Spalding High School Weekly Bulletin 26th November 2026

This week from Mrs Anderson, Headteacher

The arrival of the Christmas season always brings a special sense of excitement to school, and this week it truly feels as though Christmas has arrived at the High School.

The centrepieces of our festive celebrations arrived earlier this week in the form of two magnificent real Christmas trees. The tree in the School hall is, without doubt, the largest I have ever seen in a school setting. For a few days they stood proudly in their natural state, and they looked impressive enough. However, once our Sixth Form Prefects turned their attention to decorating them, they were transformed into something truly spectacular.

A great deal of credit must also go to our hardworking Site Team, who carefully arranged the lights and tackled the challenge of placing the highest decorations on the upper branches (Thank you Mr Gent and Mr White!) The result is two stunning Christmas trees that will brighten our school community right through to the Christmas holidays.

Having the trees in place for this week's Christmas Craft Fair made the occasion even more special. Over three days, the School hall was filled with festive music, Christmas cheer and a wonderful atmosphere as students, staff and visitors enjoyed an array of yuletide activities. There were stalls galore selling homemade gifts and festive treats, alongside Christmas-themed competitions and games. Our form groups certainly came up trumps with their creativity and enthusiasm, but I shall not say too much more as there will be a full report, along with photographs, in next week's bulletin.

My sincere thanks go to all of the staff who invested so much time and energy organising students, stalls, tables and arrangements to make the event such a success. Events like these do not happen by accident, and we are very grateful for all their hard work behind the scenes.

Tomorrow brings another of our favourite festive traditions: the Year 7 Christmas Tree Competition. At lunchtime, our Year 7 forms will decorate the five House trees using handmade decorations in their House colours. It is always one of the most difficult competitions for senior leaders to judge because of the imagination, effort and pride that our youngest students pour into their creations. We are all looking forward to seeing what they produce this year.

As we move further into December, there is still plenty to anticipate. A reminder that next Friday sees our Year 7 and Year 8 Christmas Disco, as well as our annual Food Bank Appeal in support of Agape, our local food bank. Details of donations can be found in this week's bulletin. Both events are wonderful opportunities to celebrate the season while supporting our wider community.

The decorations are up, the music is playing, the festivities are well underway and the excitement is building and we look forward to sharing many more festive moments together over the coming weeks!

Student of the Week

Staff Name	Student Name	Student Form	Reason
Mrs J Lord	Esme Lucas	7C	English
Mrs Lees	Amy Urbanavicius	7S	Library
Mrs Bennett	Nelli Melnikova	9N	Geography
Mrs Martindale	Sophie Shrestha	9P	Biology
Mrs Rogers	Annika Beitane	9P	Geography
Mrs Schwarz	Holly Woolsey	9S	Textiles
Mrs Busfield	Isla Worrall	10C	Physics
Mrs Spinks	Aimee Kierman	10C	Mathematics
Mrs C Lord	Sithuli Marasinghe	10N	Mathematics
Mrs Connolly	Uthra Chandramohan	10N	Community
Mrs T Waldron	Fatima Shamime	10N	Biology
Mrs Martin	Lottie Thornley	10S	Mathematics
Mrs Nowak	Jess Wright	10S	Further Mathematics
Mrs Tanner	Martyna Radzewicz	10S	Art
Mr Murphy	Scarlett Norman	11S	Chemistry
Mrs Nowak	Reyah Ali	11S	Community
Miss Ashley	Laura Young-Hardy	12KM	Mathematics
Mrs Schwarz	Loma Mlunjwa	12NG	Outlook Expedition
Mrs Neal	Pela Tian-Wright	12RM	Art
Mrs Rogers	Harriet Laing	12RM	Community
Mrs Lees	Grace Bushell	13EO	Community
Miss Rossouw	Lilianna Kaklin	13FD	Psychology
Mrs Chandler	Olivia Winter	13FD	Community
Mrs Connolly	Dilsha Joseph	13LM	Community

Please find here the nominations for Student of the Week for the week commencing 9th November 2026.

Nominations can be made by both teaching and support staff and can be subject related or community focused.

