



## Important Dates:

### **Thurs 15th Jan**

Census Day Special Lunch

### **Mon 19th Jan**

Reception Height, Weight & Sight Check

### **Tues 20th Jan**

Reception Height, Weight & Sight Check

### **Wed 21st Jan**

Y5/6 Tag Rugby Competition

### **Thurs 22nd Jan**

4AY Parent/Carer Lunch;  
Y3/4 Tag Rugby Competition

Please click [here](#) for other dates.



Please remember that phones & photography are not permitted at school events.

Welcome back and happy new year.

We have lots of fun planned for the Spring term, so please read the Curriculum Maps which have been emailed to parents and carers and keep an eye on our website.



## Rainbow Friday Fundraising

On the last day of term we had an ORANGE non-uniform day to raise money for Dog's Trust and school.

We raised £339.75 which means we now have £341.51 for our lower school play equipment and £169.75 For Dog's Trust. Thank you for your kind donations.



Next Rainbow Friday on 30th January, will be a **YELLOW** non-uniform day to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care.



## Reception Admissions

The primary school (Reception) admission round closes on Monday **15th January 2026**.

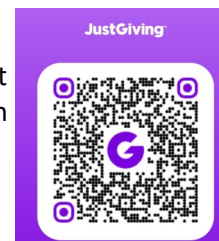
Don't forget to apply for your child's school place if they are starting Reception in September 2026. Applications can be made online via [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions).

## Air Ambulance Fundraising

"Thank you to everyone who supported our display this year. So far, we have raised an amazing £804.62 for the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. We are hoping to reach our £1,000 target.

Donations can still be made via JustGiving or at the display until next weekend if anyone still wishes to donate (Find us on Facebook - London Road Lights)."

With many thanks, The Smitheman Family



## WhatsApp

We have been made aware of WhatsApp groups with adult and children members from different schools across Wickford.

Please read the guidance below to keep your children safe.



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

WhatsApp is a free messaging service owned by Meta which allows users to send text and voice messages, make video calls, share multimedia – such as images, videos, documents and polls – and have group chats. WhatsApp messages are encrypted, meaning only the sender and the recipient can view what is sent. While this privacy may sound attractive on paper, this app comes with several associated risks that must be considered – especially for younger users.

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

## GROUP CHATS

Group chats let friends talk together but can pose problems for young users. They might feel excluded – like discovering events they weren't invited to. Hurtful comments can also escalate quickly, as more people join in, amplifying the impact through a wider audience.

## EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it attractive to scammers. Tactics include impersonating a child in an 'emergency' to request money, or triggering a login code, then pretending to be WhatsApp and asking for it – giving them access to private messages and personal data.

## CHANNELS

'Channels' let users follow topics anonymously, interacting only through polls or emoji reactions. However, fake channels can mimic real ones, spreading misinformation, hate speech, or phishing for personal data. WhatsApp may also collect and share channel-following info with third parties, raising privacy issues.

## DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Disappearing messages help share sensitive info, but young people may wrongly assume they're fully private. Senders can opt for their message to vanish after 24 hours, 7 days, or 90 days – or for media, after one view. However, recipients can still save them by bookmarking or taking screenshots, reducing their privacy.

## FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's simplicity makes sharing news quick – accurate or not. To help curb misinformation, messages forwarded over five times now show a 'Forwarded many times' label with a double arrow. This alerts users that the message isn't original and may be unreliable.

## CHAT LOCK

The new 'Chat lock' feature lets users store specific messages in a separate passcode- or biometrically-protected folder. While useful for privacy, it could be misused by younger users to hide conversations or content they know parents and educators might find inappropriate, including age-restricted material.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature helps friends meet up or parents check a child's route home. However, anyone in a child's group chats can track their location, potentially revealing their home address or regular travel patterns to strangers.

