



21/7/23

FRIDAY NEWS

N^o. 39

Dear Parents and Carers,

Writing my final piece for this Friday News, or in fact any school's newsletter, is a rather surreal feeling. Having been involved in schools as a teacher since 1989 and having been a Headteacher since January 2000, it's hard to imagine school life and my own world not being immersed together. The nature of being a Headteacher is that the job does rather become your life and it's not always easy to separate one from the other.

Being chosen to lead a school is a huge honour, and I feel incredibly privileged to have been asked to take on this role three times in my career. As a relatively young man taking on my first headship in Bath twenty odd years ago, I had the expectation that whatever we did as a school on a day-by-day basis had to be good enough for my own children. This is an expectation and philosophy which I am proud to say I have tried my utmost to keep to every day of my working life ever since. I am equally proud that I have been able to stay true to my own values and priorities in that the schools I have led have always put children's learning first, had high expectations in terms of relationships, behaviour and outcomes for our children and have had a strong team spirit amongst the staff and the wider community.

As with any leadership role, the job of a headteacher also comes with significant responsibility and accountability. Aside from the inevitable pressures of making sure that a large organisation such as ours functions safely and effectively, and that there is consistently the highest quality of provision for our young people and their families, there are also the external pressures which come from an endless series of changes from the DfE and the constant and unpredictable spectre of Ofsted. There are, of course, many positive aspects to working in schools which offset these pressures, the main one being the delight of working with so many wonderful, funny, and invigorating young people over so many years. I have often said that the perfect cure for a bad day in school is to go into Reception for ten minutes and speak to some of the children there; it is like visiting another world where conversations are so much happier, real and uplifting than so much of the nonsense that finds its way onto my desk on a daily basis!

Members of the community will often reference the Headteacher as the focal point of a school, attributing the success or decline of that school to that individual. Whilst it's true that a Headteacher can, and should, positively influence the ethos, culture and direction of a school, the role of Head is primarily about trying to maintain, build, support and strengthen the teams of people that enable the school to be successful day after day.

I have been incredibly fortunate to work with such fantastic teams of staff and governors during my time at Alverton, never more so than our current staffing group. Throughout my headship, I have had the privilege and good fortune of working alongside the most committed, creative and talented individuals and teams who have risen to every challenge presented to them and made my job a relatively simple one. I would particularly like to pay tribute to our school leadership team and, in particular, Mrs Wicks who has been my right-hand woman over the past ten years at Alverton and who has worked tirelessly to make Alverton the place it is and to keep me (relatively) sane.

Each headteacher's time in post is a link in a long chain rather than a beginning and end in itself, a little like being part of an extended relay team, recognising and building on the work of others whilst trying to move the school forward to the strongest position possible before passing the baton on to the next person. With this analogy in mind, I am proud of the progress and developments our team has made the over the past ten years and feel confident that in handing over the baton to Mr Brown, the school is in a strong and sustainable position ready for the next leg of the journey.

A key part of our successful team has been the Alverton governing body who have always shown a level of collective commitment, knowledge and expertise which is, in my experience, rarely found in a governing body. As a Headteacher, the importance of having governors who provide high levels of support and constructive challenge cannot be overstated, and the security of knowing that one has such a capable and supportive group of governors has been invaluable, so thank you. I'd particularly like to thank Anna George whose wisdom, generosity and dedication to the school has been exceptional.

Alverton has always enjoyed a positive reputation in Penzance and, indeed, further afield. The strength of the school is, in my view, its community foundation of staff, governors and parents which underpins our success, setting a culture of high expectations and ensuring that we stay focused on providing the best possible environment and opportunities for the children who attend our school. Reputations are, of course, hard won and easily damaged. I'm therefore delighted that the Alverton team who will take the school forward into the next chapter are so embedded in, conscious of, and determined to maintain the core values and ethos which make Alverton such a special to work and to learn that the future is a positive one for the school.

Thank you for your support, for trusting me to look after your children's education for the past ten years, for allowing me the honour and privilege of leading this fantastic school and of being a small part in its long and successful story.