Staff Name	Student Name	Student Form	Reason
Mrs J Lord	Esme Lucas	7C	Community
Mrs C Lord	Poppy Maynard	7N	Mathematics
Mrs Tanner	Olivia Pickering	7N	Art
Mrs Lees	Lyla Huggins	8C	Library
Mr Garbett	Melika Onions	8J	Music
Mrs Bennett	Binaya Atapattu	8P	Geography
Mrs Chandler	Betheli Osei-Owusu	8S	Library
Mrs Spinks	Salsabilla Neacy	8S	Mathematics
Mrs Connolly	Ritu Pudasaini	9C	Community
Mrs Clay	Airida Bandzaite	9N	French
Mrs Martindale	Iqra Jabeen	9N	Biology
Mrs Nowak	Isla Griffiths	9P	Mathematics
Mrs Aurikko	Lucy Kitchen	10N	Chemistry
Miss Magnus	Ava Willis	10P	Physical Education
Mrs Neal	Poppy Nightingale	10P	Art
Mrs J Lord	Vidhya Mistry	10S	English Language
Mr Blackbourn	Bethany Taylor	11C	German
Mrs Connolly	Karina Kaskeleviciute	11C	Community
Mr Murphy	Poppy Crunkhorn	11N	Chemistry
Mrs Aurikko	Lilia Lancashire	11N	Community
Mrs Tanner	Jessica Pilgrim	11N	Community
Mr Ganger	Dua Fatima Abbas Asif	11P	Mathematics
Mr Leach	Sanvi Panday	11P	Chemistry
Mrs Bennett	Reyah Ali	11S	Community
Mrs Busfield	Alena Golek	11S	Biology
Miss Ashley	Laura Elzbergyte	12NG	Mathematics
Miss Rossouw	Tamzin Wilson	12RM	Psychology
Mrs H Waldron	Ethan Spillet	12RM	Religious Studies
Mrs Lees	Poppy Miller	13TD	Community

Please find here the nominations for Student of the Week for the week commencing 16th November 2026.

Nominations can be made by both teaching and support staff and can be subject related or community focused.

Sports News

Year 7 Netball

Year 7 have recently played in two netball fixtures for the South Lincolnshire Sports Association, demonstrating excellent teamwork, determination, and skill throughout both matches.

On 9th November, the team faced Spalding Academy and secured an impressive 17-1 victory. The students worked brilliantly together, showing great team cohesion across the court. Their attacking play was outstanding, with accurate shooting and effective movement creating numerous scoring opportunities. Defensively, they were strong and organised, making it difficult for the opposition to gain possession.

The team followed this performance with another excellent result on 17th November against University Academy Long Sutton, winning 13-0. Once again, the students demonstrated superb communication and teamwork, combining excellent shooting with a solid defensive performance.

A special mention goes to Flo, who was deservedly awarded Player of the Match in both games for her outstanding performances at GA/GS. Her shooting, movement, and overall contribution were instrumental in both victories.

Well done, Year 7! These were two excellent team performances and a great reflection of your hard work at Netball club on Wednesday lunchtimes.

Miss Pascoe





U16 Football

On Wednesday 18th November we travelled to Thorpe St Andrews VIII Norwich, for round four of the ESFA National Cup. Despite having a slightly depleted squad due to injuries we went into half time 2-0 following great strikes from Darcy and Lexi. With a couple of injuries in the second half the squad of twelve found ourselves down to eleven and ten players at times with five changes of goalkeeper. Unfortunately the opposition were able to equalise taking us to extra time. With only nine players on the pitch we battled hard for ten minutes suffering an unfortunate defeat to a late winner by the opposition.

The team cannot be questioned for their effort and determination today, it really was a full team effort. Well done to Ella, Lottie and Lexi for all stepping up for stints in goal. Player of the Match goes to Milly for a dominant performance in central midfield.

The team will now have a break for a few weeks and hopefully return to full strength before the County Cup fixtures commence.



On Thursday 19th November, our U13 cricket team travelled to Stamford Endowed School, Stamford, to compete in the South Lincolnshire Indoor Cricket Tournament. For many of the students, this was their

first experience of competitive cricket and they represented the School with enthusiasm, determination and excellent sportsmanship.

The tournament was the culmination of weeks of hard work and commitment at our Monday lunchtime cricket club, where students have been developing their batting, bowling and fielding skills. Their progress was clear to see throughout the day as they grew in confidence with every match.

The team performed brilliantly, finishing as runners-up in the competition. Stamford Endowed School were worthy winners, taking first place, but our students should be incredibly proud of their achievement and the way they conducted themselves throughout the tournament.

Congratulations to all the players involved on a fantastic result and for being such excellent ambassadors for the school. We look forward to seeing their cricketing journey continue in the future.

PE dept



Year 8 Netball vs UAH

Year 8 put in a fantastic performance against UAH, narrowly losing by just one goal. They were ahead for three out of the four quarters, showing great determination, teamwork and skill throughout the match. Unfortunately, UAH managed to take the lead in the final quarter, leaving Year 8 just short of the win.

