Spalding High School weekly bulletin 5th November 2026

This week from Mrs Anderson, Headteacher

Children in Need - Friday 13th November 2026

Children in Need - Friday 13th November 2026
On Friday 13th November, we will be taking part in a non-uniform day to support BBC Children in Need. Students are invited to come to school in their own clothes and make a voluntary donation to this fantastic cause.
This year's appeal focuses on ensuring that every child has someone by their side when they need it most, highlighting the importance of providing children and young people with support, opportunities and trusted adults who can help them overcome challenges. Funds raised by BBC Children in Need help local projects across the UK that support children's mental health, wellbeing, education and development. At our school, we know how important it is that every child feels valued, included and supported, and Children in Need reminds us of the difference that kindness, community and working together can make. By taking part in our non-uniform day, students will be helping to raise vital funds that enable charities and community groups to continue their life-changing work with young people across the country.
We would like to thank families in advance for their generosity and support. Every donation, however small, will help make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people who need it most. Together, we can help ensure that no child has to face life's challenges alone.

There should be no inappropriate outfits & no political or offensive slogans worn. Normal jewellery and make-up rules also apply.
This was originally on the school calendar for Friday 20th November – please note the change in date to Friday 13th November.

Winter uniform

Please may we remind you that winter uniform is now to be worn until after the Easter break - this means ties and button up collared shirts for Years 7 to 11 inclusive.

Thank you for your cooperation.

School buses: Message from Lincolnshire County Council

We have been asked by Lincolnshire County Council to pass on the following message:

We have recently been made aware by Stagecoach that some pupils are attempting to travel on the IT1 and IT2 services using their Lincolnshire County Council-issued school travel passes.

Please note that Lincolnshire County Council does not have an agreement in place for pupils to use these services. As a result, school travel passes issued by the Council are not valid on the IT1 or IT2 routes, and pupils wishing to use these services will be required to pay the appropriate fare.

Could you please remind any pupils who use buses that they are not permitted to travel using their LCC pass? This will help avoid situations where pupils are refused travel and potentially left stranded.

Thank you for your assistance.

Student of the Week

Staff name	Student Name	Student Form	Reason
Mrs Spinks	Mia Bailey	7C	Mathematics
Ms Shaw-West	Elsa Soni	7C	Science
Miss White	Sara El Kharroufi	7J	Science
Mr Hempsall	Chiana Gibbs	7P	History
Miss Parker	Similoluwa Awoyemi	7S	Physical Education
Mr Wright	Violet Quemby	7S	Science
Mrs Lee	Summer Mustafa	8C	French
Mrs Norton	Hallie Jeffrey	8N	Community
Mr Garbett	Aaruni Keshvara	9C	Music
Mr Murphy	Amelia Zuk	9C	Chemistry
Mrs Lees	Bhavya Warnakulasuriya	9C	Library
Mrs Wilkins	Eliza Fathers	9J	Technology
Mrs Cave	Beau Skinner	9N	Religious Studies
Miss Jeffery	Maya Fraszczak	9P	English Literature
Mrs J Lord	Ruby Matthews	10C	English Literature
Mrs Nowak	Gabriele Ojimba	10C	Mathematics
Mrs Aurikko	Lula Goor	10N	Biology
Mrs Nowak	Eunice Kei	10P	Further Mathematics
Mrs Martindale	Kira Klesuk-Prolejko	10S	Biology
Mrs Rogers	Jess Wright	10S	Geography
Mrs Fisk	Leila Petraite	11P	Drama
Mrs Fisk	Imogen Neal	11P	Community
Mrs Bennett	Ruby Mantle	11S	Geography
Mrs Jones	Ruby Mantle	11S	Latin
Mrs Bennett	Freya Willerton	12JL	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Mrs Bennett	Loma Mlunjwa	12NG	Community
Mrs Busfield	Nancy Chapman	12NG	Biology
Mrs Kingerley	Jenna Mackman	12NG	Community
Mrs Kingerley	Elsie Ellis	12RM	Community
Mrs Lees	Angel De Melo	13LM	Community

Please find here the nominations for Student of the Week for the week commencing 19th October 2026.

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

Sports News

Dance News: Year 7 and Year 8 Shine!

This term, Year 7 have been exploring the lively dance style of the Charleston, while Year 8 have been discovering the vibrant and energetic world of Bollywood dance.

