



# Tavistock College Newsletter



@collegetavi



Dear Families,

When we returned to the College in January - the mornings were dark, the winds were raging and we once again battled with snow. As we head towards the February half term, it feels positively spring-like, with optimism and positivity in the air. Our young people continue to work hard at the College, not only investing in their education but representing the College on our STEM trips, creative arts trips and numerous sporting events of which many have seen some incredible successes. Year 9 have engaged fantastically well with their Options process, and we look forward to sharing confirmation of options in the coming weeks. Our Year 11s are confidently looking forward to the next round of mock exams after the break as they establish their intervention and revision routines ready for the public exams later this year. Our wonderful Year 12 and Year 13 students also continue with their assessments and mock examinations in preparation for later in the year.

Whatever your plans for the half term break are, do please enjoy them and we look forward to welcoming our students back at 0835 on Monday 24 February.

James Buchanan  
Principal

**TAVISTOCK COLLEGE**

**Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust**  
...everyone in our Trust.

**SAFEGUARDING OUR COLLEGE**

If you have any concerns about your own safety, or that of another person, please talk to a member of our team or another adult at our College

 Hazel Blackmore Designated Safeguarding Lead	 James Buchanan Principal	 Jack Brokenshire Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	 Rachel Turner Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Assistant Principal for SEND
 Niall Murphy Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Together House Leader	 Laura Evans Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Care House Leader	 Natasha Ingleby Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Challenge House Leader	 Rachael Squire Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and Excel House Leader
 Dan Jacob Standards Lead for Sixth Form	 Steve Marsh Deputy House Leader	 Sonia Fox Deputy House Leader	 Patrick Trimmer Deputy House Leader
 Trudi Massey Deputy House Leader	 Sophie Champion SEND		

**Whisper**  
Support for young people  
0800 500 5000  
www.whisper.org.uk

**NISPCC HELPLINE**  
0800 500 5000  
www.nispcc.org.uk

**childline**  
0800 1111  
www.childline.org.uk

**mind**  
0800 611 1111  
www.mind.org.uk

**Intercom Trust**  
0800 111 1111  
www.intercomtrust.org.uk

## Holidays aren't happy for everyone

This does not  
appear on  
your phone  
bill



<https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>

If you are concerned for the safety of a child, please report it on  
0345 1071 1071 or call 999 if they are at immediate risk of harm

Together: we care, we challenge, we excel.







# Introducing our House Captains



## Together House

We are the house captains for Together house. We are here to support you during tutor times and to help with any problems you might have.

We will be in your tutor groups once a week but you can come and talk to us anytime if you need. We will be able to help with academic issues and any other problems you would like to speak to somebody about. We look forward to seeing and working with you soon!

## Care House

Hello  
we are your house captains for care house at Tavistock College.

We are very excited to start our roles and look forward to meeting you all and organising some fun house challenges very soon.



## Challenge

Hi everyone! We are so excited to introduce ourselves as the new House Captains for Challenge House! We are taking on this responsibility with great pride and enthusiasm, and we're committed to making our house the best it can be.

As House Captains we will be regularly coming into your tutor groups to support you during tutor as well as leading activities such as sports day and other school events. We can't wait to start working with you!



## Excel House

Hi, we are the new captains for excel house at Tavistock College.

We are very excited to take on these roles and look forward to getting to know the college community. Hopefully we can have a positive impact in the coming term.







# Lost Property



## School Tie Return Plea

Since the start of the September term we have loaned out a great number of ties to students and now find our stocks are much depleted as students have not returned them when they had agreed to do so.

If you come across any extra ties at home over the holiday, particularly the traditional long type (rather than the clip-on ones) and sometimes marked REC on the label, indicating they came from School Reception, we would be very grateful if they could be dropped off at the front reception desk on our return to school after half term.

We have a large store of uniform available at school for students to borrow from, as and when they need to, but this system can only work if borrowed items are returned at the time agreed.

## Lost property

We currently have a large amount of coats in lost property. Please could you take the time to look through the list below and let us know if there is anything that belongs to your child. Please telephone reception or email [a.wyke-smith@dmatschools.org.uk](mailto:a.wyke-smith@dmatschools.org.uk) quoting the reference number relating to the individual item/s you are enquiring about.