The defensive work was excellent, with some fantastic interceptions and strong marking, while the attacking play was equally impressive, with great movement, passing and teamwork to create scoring opportunities.

Although the result didn't go their way, Year 8 should be incredibly proud of their performance. They showed great resilience, worked brilliantly as a team and fought hard until the final whistle.

Well done, Year 8!



Library News

Year 7 - 11 Book Group

Many of us are eagerly awaiting Sunrise on the Reaping, the new film in the Hunger Games series which is due for release this week. With this in mind, our book discussion this week was about books we wanted to see adaptations of and those that we'd been disappointed with the adaptation. As always, everyone had lots to say! Adaptations are eagerly awaited for Powerless, Once Upon a Broken Heart, Fireborn, They Both Die at the End, Scythe, Lightlark and The Contender. Although we did consider several of these would be very tricky to adapt due to content. There was one very happy reader who suggested the Skandar books, only to be informed that this was currently in production. Discussing adaptations that had let down the books led to some very angry complaints! The group felt Divergent, Good Girl's Guide to Murder, Eragon, The Host and Red, White and Royal Blue all need to be completed, have additional scenes or just remade!

The Week Junior and The Week

Both of these publications are available in the Library and are essential reading for an inquiring mind.

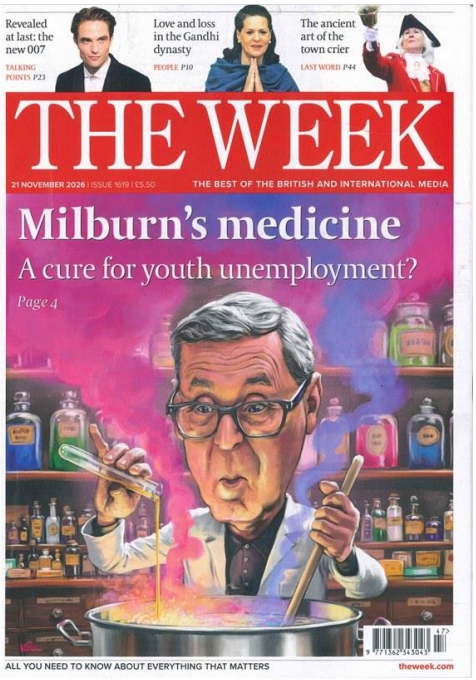
Happy Reading

Miss O'Sullivan and Mrs Lees

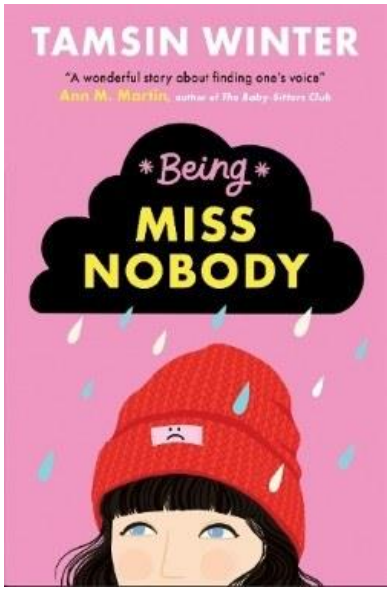

SCIENCE+ANIMALS+PUZZLES+PEOPLE+GAMES+PHOTOS+BOOKS+SPORT+TAYLOR DRI
THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
Meet a teen parkour champion p20
COP31 climate talks begin in Turkey p5
Zoo's new pandas go on show p8
14 November 2026 • Issue 570
theweekjunior.co.uk
Making sense of the worl
THE WEEK Junior
JUST £3.99
Football!
AI!
WORD OF THE YEAR
Now's your chance to vote for the winner p17
Six-seven!
Heatwave!
Slay!


