punnets of strawberries this



Pictured: Strawberries growing in The Summer Berry Company glasshouse. **Source:** The Summer Berry Company on Facebook.

winter! The glasshouses are partially powered by renewable energy, and bees are present as pollinators in the 36,000 square metres of the greenhouses at the Chichester site. Growing berries this way may massively reduce food miles, but experts warn that there can be an environmental impact of heating such a large area.

Do you enjoy eating strawberries? Do you know where your strawberries are grown?

What does kindness look like?



You can be kind by noticing when someone needs help and asking them what you can do.
Freddy

Let us know what you think about this week's news

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