Any unclaimed lost property will be sent to charity three weeks after half term, week commencing 24th March 2025.

Many thanks for your support in this and we wish you all a great mid-term break.

Many thanks  
The Reception Team

	Brand	1st Colour	2nd Colour	Size	Type
410	North Face	Black	White	Mens XS	Coat
431	New Look	Moss green		12 to 13	Zip up Jacket
432	Mountain Warehouse	Black	Grey Lining	M	Coat
274	H & M	Dk Green	Fluffy Hood	Euro 40	Coat
433	Urban Outwear	Black	Silver	M	Jacket
435	Mercier	Black (Duvet)	Black	Medium	Coat
436	F & F	Navy Blue	Gold press studs	6	Quilted Coat
437	Mountain Warehouse	Black	Grey Logo	10	Jacket
438	New Look	Black	Black	Large	Coat
439	Hally Hanson	Blue	White logos	M	Jacket
440	DKNY	Black	Black	14-16	Coat
441	Adidas	Black	White Logos	M	Blouson Jacket
442	London England Hoodie	Blue	Silver/Gray	S/M	Sweatshirt
443	Regatta	Black	White logos		Jacket
444	Storm	Black	Gray		Jacket
445	Regatta	Black	Red		Jacket
446	F & F	Black	Silver Zips	M	Heavy Padded Coat
447	Everlast	Black	---	Small	Coat
449	Gill	Light Blue	Inside Blue/Grey		Jacket
450	Spray Way	Light Blue	Darker Blue inside		jacket
452	Saltrock	grey	blue		Coat
454	PRIMARK	Black	Black	XS	Coat
455	Regatta	Black	Red	32	Coat
459	Berschta	Black	Black	Large	Coat
460	England Rugby	Black	Black	Small	Hoodie



# Thank you

## MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE

A huge thank you to ex-student Lewis Cocker-Robinson and the team at the Tavistock branch of Mountain Warehouse, for kindly donating three high quality mannequins to our creative arts department. The family of three were dressed in students' textiles projects as soon as we received them and proudly put on display at our Year 9 options evening.



STANDARD DAY 8.30AM - 4.30PM  
EXTENDED DAY 8.00AM - 6.00PM

2004 AWARDS  
★ BEST CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY PROVIDER IN THE SOUTH WEST  
★ BEST SUMMER CAMP IN SOUTH WEST

AGES 5-12

# GALAXY EXPLORERS

## HALF TERM

### 17TH-21ST FEBRUARY 2025

#### @ MOUNT KELLY PREP SCHOOL

Join High 5's brilliant team for **FIVE** fabulous days of sports, activity, art and fun at their **Galaxy Explorers** themed camp. Enjoy a whole host of amazing Xtra activities which are **ALL** included in the price!

**ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN, ONE GIANT LEAP FOR HIGH 5!**

BOOK NOW @

Ofsted [www.high5sportscamps.co.uk](http://www.high5sportscamps.co.uk)

FIND US ON:

## Seals Locals!

Locals' Annual Pass 2025

Every pass purchased supports the animals in our care...we couldn't do it without you!

Your pass gives you...

- A 30% saving on Standard Admission
- A whole 12 months of **unlimited entry!**
- 20% off in our cafe and gift shop every visit

Exclusively for residents living in **EX, PL & TR** Postcodes\*

Adults: **£16.05** Children: **£13.95**

**BUY NOW SAVE 30%!**

**Limited time offer...**

**DON'T MISS OUT!**

**Only available to buy in FEBRUARY**

Cornish Seal Sanctuary

\*proof of address required on collection





# Together Half Term News

As we reach the end of this half term, we are thrilled to reflect on a fantastic start to the new year. Our school community has been buzzing with energy and enthusiasm, and we have so much to celebrate.

## Highlights of the Term

**Passport to Prom:** Our exciting 'Passport to Prom' initiative is in full swing! Students have numerous opportunities to earn points through participation in various activities. Keep up the great work and aim for that prom night!