Both year groups have been learning a range of dance moves and techniques before putting their creativity to the test by choreographing their own dance routines to perform as part of their end-of-term final performance. Year 7 danced to Fat Sams Grand Slam from Bugsy Malone and Year 8 choregraphed their dance to Jai Ho.

A key focus of the task was incorporating a variety of levels, formations and synchronised movements. Students demonstrated excellent understanding of these choreographic devices, using changes in height through jumping, standing, kneeling and floor work to add interest to their performances. The groups also impressed with their use of formations, seamlessly transitioning between lines, circles and clustered arrangements to create visually engaging routines.

It has been fantastic to see students working collaboratively, developing their confidence and bringing their own ideas to life through dance. Well done to all students for their hard work, enthusiasm and commitment! The effort, creativity and energy levels throughout the term have been absolutely fantastic, and we are incredibly proud of what everyone has achieved.

Keep dancing!


































This term, Year 8 have started their gymnastics unit, with a particular focus on creating impressive **big group balances**.

This week 8C took part in an experimental lesson, where they had the opportunity to trial and explore a variety of different balances. Working collaboratively, students experimented with different shapes, formations and ways of supporting one another to create stable and creative group balances.

The challenges proved to be both fun and rewarding, with everyone showing great teamwork, creativity and problem-solving skills. The groups produced some fantastic balances, which you can see in the photo!

We look forward to seeing how their skills and creativity develop as the unit progresses!

Miss Parker


L
M
N











Year 12/13 Tournament Report

Our combined Year 12 and 13 team recently took part in the South Lincolnshire Netball tournament, where they faced some tough competition. Despite losing both games, the teams performed brilliantly and showed great determination, resilience and teamwork throughout.

A particular highlight was the fantastic defending, with players working hard make interceptions and stop goal scoring opportunities. The team held their own against strong opposition and demonstrated a positive attitude from start to finish.

Although the results didn't go our way this time, the students should be proud of their efforts and the way they represented the school. The experience provided valuable opportunities to develop their skills and build confidence.

Well done to all involved!

Players' Player was awarded to Amelia

Well done, Miss Parker



Evening of Sport Drama and Music 2026

On Wednesday 21st October we held the annual Sports, Music and Drama Celebration Evening for the 2025-2026 academic year. The evening was hosted by Evie and Annabelle from Year 13, who both spoke very clearly and confidently. The evening included a great street dance by Erica and an elegant ballet performance by Isabella.

Students were awarded School Sports Colours for outstanding and sustained effort, commitment, achievement & positive attitude to a School team, Bronze/Silver Achievement Awards to School Sport for outstanding and sustained effort, commitment, achievement & positive attitude to at least three school teams, and School Performing Arts Colours for outstanding and sustained effort, commitment, achievement & positive attitude to the school production and musical concerts.

In addition to these awards there was one student per year group that was awarded the Outstanding Individual Contribution Awards for both Sports and Performing Arts. The winners of the

Sporting Outstanding Individual Contribution Awards were Nyah, Annika, Kaelyn, and Lily as seen in the photo. The Performing Arts Outstanding Individual Contribution Awards winners were Chloe, Pip, Immy, Darcy, Isobel and Erin.

Well done to all of the Award winners and thank you for coming to celebrate your achievements.

Thank you to everyone who bought football squares in support of the PE department, we were incredibly pleased to raise over £600 towards the purchase of new equipment and in support of our extra-curricular provisions.







Here are the winners of the Guess The Football Team fundraiser:

Card 1 = John Short

Card 2 = Stacey Miles



Maths News

Axiom Maths

We are very proud at SHS to have a long-standing history of delivering the Axiom Maths programme as an extracurricular opportunity for our students.

Our current Year 11, Year 10 and Year 9 students are taking part in online sessions from home, at times that suit them best. Meanwhile, our Year 8 students enjoy sessions on Tuesday lunchtimes with Mrs Martin.

Our new Year 7 cohort will be starting the programme on the 30th November.

Axiom Maths — Helping children realise the potential of their power

Take a look below at what our participants have to say about their experience!

Mrs Nowak, Maths teacher

As I progressed through Axiom Maths from Year 7 to Year 8, I not only realized it helped with my academic growth, but it also challenged me to think outside the box. It is a brilliant space where I can share my ideas and hear different perspectives from my peers. The programme is incredibly fun, and I love how it makes me feel confident in my understanding of Maths.