Wishing you and your families a fabulous holiday,

Martin Higgs
Headteacher

Reminder

Changes to the School Day

You may well be aware that the government has said that, by September 2023, all state-funded, mainstream schools will be expected to provide a compulsory school week of at least 32.5 hours. This includes the time that each pupil is in school each day from the official start of the school day (morning registration) to the official end to the compulsory school day (official home time). The 32.5 hour minimum includes breaks and lunch times as well as teaching time but does not include optional before or after school provision. This means that we have had to review our opening times ready for September.

We wanted to ensure that, by increasing our school week, this had the maximum impact on children's learning but also was as helpful and least disruptive to you as parents as possible. We have considered the options available to us and it has been decided that we will meet this expectation in September by starting 15 minutes earlier in the morning as follows:

Reception and Key Stage 1

Doors open: 8.25am

Registration: 8.40am

End of school day: 3.10pm (no change)

Key Stage 2

Doors open: 8.30am

Registration: 8.45am

End of school day: 3.15pm (no change)

We have decided to continue with the slightly staggered start times that we have used over the last few years as this works well.

Remember – safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Martin Higgs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at head@alverton.tpacademytrust.org or, if it is out of school hours, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Unit on 0300 1231 116;
E-mail: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk

Outstanding money owed

Please check your Schoolmoney account and ensure that all anything you owe for breakfast club, after school child care, trips and swimming is paid by today. TPAT cannot allow any debt to be carried over to September and certainly none for anyone leaving the school.

School lunches from September

The same menu will continue in September until October half term although there will not be the option to have a packed lunch. Chartwells have increased the price of a meal to £2.65 from September.

THIS IS OUR

HELP YOUR SHELF

How it Works

It's all **free**.

**Take what you need,
whenever you need it.**



No Questions Asked – No Judgements Made

Give what you can if you would like to.

We currently have lots of items on our Help Your Shelf ready for collection which are free for anyone to take at any time.

If you prefer, you can buy a reusable bag for £1 and fill this with items from the shelf. Once you've bought your bag, you can fill it with as much as you want, as many times as you want. Whichever way you choose, the Help Your Shelf is available all day and you can pop in at any time.

Ties

The cost of ties will increase in September to £4.50. Please order on the Schoolmoney system in the shop area and we will give one to you child.

Lost library books

There are lots of library books still at home and not in the library! Please look for them over the summer and bring them back when term starts in September.

Daisy's Diary

Bye bye!

Gosh I FINALLY finished the garden. It took forever and felt like I was having a baby - a 40 ft long, tantalised baby. But it's done! And now all the children that have helped wheelbarrow and lug lumps of wood and shovel grit and weave and weave and weave and weave willow can play in the garden we made. Here's a picture of one of the helpers that no one saw as she came in at the weekends like a magic fairy to help - Maya who was doing her Duke of Edinburgh award.

I'll still see you all at drop off and pick up but I won't be carrying a chicken under one arm and a bag of plants/ poo / a rabbit



19 Events



22

JUL

'Swimming in Plastic' event - Penzance

Public · Event · by Surfers Against Sewage and Plastic Free Penzance



Interested



Invite



More

Saturday, 22 July 2023 from 14:30-17:30

under the other. I may even have a hairstyle and clean trainers. But I doubt it. I have LOVED taking out the children and getting them muddy and it's been brilliant to have the time to play and build and laugh with them (and sometimes at them but mostly I have noticed they were laughing at me...) Thank you very much.

PS - we did so well on the bottle event so here's the poster to tell you about what's happening to them! Come see me and my synchro women swim - it's free and we've got new hats!



Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has its own Out of Hours telephone support provided by Support Matters Cornwall. This service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays and 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays. The service is open to all patients (aged 16+) under the care of the Trust's mental health services. Support can be delivered over the telephone, via text, email or web chat. Call free on **0800 001 4330**.



Family
Line

0808 802 6666



0800 1111

0300 123 3393
www.mind.org.uk
mind
for better mental health

Download this image onto your phone for **when you might need help**



Samaritans: 24h
Emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

116 123

Shout: 24h
Text service, free on all major networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.

• If you're over 18, text the word **SHOUT**

• Under 18s, text YM

Text: 85258

Cornwall's 24/7 NHS mental health support

Call for free, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone service will listen to you and determine how best to help

0800 038 5300

Valued Lives:

Supports people who are experiencing mental or emotional distress in Cornwall. Every day, 5.30pm - midnight.