## Extra-Curricular Activities:

**Sports Matches:** Our teams have shown incredible spirit and sportsmanship in various matches. Well done to all our athletes!

**Theatre Trips:** Students have enjoyed several enriching theatre trips, experiencing the magic of live performances.

**Euro Disney Trip:** A group of students had a magical time at Euro Disney, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

## Over half term

**Rome Trip:** A selection of year 10s will venture out to Rome, with students exploring the rich history and culture of the city.

## Academic Achievements

**Year 11 Revision Sessions:** Extra revision sessions have been well attended, helping Year 11 students prepare for their upcoming exams.

We are incredibly proud of the hard work and achievements of our students and staff. Let's continue to build on this momentum and make the next half term even more successful!



# Care Half Term News

An absolutely huge round of applause should go to Aoife S and Darcey B for their performance at the Southwest XC Championships on Saturday 1st February. Both raced their best and represented Tavistock College and team Devon with pride. Aoife was a part of the Devon Junior Girls team, who won gold in the team competition. To be selected to represent Devon is an amazing achievement in itself, it is done by qualification and is the culmination of months of hard work and dedication. They are each one of the fastest 10 girls in their age category in Devon.

The past couple of weeks have seen Year 9s taking part in 'Step Up' lessons. This allowed them to have a 'flavour' of subjects at GCSE and especially those subjects that will be new to them in Year 10. Students came away happy stating that they 'really enjoyed it' and that it 'really helped them' with making their decisions. This culminated in their choices being submitted for Wednesday 12 February. The following all won subject specific prizes for their effort and enthusiasm during their Step Up lessons: Dibeh A, Grace R-D, Lottie G, Sam D, Dan O, Joe M, Poppy D and Aoife S. Well done to all Year 9's in CARE house for being such great representatives of us.

This term also sees the start of our revised Student Leadership programme. The following are our House Captains assigned to each of our year groups. Tom B - Year 7, Megan G - Year 8, Bethany C - Year 9, Ben G - Year 10 and Nicolas M - Year 11. The House Captains will be around to introduce themselves over the course of the last week of half term, ready to start working with our student leaders who have volunteered their time and efforts - keep an eye on your emails for more information.

We appreciate that this time of year is rife with bugs and lurgies. Do remember to call the attendance line when your child is too unwell to attend school. Attendance is obviously high on our priorities with a huge drive on Fridays with our Friday Attendance raffle. Remember to collect your ticket in the morning as you arrive from Miss Evans or Mrs Ingleby - you have to be in it to win it!





# Challenge Half Term News

**Ten Tors:** Our adventurous teams have been venturing out upon the blasted heath where wind, snow and rain has not defeated their mighty spirits, even at 7.45 am on a Sunday morning meet. Three teams from years 10, 11 and 12, competing for 35, 45 and 55 miles are charging across the moor in training for the big event Friday May 9th.

**Beauty and the Beast:** The wonderful cast of the show have been tirelessly rehearsing song numbers and dances as a whole cast sometimes three times a week. They are committed and working as a strong crew of performers.

**Blood Brothers theatre trip February 6th 2025 :** The Creative Arts department took 50 students from mainly Year 9 to the Royal Hall for Cornwall to see the famous Blood Brothers. Students thoroughly enjoyed the performance, electrified and thrilled.

**Year 11 Mock exams:** These exams begin Monday February 24th to Friday March 7th. Don't let pressure turn to stress! Prepare and ask questions of your teachers. Use the revision sessions available to you and the resources your teachers have put on Google classroom.

A poster for the Youth Market at Butchers Hall, pinned to a brick wall. The poster is white with a blue border and features colorful text and graphics.