SCIENCE+ANIMALS+PUZZLES+PEOPLE+GAMES+PHOTOS+BOOKS+SPORT+HELL CHICKEN
THE WORLD'S BEST NEWS & FACTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
HOW TO Bake tasty cheesy pizza peppers p27
NEWS Michael Rosen's big Poetry Party p5
ANIMALS Tiny backpacks track butterfly migration p12
21 November 2026 • Issue 571
theweekjunior.co.uk
Making sense of the world
THE WEEK Junior
JUST £3.99
TEEN TALENT
Young athletes thrill crowds at the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games p20
DAKAR 2026


Lessons learnt by a later-life teacher LAST WORD P48
How Brand was finally brought to justice TALKING POINTS P22
A dazzling, "gobsmacking" documentary FILM P31
THE WEEK
14 NOVEMBER 2026 | ISSUE 1618 | £5.50
THE BEST OF THE BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA
Trump defiant
Brace for a bruising two years
Page 4
ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS
theweek.com


Revealed at last: the new 007 TALKING POINTS P23
Love and loss in the Gandhi dynasty PEOPLE P10
The ancient art of the town crier LAST WORD P44
THE WEEK
21 NOVEMBER 2026 | ISSUE 1619 | £5.50
THE BEST OF THE BRITISH AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA
Milburn's medicine
A cure for youth unemployment?
Page 4
ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS
theweek.com

Book Reviews



Being Miss Nobody by Tamsin Winter

You should read Miss Nobody because it is a really compassionate and engaging book. It is a fictional chapter book which consists of around 340 pages and is set in the past and present tense alternating from chapter to chapter. The book is set in Rosalind's new secondary school, Manor High. The main characters in the book are Rosalind, her little brother Seb, Octavia, "The Girl with the Smudged Eyeliner", and Maisy Love. Rosalind get bullied in her new school because she has something called SM (selective mutism), a disability where her words are stuck in her mind and she can't speak like she wants to. This makes it hard in her day-to-day school life. She tries to tell the teachers about it but they don't help. So she decides to do something that flips the story around...

I really liked this book because of the relatable atmosphere and the immense feeling that the book brought and made me feel. I think it would appeal to those who are finding it hard with friendships, or if you're starting secondary school and looking for an empathetic read because of the atmospheric wonders the book will make you encounter.

I give this book 5 stars.

Amy 7S

Sixth Form News

On Friday the 20th of November, Grace, Zara-Jayne and I hosted a 'bingo night'. This was an event created in order to raise funds towards our Year 13 prom. It was a fun and lively night, consisting of eight rounds of bingo and a raffle at the end. There were lots of amazing prizes to win, including a jellycat and wine. Mr Hempsall was especially vital in the success of this outing due to his charismatic personality and '67' jokes.

All in all, students and families really enjoyed taking part in a competitive yet joyful atmosphere, which worked to bring the community closer together.

In total, we managed to raise £804.32! Well done to all of the winners, and thank you to everyone that took part.

Yomola, Year 13

🎄 Christmas Decorations Wanted! 🎄

If anyone has found any old boxes of Christmas decorations this year that are no longer wanted, we would love to use them to make the Common Room feel extra cosy and festive this

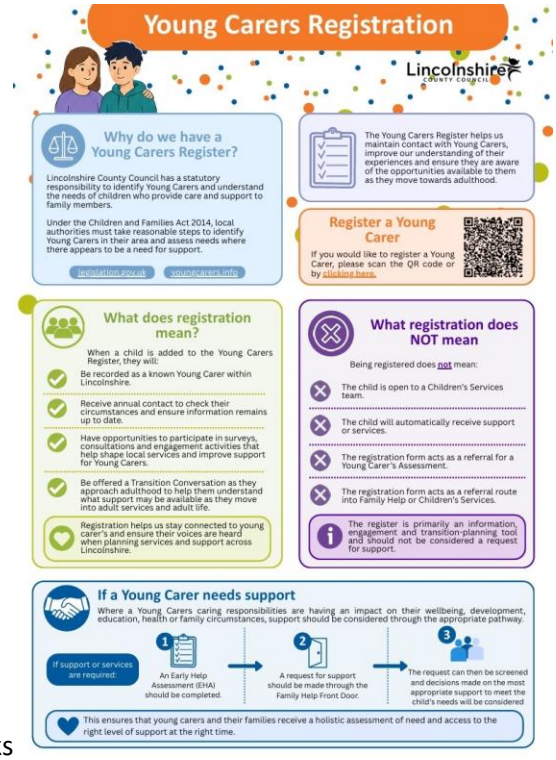
Christmas! Please contact Eleanor Jeffery by email to eleanor.jeffery@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk if you have anything to donate.
Thank you!