The problem-solving skills I've learned actually help me in my normal day-to-day life and even in my regular math lessons. Because the sessions are so engaging and adventurous, I highly recommend Axiom Maths to my classmates and everyone around me. I really value that our school has an environment where we can discuss these ideas together. Axiom Maths helps students understand Maths in a completely different way, and I highly value that we have access to such an exceptional resource.

Salsabilla, Year 8

Hi, my name is Hayley and I've been going to Axiom Maths since the start of Year 7. Axiom may seem like you have to do extra maths during your lunchtime however, you learn fun and interesting questions. It is not only basic questions but fun and inclusive and teaches you how to think outside the box in many different ways and to be articulate and adventurous.

Hayley, Year 8

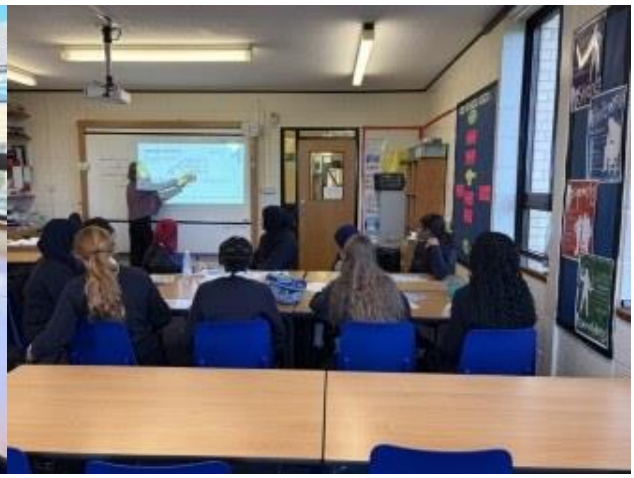
I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience as a mentor for Axiom Maths as it has allowed me to build meaningful relationships with other students and to observe the strong connections they developed with one another throughout the programme. I found it particularly rewarding to witness their growing confidence, progress and improvement with each session. Alongside this, the experience enabled me to further develop my own leadership, organisational and communication skills, whilst building my confidence in guiding and supporting others.

Freya, Year 12, Axion Mentor

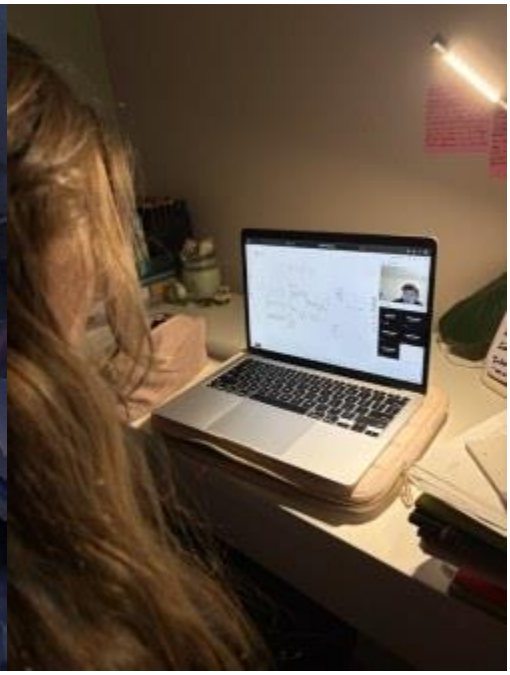












Library News

Year 7 - 11 Book Club

Our theme this week, inspired by Bonfire Night, was books that we'd like to burn. Now, just to clarify, we love our books and of course we would never condone burning a book, however some books have inspired incendiary feelings.

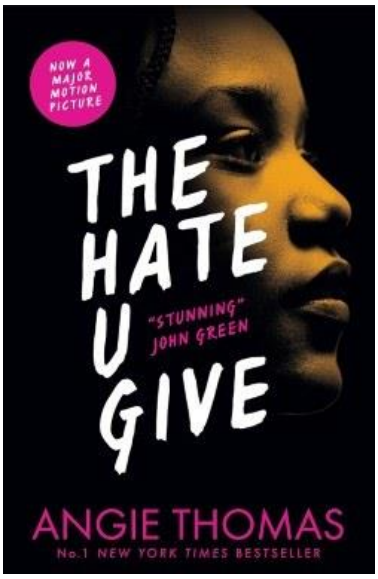
This topic caused a heated debate (pun intended) and there were plenty of suggestions as to what books could be piled pyre high and for lots of different reasons too. I'd Tell You I Love You But Then I'd Have to Kill You by Ally Carter was suggested as it has not been adapted for screen, despite our reader