**BH BUTCHERS HALL**

*Come & support a new generation of innovative young entrepreneurs*

**YOUTH MARKET**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March**  
**09.00-16.00**  
**FREE Admission**

**# Building businesses from a new generation**

**Over 20 traders**

**Public vote for best innovative business**

**Mayor's vote for Best Dressed stall**

**NMTF**

**In association with the National Market Traders Federation**

**Tavistock Town Council**  
Supporting young entrepreneurs  
tavistock.gov.uk •





# Excel Half Term News

The first half of the Spring Term has been one of resilience and determination for our students in many ways. At the beginning of the term, they had to navigate challenges such as snow and sleet on their way to and home from college, which they performed excellently. Despite the weather, our Ten Tors training team have been out training in the cold climates and the wind and the mist, showing their dedication to be part of the team. We have seen sporting events taking place including U12-U13 girls' football and cross-country competitions. Our Year 12 students have also had the opportunity to engage in a 'Collapse Curriculum Day', where they explored life beyond the classroom. Workshops focused on essential topics like post-18 options, revision strategies, sustainability, politics, and car safety and maintenance, equipping them with valuable skills for the future. We also had a visit from a Barn Owl, which many students enjoy. Well done to all our Year 9 students for fully engaging in your Step-Up Week. It was great to see so many of you so enthusiastic about picking your options. It's been an exciting and productive term so far, with Excel House students rising to every challenge and making the most of every opportunity – Well done.



Well done to the many students in Excel House whose attendance is at 100%. It is crucial for a student's academic success and overall development. Regularly attending classes ensures that students don't miss out on important lessons, discussions, and assessments that are essential for understanding the subject matter. Consistent attendance fosters better relationships with teachers and classmates, creating a supportive learning environment. It also helps students stay organised, manage their time effectively, and develop a strong work ethic. Missing school frequently can lead to gaps in knowledge, lower grades, and increased stress as students try to catch up. Therefore, maintaining good attendance is key to staying engaged in the learning process and achieving long-term academic goals. If anyone is worried about their attendance, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Excel team.

## Enrichment

Congratulations to Darcey B who recently raced at the Devon School's XC Championships' in Exeter and won a silver medal in the Y7 girls race .





## Plymouth Junior Badminton Tournament Achievements

### Reuben SM

Under 16 boys singles winner  
Under 16 boys doubles winner

### George and Eric

Played really well in the Under 16 boys doubles in their first tournament  
They were the only pair to beat the eventual winners!

### Alana and Hazel

Under 16 girls Alana won the singles with Hazel being the runner up  
They then paired up to successfully win the U16 girls doubles

### Mabel

Under 14 girls doubles winner  
missed out on going through to the U14 girls singles knockout stages (semi-final) by two points.

[Devon Family Hubs Monthly Newsletter - Click below to view](#)



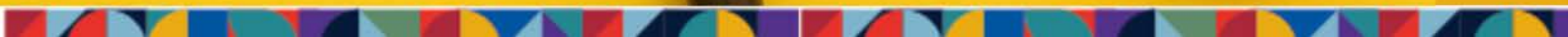
## Governor Vacancies at Tavistock College

Governors play a crucial role in supporting schools, ensuring strong leadership, and helping to shape the future of education for children in our area. As well as being that sounding board for the schools.

TCC currently has 4 vacancies (2 Parent/Pupil, 1 Staff and 1 Community Governor)



Together: we care, we challenge, we excel.





# FRANTIC FRIDAY Meal Deals

## Menu Course Choices

Homemade lasagne served with homemade garlic bread and coleslaw  
(vegetarian option available)

Macaroni cheese with a crispy bacon topping served with baked  
wedges  
(vegetarian option available)

## Dessert Choices

Apple and cinnamon crumble with custard

Homemade cookie dough

Pre ordering via school gateway, by the dates shown below is essential.

All main courses £5.00pp ~ Desserts -£3.00 pp



## Dates available

**Friday 28th February**

Order in by Wed 26h

**Friday 14th March**

Order in by Wed 12th

**Friday 28th March**

Order in by Wed 26th

**Friday 11th April**

Order in by Wed 9th





Together: we care, we challenge, we excel.



### THC vaping information for schools

Recently there has been a lot of media interest in the impacts of vaping on young people, although this has mainly been focused on Nicotine Vapes, we are also aware of concerns being raised within educational establishments of young people accessing and using THC vapes in schools.

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the main psychoactive chemical within cannabis. Reports are finding that some vapes contain no THC at all, but have other synthetically produced cannabinoids such as Spice within them or a mix of both.