01209 901438

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call **999**



www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth

If you're worried about a child:

0808 800 5000
help@nspcc.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk

Penzance CTIPA Foodbank

The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance provides food for anyone in need. If their support would be helpful to you, just phone Veryan or Adele in the office in confidence on 01736 364087 and they can phone the Foodbank for you who will be able to help.

The Foodbank are extremely busy at the moment and are very grateful for any donations.

citizens
advice

0344 411 1444

ON YOUR SIDE
NO MATTER WHAT

0800 58 58 58

THECALMZONE.NET/WEBCHAT

5PM-MIDNIGHT | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | ANONYMOUS

CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
LIVING
MISERABLY
CALM

"It's alright to ask for help"

SAMARITANS

116 123

NATIONAL DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE HELPLINE
0808 2000 247
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL
FREEPHONE

AT HOME
SHOULDN'T
MEAN
AT RISK

#YOUARENOTALONE

FIND SUPPORT AT:
gov.uk/domestic-violence

WCWAid

West Cornwall Women's Aid

01736 367539

https://www.wcwaid.co.uk/helpline

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
12+

on the App Store:
'Everyone' on Google Play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Developed in Germany, this social networking app is called 'W App' in the Apple Store and Google Play but is also branded as 'Slay' in some territories. Aimed primarily at teens and marketed as a 'zero-negativity' zone, it asks users to connect with others from their school. They are then asked a positive question (such as "Who is the nicest person?") and shown four people from their school to choose from. All users from a school can appear in the poll: not just those a child is friends with. The app is mainly anonymous – but does offer clues to reveal who selected you for each question.

FAKE ACCOUNTS

There is no verification when signing up to W App. Once someone joins, they can see all users at their school and add them if they wish. Users provide their name, gender, school and grade – but are also able to change these (aside from their name) as often as they like. This concerned our expert: predators could potentially keep attempting to build connections with children at different schools.

PROFILE OVERSHARING

Young people tend to have multiple social media accounts, so it's vital their identity is protected online. By default, W App shares someone's school and grade, while users choose whether to share their full name, photo and other social accounts. Most people appear to select this – making it easier for someone to build up a picture of who they are, what they enjoy and where they go to school.

SPAMMING CONTACTS

The app's activity feed notifies a user when they have been put forward for a poll. They're then given the option to reveal the initial of the person who nominated them, by inviting a friend to join the app. The friend doesn't have to sign up, but they will receive a 'get the app now' text, followed by a link. This process could result in texts being continually sent to a child's contacts.

CATFISHING RISKS

As well as invented fake accounts, users could also sign up and pretend to be someone else from their school. By joining under another person's name (possibly with their photo), they can take part in polls while masquerading as that other person. Some polls hint at an attraction or crush, which – if deliberately misused by imposters – could result in misunderstandings and embarrassment for teens.

SUBSCRIPTION COSTS

W App is free to download and use, but there is also a 'gold membership' package (costing £4.99 per week) available. Subscribing allows users to reveal the names of people who selected them in polls (slightly defeating the point of it being an anonymous app), gives unlimited hints and offers exclusive play modes – all of which may tempt a curious young user into spending their money.

REPEATED USE

Like most other social media platforms, W App wants users to log in regularly. Every time someone completes a set of 12 polls, they earn virtual coins. These can be cashed in for perks such as being included in random polls (so that more users will see them) or adding their name to their crush's poll. This may not seem much of an incentive currently, but that may alter as the app evolves.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS FRIEND REQUESTS

Talk to your child about the risk of sharing their other social accounts, especially on anonymous platforms where there is no verification – so a user could be anyone. If someone they don't normally talk to at school approaches your child via W App and suggests connecting on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram, emphasise that it's safest to confirm it with that person face to face before accepting or replying.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's crucial that trusted adults regularly remind children about the importance of not sharing too much of their personal information online (and demonstrate it on their own social accounts, where possible). W App automatically displays the user's school on their profile – but if your child does want to use the app, you can advise them to only enter their first name and not to upload an image of their face.