Supporting Young Carers

At our School, we are committed to supporting students who have caring responsibilities at home. Young carers can sometimes face additional challenges alongside their education, and we want to ensure they receive the support they need to thrive both in and out of school.A letter has recently been sent to parents and carers who have informed us that their child has young carer responsibilities. This outlines the support available within school and how we can work together to help students balance their caring role with their education.Please see the Lincolnshire County Council Young Carers poster included. The QR code can be used by parents and carers to register their child as a young carer and access further support. We would also like to highlight the 2026 Young Carers Survey, which is open until 30 November 2026. There are separate surveys for parents/guardians and young people, and we encourage participation to help shape future support for young carers across Lincolnshire:

- **Parent/Guardian Survey:** Young Carers survey for parents/carers 2026
- **Young Person Survey:** **Young Carers survey 2026**

If your family circumstances change and your child takes on a caring role for a family member, please do get in touch with us. We are here to help and can discuss the support available both within school and through external agencies.Together, we can ensure that our young carers feel recognised, supported and able to achieve their full potential.



Mrs Norton & Mrs Spinks

Careers News

Work Experience – Year 10 and Year 12

Students in Year 10 and in Year 12 should now be actively looking for work experience placements. Students should speak to me or Mrs Lambe if they require any additional help.

If students need to phone employers during the school day, I can arrange for them to use the phone in my office.

Success at School – Upcoming Webinars

'Success at School' is running some webinars in December regarding Accountancy – 'University vs Apprenticeships' which may be of interest to parents and students.

Webinar Calendar 26/27 — Book your place

Support:

As always, I can be contacted by email if parents or students in any year group have any queries:

Dawn.bushell@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk

Mrs Bushell, Careers Leader

Other notices and information

Upcoming diary dates:

Friday 27th November Y7 Christmas Tree competition

Monday 30th November - Friday 11th December Y11 and Y13 mock exams

Friday 4th December Bring a Tin Day

Friday 4th December Y7 and Y8 Disco at SHS, PFA Bingo at SGS

Monday 14th December Christmas Concert

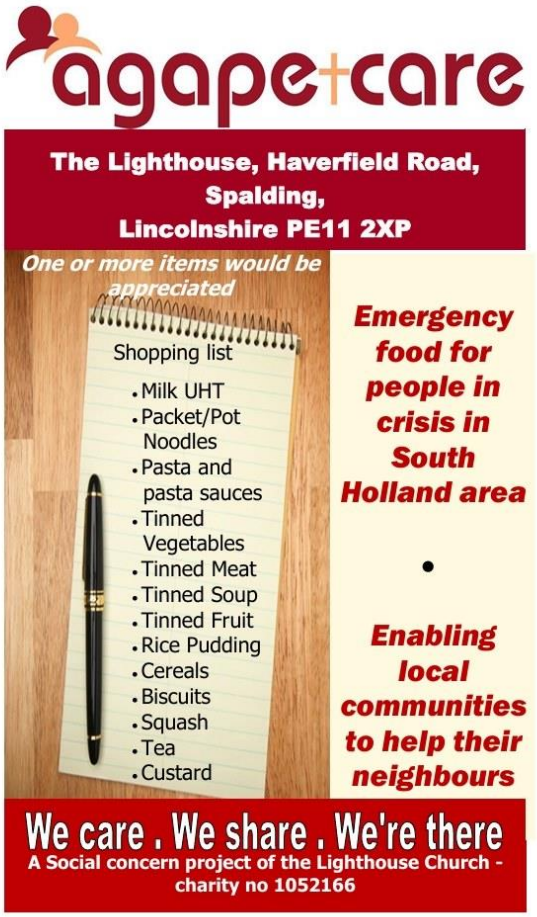
Thursday 17th December Church Christmas Service - morning

Thursday 17th December A Level Presentation - afternoon

Friday 18th December End of Term 2

Tuesday 5th January Start of Term 3


SCHOOL
BASKETBALL
TRIALS
YEAR 7–9
U14 TEAM
TO COMPETE AT TOURNAMENT ON
2ND DECEMBER
COME AND
GIVE IT A GO!
SHOW YOUR SKILLS
WORK AS A TEAM
REPRESENT OUR SCHOOL
Wednesday
25th
November
3.45-5.15pm
Pupils to be collected from Matmore Gate car park at 5.15pm.