Some young people may have much stronger adverse reactions to these vapes which in some cases have resulted in hospital admissions, there is also a possibility of an increase in psychosis symptoms.

Detection of THC in vapes is more difficult than more traditionally smoked cannabis which has a pungent odour making it easier to identify those individuals using it.

Liquid THC vapes look similar to nicotine vapes, they are often nearly odourless, some may even have artificial "flavours" added to them, smelling similar to nicotine vapes, this can make it challenging to identify any individual using them.

Some possible indicators to THC Vape use can include but are not limited to:

- Changes in mood and behaviour
- Red or bloodshot eyes
- Tired or unable to focus on tasks

If you suspect any of your young people are using THC in vapes then please consider referring them to Y-SMART.

**Y-SMART 01392 385637**  
**y-smart@devon.gov.uk**



**We support families who need help with food**

**We help to reduce food waste**

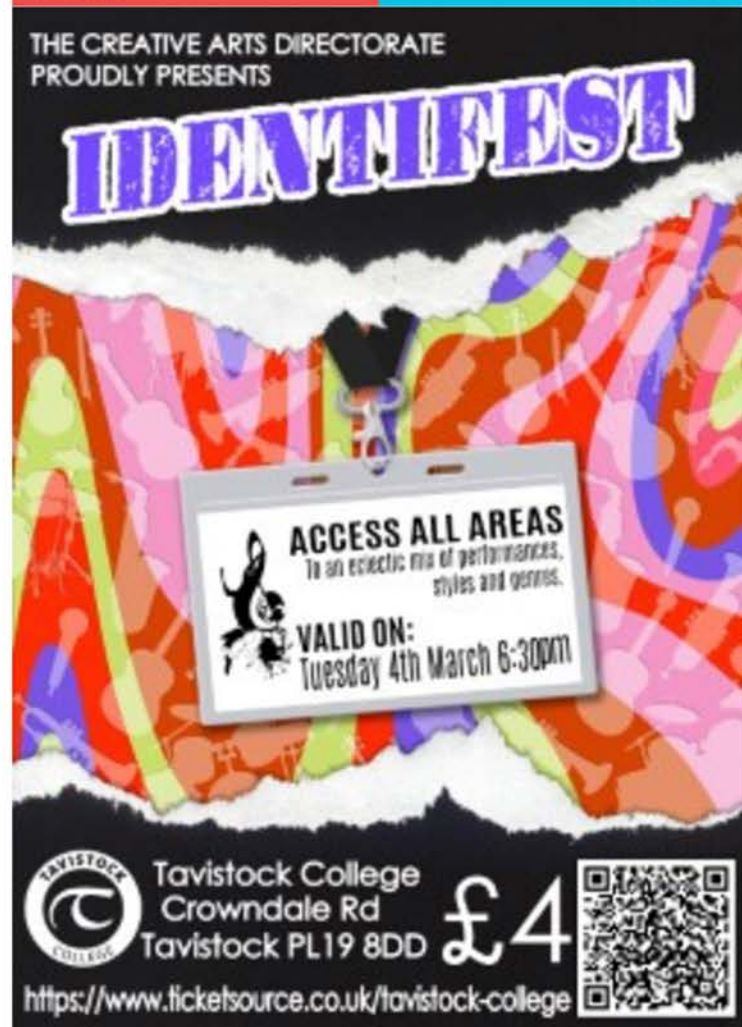
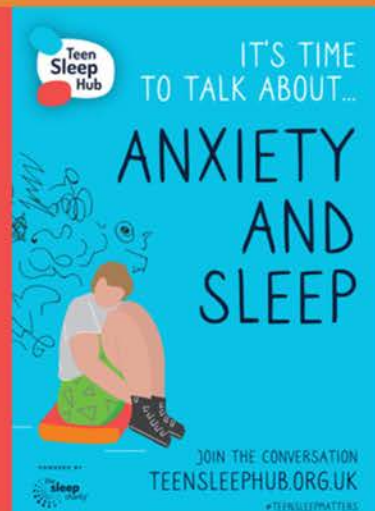
**A £5 donation fills a large bag**

**No questions asked - you're welcome at both of our venues**

**Tavistock Saturday Food Store**  
Saturday mornings - 11-11.45  
Stannary Brewery, Pixon Lane

**Princetown Food Hub**  
Wednesday mornings –  
11.30 -12 noon at Tor Royal Chapel

Contact Graham Parker on 07545 075942  
or by email – graham@tavihelps.co.uk





# Uniform

We are Team Tavi ready and wear our uniform with Pride.