BE MINDFUL OF REJECTION

The polls in W App are designed to be complimentary rather than negative. However, never being nominated or picked by their peers could leave a child – especially a status-conscious teen – feeling ignored and isolated. If you think that W App is having this effect on your child, it might be time for a supportive reminder that social media doesn't reflect someone's true worth or popularity.

DO SOME 'APP ADMIN'

Before letting your child download W App, you may want to (via their device's settings) disable the option to make in-app purchases: £4.99 per week for the subscription can soon mount up. Likewise, if a friend's use of W App is causing your child to be inundated with texts inviting them to sign up too, you could suggest asking that friend to stop selecting your child's name from their contacts list.

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.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/w-app-anonymous-polls/id1845859841> | <https://www.slay.co.uk/>
<https://techcrunch.com/2023/01/18/german-teens-went-crazy-for-this-compliments-app-and-now-vcs-are-backing-its-next-phase/>

[@natonlinesafety](https://twitter.com/natonlinesafety)

[/NationalOnlineSafety](https://www.facebook.com/NationalOnlineSafety)

[@nationalonlinesafety](https://www.instagram.com/nationalonlinesafety)

[@national_online_safety](https://www.tiktok.com/@national_online_safety)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 19.07.2023

There is a lot of help and advice available to help you keep your children safe online. Have a look at the Online Safety section of our website for lots of useful information and links http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/online_safety_for_families/246722. Your child's teacher will also always be happy to talk to you about online safety.

Free School Meals / Pupil Premium

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/>

Registering a child as eligible for free school meals (as described below) means that your child receives a free meal every day (though they can, of course, bring a packed lunch should they prefer) but there are additional benefits too. Pupil Premium brings more money into the school to help children achieve and learn. Children in receipt of the Pupil Premium also receive other benefits (eg contributions towards Key Stage 2 camps and funding to use for uniform, music lessons, trips etc). At some times, there are further benefits for these children such as food vouchers during holiday times where these are given. Please see the Pupil Premium Provision Map in the Pupil Premium section of our website http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/pupil_premium/172518 or speak to Mrs Gill or Mrs Stacey in the office or contact Mrs O'Rourke who leads our Pupil Premium provision.

The easiest and quickest way to apply for free school meals is online through the Cornwall Council website but, if you are unable to do this, you can call the Free School Meals team on 01872 323298 and a member of the team will call you back to complete the application over the phone.

A child is eligible for free school meals if their parent / carer (or the child themselves) receives any of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods

If you are claiming the benefits listed below you are NOT eligible for free school meals, regardless of what other benefits / credits are being claimed:

- Working Tax Credit
- Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and / or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance

NB All Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, regardless of what benefits are being claimed. However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 may also have an entitlement to benefits-related free school meals and it is important to apply for these if you think your child may be eligible.

Registering for free school meals / Pupil Premium is confidential. If you think that your child is eligible, we strongly recommend that you contact Cornwall Council as detailed above. Mrs Gill and Mrs Stacey in the office will also be able to help you and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

DIARY DATES

Monday 24th July	School closed - INSET Day
Tuesday 25th July	School closed - INSET Day
Wednesday 26th July-Sunday 3rd September	Summer holidays - school closed
Monday 4th September	School closed - INSET Day
Tuesday 5th September 8.25am	School opens for Autumn term



Hoorah, the sunshine came back...but how long will it last? I'd rather not say so I shall keep my optimistic fingers crossed and hope for the best. It's possibly going to be incredibly challenging for some of you this summer, making and juggling childcare arrangements, making plans for what to do and entertaining small people for long periods of time can be exhausting.

So once again, please, please, please make sure you have swapped some contact numbers and arrange to meet with each other, not just for the sake of your children but also for yourselves too. I will be back, for 3 days of each week rather than my usual 5, but I will definitely be here for you should you need me. Please take care, please support each other, thank you for our lovely comments and positive feedback, it really does mean a lot to me. Have a good summer, relax as much as possible, enjoy any time off you can get and come back refreshed and ready for the next academic year. Goodbye to all you lovelies who are heading off to secondary with your babes, many of whom I taught when they were teen tiny tackers. No doubt I will see you all at some point and hopefully in the not-too-distant future.

My very best wishes, Mrs D xxxxxx