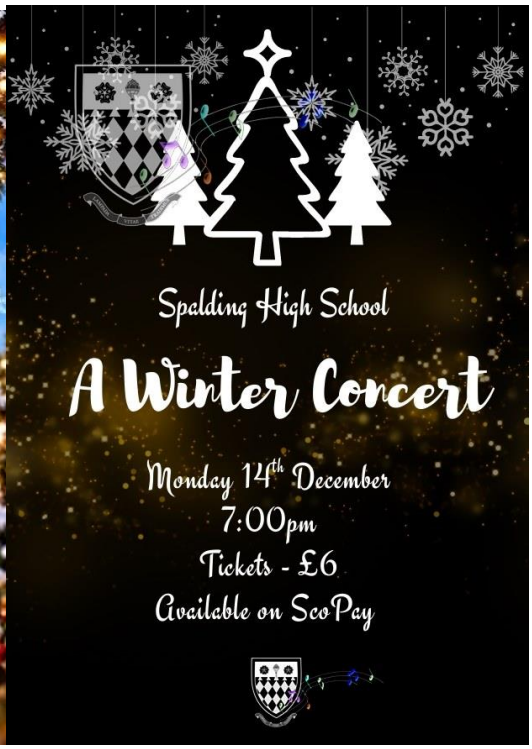


Bring a Tin Day 2026

We will be holding our annual Bring a Tin Day on Friday 4th December. On this day, students and staff bring in donations for the local foodbank, Agape Care, who then distribute them to those in need in our local community.

Please see here the list of items that Agape are in particular need of.





Christmas Lunch 2026

Tuesday 15th December

Wednesday 16th December

Main Course

Turkey, Stuffing, Pig-in-blanket, Yorkshire Pudding, Roast Potatoes, Vegetables & Gravy

Or

Vegan Layered Vegetable Roast, Stuffing, Quorn Vegan Sausage Bite, Roast Potatoes, Vegetables & Gravy

Dessert

Festive Chocolate Brownie

£4.50

To order a ticket, please pay online through SCOPAY in Products

Other food will also be available

Christmas Grab & Go 2026

Tuesday 15th December

Wednesday 16th December

Grab & Go

Jumbo 'Pig in Blanket' Hotdog

(Pork sausage wrapped in bacon in a soft deli roll)

~

Brie & Cranberry Flatbread

Dessert

Festive Chocolate Brownie

£3.00

To order a ticket, please pay online through SCOPAY in Products

Jacket Potatoes, Pasta and cold food will also be available





Specialist T eaching Team
Inclusion Team

Dyslexia Outreach

Study Skills and Revision Strategies

A free online workshop for secondary-aged students and their families



Open to anyone preparing for GCSEs or A-Levels as well as any secondary students, from Year 7 onwards, who would like ideas on how to better retain and organise learning.

Wednesday 2nd December
7:00–8:00pm

If your child would liketoattend, please email
Dyslexia Outreach
dyslexiaoutreach@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Free Online Safety Q&A Events for Parents

The Stay Safe Partnership, led by Lincolnshire County Council, have provided the following information:

Are you a parent who is concerned about what your child may be experiencing online? Would you like to feel more confident in supporting them to stay safe?

A series of free events have been organised giving parents and carers the opportunity to get their questions answered on a raft of online safety issues, including age-appropriate apps, online trends, parental controls, social media, and more.

The online events will be hosted by experts from Lincolnshire County Council's Stay Safe team. Two sessions will take place in December online, through Microsoft Teams. Tickets are free but places need to be booked in advance.

Online Safety Q+A for parents of primary school aged children - 1st December 2026, 6pm to 7.30pm. Book your place https://www.tickettailor.com/events/staysafepartnership/2476488

Online Safety Q+A for parents of secondary school aged children - 9th December 2026, 6pm to 7.30pm. Book your place. https://www.tickettailor.com/events/staysafepartnership/2476657

The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership have asked us to share the following information with our students and their families.

Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership

Dear Parent/Carer,

E-scooters and e-bikes are becoming an increasingly common sight on our roads and footways, particularly amongst young people. While they can offer a convenient way to travel, they also present significant safety risks when used irresponsibly or illegally.

Road safety posters are being displayed around your child's school to raise awareness of the dangers associated with e-scooters and e-bikes and to encourage safer travel choices.

Did you know?...

- **Privately owned e-scooters are not legal** to use on public roads, pavements, cycle paths/cycle lanes or in parks and other public places.
- Riding an e-scooter in public could lead to **a fine, penalty points on a driving licence, and seizure** by the police.
- In Great Britain, there were **1,477 casualties involving e-scooters in 2025**, including **484 people seriously injured** and **10 fatalities**.
- Most **e-scooter injuries** involve falls, collisions, or loss of control, and head injuries are among the most common serious injuries.
- E-scooter riders were found to have a **higher risk of traumatic brain injury than cyclists** and motorcyclists involved in serious incidents.
- Many serious e-scooter injuries occur when riders lose control and fall, even when no other vehicle is involved. In 2025, **384 reported collisions involved only the e-scooter rider.**
- Studies have found that **helmet use among injured e-scooter riders is rare**, despite head injuries being one of the most common serious injuries.