having contacted the author directly and requesting it! Daughter of the Pirate King by Tricia Levenseller was another suggestion as our member didn't want to share the book with anyone else. Twilight by Stephanie Meyer was felt to be just too cheesy and The Survivor Wants to Die at the End by Adam Silvera was nominated for having an unpopular end. Life of Pi by Yann Martell was said to be just too confusing, Dead Souls by Nikolai Gogol and The Northern Lights, by Philip Pullman, were too difficult to read and Pandemonium, by Lauren Oliver, had yet another love triangle to our reader's disgust.We then turned our debate on its head by highlighting books that actually have been banned in schools around the world. This caused much surprise, annoyance and discussion as we delved into possible reasons why. Did you known that The Hunger Games, To Kill a Mockingbird, The Handmaid's Tale, The Hate U Give, The Hobbit, Twilight, The Northern Lights, The Fault in Our Stars and Heartstopper (to name just a few) have all been banned? Our two book reviews this week focus on a couple of these and we will be featuring a Banned Books display in the library very soon.

Happy Reading

Miss O'Sullivan and Mrs Lees

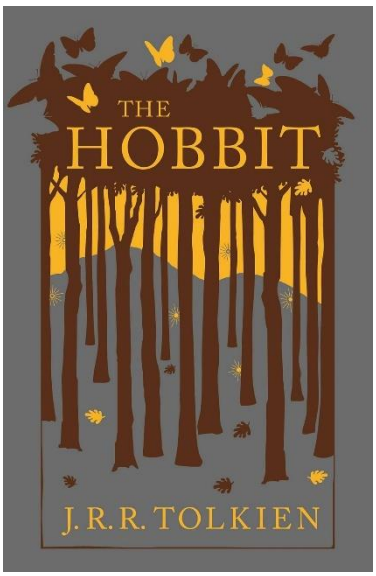
Book Reviews



The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

The Hate You Give is a wonderful book about a young black girl called Starr. Starr lives in a very poor neighbourhood where she was born and raised, however she attends a posh private school for the rich in the suburbs. This young girl manages to balances her two different lives. However she experiences a traumatic and cataclysmic tragedy when her childhood best friend is shot by a police officer when they are on their way home after a party. Starr was the only witness to the fatal shooting and she has now become the centre of media attention. Starr finds herself conducting countless interviews about how her friend was unarmed and innocent. What Starr says now could destroy her community. It could also get her killed. This book is aimed towards teens and shows the effects of racism and police brutality.

Daniella 11J



The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien is an amazing book. Filled with fantasy and drama, this book is suitable for all ages- although older readers may appreciate the language used in this classical book more than the younger. Following the adventures of Bilbo Baggins the Hobbit, during his quest to retrieve ancient treasure from the tyrant dragon Smaug, this book includes the perfect amount of magic and mystery, packed with twists and turns- pure strangeness (in a completely perfect way) exploding from every page you turn. Some older books in the fantasy genre can seem a little boring to modern readers, however in this tale, the world Tolkien created and shows the reader, is intriguing by the fact that so many different characters and aspects of life flow from the pages. From the mystical elves of Mirkwood, to the enchanted ring that gives the wearer the power to turn invisible, taken from a blood-thirsty Gollum, there is an extreme amount of different events in such a short book, with only around 300 pages! To conclude, this book is a must read, and is especially good for fans of The Lord of The Rings, written by the same author, and set in the same universe- Middle Earth. I definitely recommend this book!

Sky 13FD

Norway Trip 2026

During the October half-term, a group of GCSE and A Level Geography students enjoyed an unforgettable four-day visit to western Norway, exploring some of the country's most spectacular physical and human geography.

Upon arrival in Bergen, the group explored the historic harbour area before travelling on the famous Mount Fløibanen funicular railway, where panoramic views of the city, mountains and coastline provided an impressive introduction to Norway's dramatic scenery. Students then completed a hike from the summit back to the waterfront, led by Mrs Rogers. Along the route, Mrs Bennett incorporated Geography revision, while Mrs Waldron helped students with their biology revision by identifying the local flora and fauna.

A highlight of the trip was a full-day excursion into the fjord region. Students stopped at the impressive Tvindefossen waterfall before embarking on a cruise through the UNESCO-listed Nærøyfjord, one of the narrowest fjords in Norway. Surrounded by towering valley sides and breathtaking glacial landscapes, students were able to see first-hand the powerful influence of ice on the environment. The day concluded with a journey on the world-famous Flåm Railway and Bergen Railway, travelling through spectacular mountain and waterfall scenery.