Tavistock College uniform plays an important part in contributing to the ethos and values of the College. Our uniform demonstrates our shared values and identify as part of our school and wider community.

Students who are not in correct uniform will be sanctioned through our Behaviour and Conduct Policy.

Samples of acceptable shoe types are shown on the right, other styles are available. All plain black school shoes and trainers are acceptable, other coloured soles and embellishments are not permitted.



## Tavistock College Uniform

- ✓ Black sweatshirt with Tavistock College badge
- ✓ Tavistock College tie
- ✓ Plain white collared shirt – buttoned to the collar (worn tucked in)
- ✓ Plain black trousers or tailored button waist black shorts
- ✓ Tavistock College tartan skirt

Acceptable trousers	Not-acceptable trousers
Plain black full length tailored trousers, not tight around the ankles School tailored shorts with College logo only available from Fitness for Sports, online	Jeans style trousers eg. heavy cotton, studded trousers Leggings, jeggings, hipsters, tracksuit bottoms, tight skinny legged trousers
Acceptable skirts	Not-acceptable skirts
Tavistock College tartan skirt	No other skirts are acceptable
Acceptable shoes	Not-acceptable shoes
Plain black shoes, trainers with black logo and black sole only	Long boots or 'Ugg' style fur boots
Acceptable outerwear	Not-acceptable outerwear
A coat for outside wear only	Tracksuit tops, hoodies and baseball caps

### Sportswear

PE kit can be purchased from Fitness for Sport and Lawsons  
Tavistock College PE Top  
Tavistock College shorts or skort or leggings  
Black sports socks  
Gum shield for contact sports  
Shin pads for football and hockey

### ITEMS THAT ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Studded boots for use on the astro and the field



# College Equipment

Equipment Requirements - Be Prepared Tavi 7

1. Bare Essentials
2. Reading book
3. Pencil case
4. Blue/black pens
5. Pencils
6. A 30cm ruler
7. A rubber

## Additional items:

- A pair of compasses
- Pencil sharpener
- Scientific calculator
- A protractor
- A set of coloured pencils
- A water bottle

## Parental Communications

We have a number of ways to communicate with our families.



Newsletters are shared 4 times per term. These are sent via email and can also be found on our website.



Classcharts is used to communicate behaviour points, detentions and homework.



Email is used to communicate generic and bespoke information. Staff emails will end in @dmatschools.org.uk



Telephone, calls will be from 01822 614231, staff will always leave a message if the answerphone facility is available.

Time	Activity
0800	College site open for students.
0830 - 0840	Triage support available in House hubs
0840 - 0845	Morning Line-Up - equipment check, uniform check, daily messages and walk in.
0845	Period 1
0945	Period 2
1045 - 1110	Break (20 minutes)
1110 - 1210	Period 3
1210	Period 4
1310 - 1340	KS3 Lunch / KS4 Tutor session
1340 - 1410	KS3 Tutor session / KS4 Lunch
1410	Period 5
1510	End of College day

## Introducing Our SEN Team



### SEND Team 24/25

Assistant Principal - SEND	Rachel Turner
SENDCo	Sophie Champion

SEND Administrator	Sally York
Exams Administrator	Abii Roberts

For general SEND queries, please email:  
[send@tavistockcollege.org](mailto:send@tavistockcollege.org)  
 For enquiries relating to access arrangements, please email:  
[eaq@tavistockcollege.org](mailto:eaq@tavistockcollege.org)

	Years 7, 12 & 13	Year 8 & 9	Years 10 & 11
Assistant SENDCo	Sandy T	Clare Dawe	Sam Biggs
Assistant Teachers	Eleanor Fisher Delia Hayman Andrea Robinson Jimo Siffre Kat Stride	Melissa Fieldsend-Danks Rita Melville Deb Morris Gemma Perkins Abii Roberts Jess Rose	Lucy Barratt-Love Nyssa Davis Justine Hunt Shaunna McGlade



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

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

**AGE RESTRICTION**  
**13+**  
(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app could potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

### BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

### IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

### MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

### ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app: that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

### BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



**#WakeUpWednesday**

**The National College**

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



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

JusTalk Kids is a child's version of the JusTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JusTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

### SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a call; exclusive stickers; a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber; and exclusive ringtones and themes.

### RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or from their own adult JusTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

### KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact: this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

### POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

### CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

### TOO MUCH SCREENTIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 25% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of limiting their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

### DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

### 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.



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

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# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO ROUTINE

Most of us look forward to the school holidays as an opportunity to slow down and relax, stay up later, sleep in and generally approach life in a more leisurely fashion. However, this does mean that returning to normal school-day routines can feel like an uphill battle. Here are some practical tips to ease that transition, reduce stress and set children up for success.

## 1 START SMALL AND EARLY

Begin reintroducing elements of the school routine at least a few days before term starts. Gradually adjust bedtime, wake-up times and mealtimes to be more in line with school-day rhythms. Small changes can make a big difference in avoiding last-minute panic and helping children to readjust smoothly.

## 2 REVISIT THE SCHEDULE

Involve your child in mapping out their daily routine so they understand what's going to change. Visual tools like charts or calendars can help keeping to that schedule feel more engaging. When children understand and anticipate their personal timetable, they feel more secure and in control.

## 3 CREATE A SLEEP PLAN

Sleep can present one of the biggest challenges, as children can sometimes become night owls, prone to staying up late during the holidays. Limit screen time before bed and encourage winding-down activities like reading or listening to calming music. A restful night's sleep improves focus, mood and overall wellbeing, making mornings much smoother.

## 4 ENCOURAGE FRIENDSHIPS

Help your child to reconnect with school friends by organising playdates, catch-ups or arranging to go to after-school clubs. Re-establishing social bonds can make the return to school more exciting and less intimidating, allowing youngsters to focus on the positive aspects of the new term.

## 5 GRANT RESPONSIBILITY

Give children control over some aspects of the morning routine. Maybe they could be in charge of waking everyone up, serving breakfast or choosing the radio station that everyone listens to while getting ready. Something that gives them a sense of ownership over their morning schedule can help them view the task as one they've chosen to do, rather than being told to do it.

## 6 FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Make sure children are receiving balanced meals (with regular healthy snacks to boost energy and concentration), putting them in the best possible state to return to education. A nutritious breakfast is particularly crucial for a positive start to the day. Involve children in meal planning to make it enjoyable and collaborative.

## 7 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Talk with your child about how they're feeling about returning to school: whether they're excited, anxious or a mix of both. Validating their emotions helps them feel supported and understood. Try asking them about the things they're looking forward to at school, such as seeing their friends again. Focusing on the positives can be useful for children struggling with change.

## 8 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

Ease children back into a learning mindset by incorporating fun, educational activities into their home life. Reading a favourite book, playing games that involve maths or discussing an interesting topic can gently reawaken their focus and prime their minds to learn, which can have helpful impacts on their academic performance.

## 9 PREP TOGETHER

Turn preparation into a shared activity, to shoulder the responsibility together and provide support where needed. Pack school bags, lay out uniforms and plan lunch the night before. This not only reduces early morning stress but also gives children a sense of ownership over being ready for school.

## 10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

Transitions take time, and every child adjusts differently: so, it's important to stay calm and supportive, especially if they're reacting adversely to the change in their daily life. Be ready to tweak routines as needed, and work with the child to make the return to education as easy as possible for them. Patience can go a long way to setting a positive tone for the new school year.

## Meet Our Expert

Becky Dawson is an education expert with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Passionate about empowering adults who spend time with and care for young people, Becky specialises in creating practical strategies that promote wellbeing and resilience in children during life's transitions.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/supporting-children-to-return-to-routine>

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