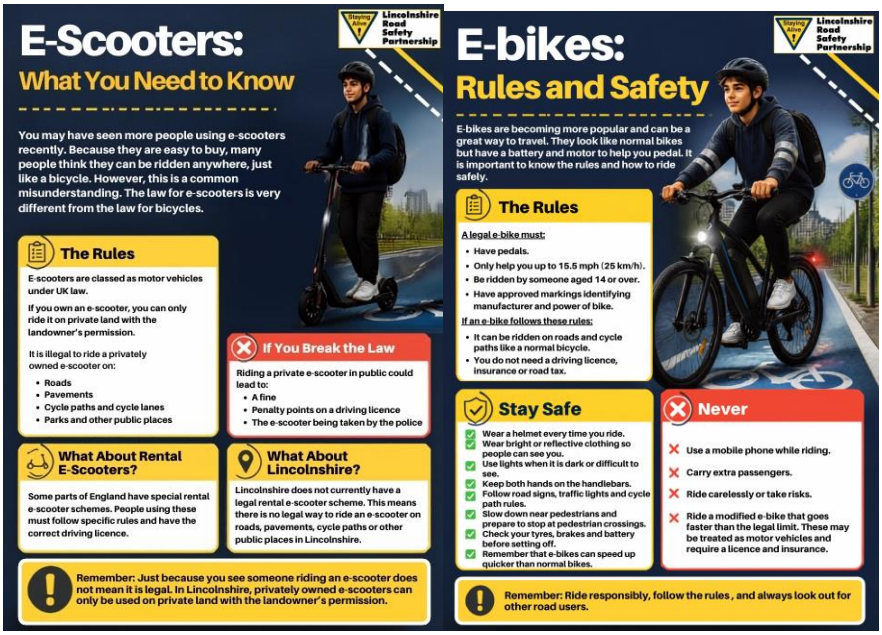
If you're thinking of getting your child a scooter for Christmas, please consider the risk that comes with it.

Parents and carers play a vital role in influencing how young people travel. Having regular conversations about safe and legal use can help prevent serious injury and encourage responsible behaviours from an early age.

Don't gift the risk: E-scooter and e-bike warning issued ahead of Christmas – Lincolnshire County Council

Together, we can help ensure that every journey is a safer one. Thank you for your support.

Kind regards,
Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership



Release of Grand Theft Auto 6

You may be aware that **Grand Theft Auto VI (GTA 6)** was released on **19 November 2026** and is expected to be one of the most talked-about video games among young people this year. As part of our commitment to keeping children safe and supporting their wellbeing, we would like to share some information to help families make informed decisions.

GTA games are intended for adults and are expected to carry an **18-age rating**. This means the content is designed for people aged 18 and over and may not be suitable for children and young people. This classification is not based on difficulty or complexity of gameplay, but on the presence of content considered unsuitable for under 18s. The game is expected to contain themes that may include:

- Realistic violence and criminal activity.
- Strong and offensive language.
- Drug and alcohol use.
- Sexual and adult themes.
- Mature online interactions and user-generated content.

Large entertainment releases can have a significant cultural impact among young people. Children may encounter this content directly through gameplay or indirectly through videos, livestreams, social media clips, and conversations with peers and family members, even if they do not own the game themselves. Some young people can find such content upsetting, confusing, or influential, particularly where they have not yet developed the maturity to understand and critically evaluate the themes being presented.

We recognise that gaming is an important hobby and social activity for many young people. Our aim is not to discourage gaming or create unnecessary concern, but to support families and children in making safe, healthy, well-informed and age-appropriate choices.

Gaming is a normal and enjoyable part of many young people's lives, and we recognise that students will be talking about GTA VI when it launches. However, because the game has been designed for adults, we encourage parents and carers to take an active interest in the content their children are accessing, have open conversations about what they see online and make use of age ratings and parental controls where appropriate.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our young people safe, healthy and ready to learn. As always, we encourage families to contact the school if they have concerns about online safety, gaming habits, wellbeing, or any safeguarding matter. If you are interested in further support information, please see the information below.

Online Safety - A Practical Checklist for Parents/Carers

1. Know What Your Child Is Watching

Many young people who do not play GTA VI will still watch others playing it. Consider:

- Asking which gaming channels, streamers or content creators they follow.