## AI INTEGRATION

Meta AI on WhatsApp poses risks to children, including exposure to misinformation, inappropriate content, and data privacy issues. AI responses may be inaccurate, and kids might share personal information unknowingly. It can also hinder critical thinking by offering ready-made answers.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution. Get them to consider, for example, whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

### THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content sent to one user to then be shared more widely, and even publicly on social media. Encourage them to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

### ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. To do this, go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups'. You can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if the child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

### CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Have a conversation with youngsters about how they're using WhatsApp, emphasising that it's for their own safety. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of messages that are in there, who they're with and why they have been hidden. Also, if a young user has sent any 'view once' content, discuss their reasons for using this feature.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp-2025>

# School Dinners

The dinner menu next week will be:

## MONDAY

- Minced Beef Bolognaise
- Vegetarian Bolognaise
- Jacket Potato with Cheese or Beans
- Garlic Bread
- Broccoli
- Milkshake & Yoghurt

## TUESDAY

- Pepperoni Pizza
- Cheese & Tomato Pizza
- Jacket Potato with Beans or Tuna Mayo
- Baked Beans
- Toffee Muffin

## WEDNESDAY

- Roast Pork & Yorkshire Pudding
- Winter Vegetable & Chickpea Crumble
- Hot Pork Roll
- Roast Potatoes
- Green Cabbage
- Carrots
- Healthy Fruit

## THURSDAY

**Census Day**

## FRIDAY

- Fish Fillet
- Quorn Frankfurter
- Jacket Potato with Cheese
- Chips
- Peas
- Sweetcorn
- Belgian Waffle

**Week 3**

Week Commencing  
17/11, 8/12, 12/1, 2/2,  
2/3, 23/3

## Recent Letters

[Swimming Gala Times](#)

[Y3 Art Workshop](#)

[Y3 Egyptian Day](#)

[Boys Gym Circuit \(invite only\)](#)

[Girls Gym Circuit \(invite only\)](#)

[Bowling \(invite only\)](#)



## Whole School Attendance

94%

## Weekly Winning Classes

Bumblebees 98%

w/e 19/12/25

# Census Day Special Lunch

## Thursday 15th January

Sausage Roll

Veggie Sausage Roll

Mash & Beans

Dessert: Rocky Road

The school receives funding based upon pupil numbers. The number of lower school pupils eating a school dinner will be counted so please encourage your child to choose a school dinner this day.

# Let's Celebrate!

Well done to this week's winners:

**FS:** Mason Scarff, Amelia Jackson, Theo Rain

**Year 1:** Ollie Le Count, Isla Hills

**Year 2:** Kavi Bielan, Raffy Mackin

**Year 3:** Eric Suditu, Grace Mifsud, Dillon Mwesige

**Year 4:** Hallie Nugent, Chidubem Chikwendu, Victoria Petkova

**Year 5:** Oscar Ebdon, Lara Franciskovity, Ivy Poulton

**Year 6:** Amarachi Chikwendu, Olivia Tagg, Jake Spiers

**CLASS**  
dojo 

## Golden Token Winners

This week's lucky winners are:

**FS:** Nihaana Kirushnarajah

**Year 1:** Emily Leonard

**Year 2:** Ava Batley

**Year 3:** Finley Clements

**Year 4:** Harry Meade

**Year 5:** Isabelle Green

**Year 6:** Thomas Priestaff



## Dodgeball

On Wednesday, our Dodgeball team competed in the School Sports Partnership Dodgeball Finals at William de Ferrers School.

They played 7 games, showing great determination and teamwork throughout, winning 2, drawing 2 and losing 3.

Well done to you all!



## ADHD

Did you know...?

In the UK, around **5% of children and young people** have ADHD, and approximately **3–4% of adults** do too!

The poster below, created by children, invites you into their world as they express their experiences of living with ADHD. The insights are heartfelt, uplifting, and a reminder of the many strengths and perspectives your children bring to our community. **No outsiders – everyone is welcome here.**

# A CHILD'S VOICE I HAVE ADHD, I NEED YOU TO KNOW...

Predominantly Inattentive Presentation

"I'm not being lazy – my brain just works differently"

"I get overwhelmed when too many instructions come at once"

"I try really hard, even when it doesn't look like it"

"I'm not naughty – sometimes impulse wins before I've thought it through"

"I forget things easily, but it's not on purpose"

"I need adults to stay calm when I'm struggling"

"I want to do well – and praise helps me more than pressure"

"I can focus deeply on things I love"

"I need movement to help me concentrate"

"I need help organising my world"

"I'm not ignoring you – my mind just drifts away"

"I want you to see my strengths, not just my struggles"