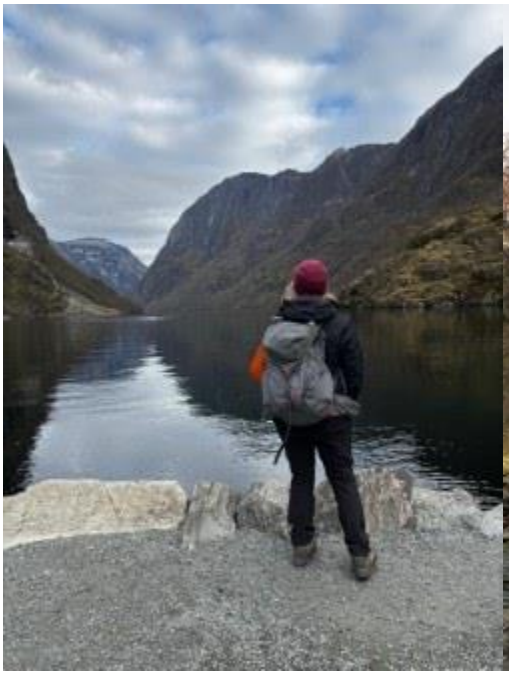
The following day, students visited the Hardangerfjord region, taking in the beauty of Steinsdalsfossen and the magnificent Vøringsfossen waterfall, one of Norway's most celebrated natural attractions. At Vøringsfossen, students challenged themselves to climb the 99 steps and cross the dramatic bridge, which hangs 50 metres above the canyon floor. The group also visited the Norwegian Nature Centre,

where interactive exhibits helped develop their understanding of Norway's climate, ecosystems and physical geography.

Before returning home, students visited the Bergen Maritime Museum to learn about Norway's rich maritime heritage, including Viking history and the importance of the sea to the country's development. The trip concluded with a windy cable car ride to Mount Ulriken summit. Although heavy rain and strong winds partially obscured the views, students still enjoyed a glimpse of the spectacular fjord and mountain scenery surrounding Bergen.

The visit provided an exceptional opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of glaciated landscapes, waterfalls, fjords and mountain environments while also experiencing Norwegian culture and history firsthand. Throughout the trip, the students were excellent ambassadors for the school, embracing every opportunity to learn and making the most of this remarkable educational experience.

Mrs Rogers, Geography teacher and Assistant Head of Sixth Form

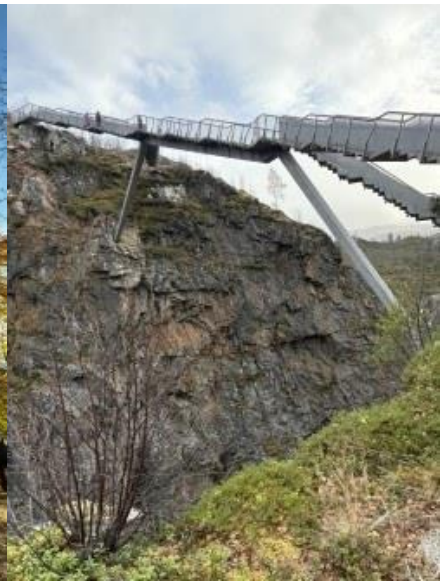





ALFRED SKULSTAD
O. STORHEIM













Celebrating the Individual: Chloe, Year 7



Chloe has been offered and has accepted a full scholarship to study with the Guildhall Young Artists, which is run by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who are currently ranked 3rd in the world for performing arts.

Throughout the programme, Chloe will be working directly with industry professionals to develop her acting skills.

She will be undertaking a number of group workshops each term with other young artists from across the world to build skills in improvisation, voice and movement, and personalised 1-1 sessions every week with a professional tutor to develop acting technique, character work, text analysis and audition prep.

Over the summer Chloe also auditioned and was accepted into Front & Centre in Leicester which is a West End Training programme run by West End performers, where each month a current West End star puts the performers through a full scene rehearsal exactly as if they were in the West End. So far she has worked with Lou Henry and learnt a full scene and dance from Six the musical, and Kirsty Ingram, who taught them a scene and dance from Bugsy Malone. Each month is a different professional and musical so Chloe is learning valuable skills to take forward in what she hopes will be her future career.

Congratulations Chloe!