- Asking what games they are playing and who with.
- Occasionally watching some content with them so you understand what they are seeing.
- Be aware that clips shared on TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram and YouTube Shorts may contain mature content.

2. Have Open Conversations

One of the best safeguarding tools available to parents is simply talking to their child. You might ask:

- What do you know about GTA VI?
- Why are people excited about it?
- Have you watched any videos about it?
- What do you think about the age rating?

Try to keep conversations curious rather than confrontational. Children are often more willing to share experiences when they feel listened to rather than judged. Open conversations are often more effective than outright bans.

3. Consider Whether the Content Is Appropriate

Every young person is different and parents know their children best. Questions worth considering include:

- Is my child mature enough to understand the adult themes in the game?
- How do they normally respond to violent or mature content?
- Are they likely to discuss anything they find upsetting or confusing?

Age ratings exist to help families make informed decisions about age-appropriateness.

4. Encourage Healthy Sleep Habits

Major game launches often generate excitement and can lead to late nights. Children and teenagers benefit from consistent sleep routines and to support this, together with wellbeing and learning:

- Agree sensible screen-off times during the school week.
- Encourage devices to be charged outside bedrooms overnight where appropriate.
- Talk about the importance of sleep for mood, concentration and school performance.
- Monitor late-night gaming and online activity; even a few late nights can have a noticeable impact on focus and learning.

5. Use Parental Controls

Most consoles, phones and gaming platforms include parental controls that allow you to:

- Restrict age-rated content.

- Control purchases and downloads.
- Set screen-time limits.
- Manage online communication features.
- Monitor gaming activity. These tools can be helpful even for older teenagers.

6. Talk About Online Safety

If your child is engaging with gaming communities online, remind them:

- Never share personal information.
- Be cautious about who they communicate with.
- Report inappropriate behaviour or upsetting or inappropriate content.
- Speak to a trusted adult if something online makes them uncomfortable.

7. Watch for Changes in Routine

Most young people will enjoy gaming responsibly. However, it may be worth checking in if you notice:

- Regular tiredness or significant changes in sleep patterns
- Reduced interest in other hobbies
- Increased irritability when not gaming
- Spending excessive amounts of time online

These changes are often best addressed through conversation and agreed boundaries.

UK Safeguarding and Online Safety Resources

Parents and carers can access the following trusted organisations for advice, support and practical tools to help keep children safe online. These resources are particularly useful if your child is interested in GTA VI, online gaming, livestreams or gaming-related social media content.

□□ UK Safer Internet Centre

The UK's leading online safety partnership provides guides for parents, age-specific advice, gaming guidance, social media information and conversation starters to help families discuss online safety.

Website: https://saferinternet.org.uk

Useful topics include:

- Gaming and games consoles
- Screen time
- Livestreaming
- Social media safety

- Reporting harmful online content
- Family conversation guides

NSPCC Online Safety Hub

The NSPCC offers practical advice for parents on online safety, gaming, social media, parental controls and supporting children's online wellbeing. It also provides guidance on discussing difficult topics and responding to concerns.

Website: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

Key resources:

- Online gaming advice
- Screen time guidance
- Online wellbeing
- Age-appropriate technology use
- Parental controls

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection)

If a child experiences unwanted online contact, grooming, exploitation concerns or behaviour that makes them feel unsafe, reports can be made directly to CEOP. CEOP is part of the National Crime Agency.

Website: https://www.ceop.police.uk

Use CEOP if:

- An adult has contacted a child online inappropriately.
- You are concerned about online grooming.
- A child feels threatened or exploited online.

Childline

Children and young people can access confidential support about anything that worries them, including online experiences, gaming concerns, bullying or inappropriate content.

Website: https://www.childline.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 1111

Internet Matters

Internet Matters provides easy-to-follow family guides covering:

- Video games
- Social media
- Device settings
- Screen time
- Parental controls
- Digital wellbeing

Website: https://www.internetmatters.org

When Should Parents Seek Support?

Please seek support if you notice:

☐Significant sleep disruption affecting attendance or learning

☐Exposure to violent, sexual or otherwise age-inappropriate content

☐Online bullying or harmful interactions linked to gaming platforms

☐Excessive gaming affecting wellbeing or family relationships

☐Sudden changes in mood, behaviour or emotional wellbeing

☐Any safeguarding concern relating to online activity

The most effective online safety tool remains an open and ongoing conversation with your child. Knowing what they play, watch and discuss online, and maintaining clear expectations around sleep, screen time and age-appropriate content, can significantly reduce risk and support their wellbeing

Image credits

Book covers: Amazon