Celebrating the Individual: Isabella, Year 11



Congratulation to Isabella in Year 11 who has been accepted onto the Ballet Theatre UK Associate Programme - well done Isabella!

Celebrating the Individual: Katie, Year 11

Congratulations to Katie who has been selected for the NLD (Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire) U16 Girls Player Development Group (PDG) for the 2026–27 season. This means that she is now part of the NLD U16 Girls PDG squad for the 2026–27 season.

Well done Katie, this is an amazing achievement!

Sixth Form News: Bingo

We are pleased to announce that this year, Spalding High School will be hosting a Bingo evening organised by the Sixth Form Team to raise money for their Leavers' Ball. This will be held on Friday 20th November 2026 from 5:30pm-8pm. Doors will open at 5:30pm, and first calls for bingo will be from 6pm.

Alongside the bingo, we are running a raffle which contains prizes such as a Jelly Cat, Starbucks merchandise, and an M&S hamper.

The tickets will be £4 per person. The tickets can be purchased via Scopay. Ticket sales are limited and will be sold on a 'first-come-first-served' basis.

Bingo dabbers will be available for purchase on the evening.

Staff and senior prefects will be on site to oversee the event.

This event will be a fun evening, for students, family and friends, giving guests the ability to relax and have fun. We hope to see you there!

Careers News

Year 11 and Year 13 – Applications

This term is very busy for Year 13 students with many students finalising university applications and several students looking for apprenticeship positions for after their studies. I hope that students will continue to be proactive in managing their applications alongside studying effectively and preparing for mock exams.

We look forward to welcoming our Year 11 students to our open evening on 10th November. I have had many positive conversations with students about their next steps after GCSEs.

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.

Radiotherapy Open Day – Lincoln County Hospital

The Oncology Treatment Centre at Lincoln County Hospital is hosting an open day for members of the public on Saturday 7 November 2026 from 9.30am to 12 noon.

Visitors will have the opportunity to meet specialist staff, view treatment areas, and learn more about the care and support available to people affected by cancer. There will also be representatives from Sheffield Hallam University, along with a second-year apprentice, who will be available to answer questions about courses, training and careers in therapeutic radiography.

This is a great opportunity for students interested in healthcare careers, particularly those considering careers in oncology, radiotherapy or cancer services.

The event is open to anyone who would like to attend and there is no need to book. Please see the flyer. If students attend, could they please let me know for monitoring purposes.



Futures for All – Youth Council 2027

Futures for All is a social mobility charity, dedicated to levelling the playing field for all young people in state education by providing fully funded and free-to-access virtual work experience and speakers for schools programmes.

Futures for All is now recruiting for their 2027 Youth Council representatives. Students aged 15-17 are invited to apply to share their insights regarding careers education and future careers.

Full details can be found in the link below and the flyer.

Youth Council | Young Social Mobility Leaders | Futures For All

If any students apply and gain a place, could they please let me know.



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

InvestIN Insight Days

Please see the link regarding insight days offered by InvestIN. Please note there is a charge for these.

https://investin.org/collections/insight-days

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 6th November Y7 & Y8 Sleepover

Tuesday 10th November SHS Sixth Form Information Evening

Thursday 12th November SGS Sixth Form Information Evening

Friday 13th November Children in Need (non-uniform) - please note change in date

Friday 13th November Disco Y8 and Y9 (re-arranged date - event postponed from summer)

Wednesday 18th November GCSE Presentation Afternoon 2pm

Wednesday 18th November Maths Kangaroo and Maths Olympiad

Thursday 19th November Y11 Parents' Evening

Friday 20th November MFL GCSE Mock orals start

Friday 20th November SHS Choir Performance Spalding

Friday 20th November Sixth Form Bingo Evening

Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th, Thursday 26th November Christmas Craft Fair

Tuesday 24th, Wednesday 25th, Thursday 26th November Year 7 Form Tutor / Parents' Meeting

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

Tuesday 15th and Wednesday 16th December Christmas lunch

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

Survey: Don't Lose Hope

A local mental health charity, Don't Lose Hope, are conducting a small research project exploring how the news affects our mental health and wellbeing, particularly among young people.

They have asked us to share the link below with our students - please click on the link to take the short survey:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XH2R6F6



Release of Grand Theft Auto 6

You may be aware that **Grand Theft Auto VI (GTA 6)** is scheduled for release 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.

On Line 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 exists 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

Other images: click on individual image for info