



16th January 2026

Dear Parents/carers

Many thanks to all families that joined the year 9 Subject evening appointments last night. These occasions give you a real insight into the current strengths being seen in a number of subjects and the areas for development. This subject evening is particularly pertinent for this year group, given they begin the Guided Choices process next week – selecting which optional subjects they would like to take through into Key Stage 4. An outline of the events to support students in these choices is outlined below

Tuesday 20 th January	8.30am	Guided Choices Launch Assembly in school for students
Thursday 22 nd January	5pm – 7pm	Y9 Guided Choices Evening in school where students and parents are invited to have face to face discussions about courses on offer
Thursday 12 th February	3pm	Deadline for submission of Guided Choices Application Forms

The Guided Choices Evening on Thursday will give students and parents the opportunity to discuss the different subjects on offer with subject teachers. This will take place in school, face to face, and also features a presentation to parents about how the Guided Choices process works and what subjects the students can select. There is no need to book a place on the Guided Choices Evening and students and parents are free to drop in as they wish. There are two presentations in the Auditorium starting at 5.30pm for Dragon and Griffin Houses and 6.30pm for Phoenix and Unicorn Houses. If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) there will be an opportunity to discuss the Unit Award Scheme as an alternative option during the evening, time to be confirmed. This will take place in the Resource Base with our SENCO, Mrs Melody Cole. We look forward to welcoming our year 9 families next week.

Other messages for the week can be found below:

Re-set and Refresh

Mr Graffagnino has been into each House assembly this week outlining some new plans as part of our January Re-set and Refresh. Following comments from student voice in term 2 the following will be in place from Monday 19th January:

- Students are not expected to congregate outside the toilets and signs are in place to remind students of this. This has been actioned as some students have said they have felt uncomfortable using the toilet during the school day as large groups of older students are standing in these areas. We are sure that the students involved are not intentionally trying to make students uneasy, but clearing that area will allay any perceived issues.



- Students are expected to be 'social' in social times. Any student that is running inside the building, shouting/swearing or seen pushing/shoving/placing hands on other students will be immediately be sent to timeout. This will take place in room 132 and the student will spend the remainder of that social time supervised by a member of the pastoral team. The number of occasions a student is visiting timeout will be monitored and further action taken if needed.

In addition to this, again in response to student voice, Mr Graffagnino has outlined our further plans which include

- Purchasing more benches which will be placed in the atrium, providing an additional 100 seated areas for students to use at break and lunch
- Assessing which stairwells across the site will be identified for only up and down access at the busiest times, ensuring they are less overwhelming to navigate for students
- Consulting with students and families on a change to the uniform which would be moving away from a shirt and tie to a polo shirt.

Contact from First Bus regarding conduct on X7 bus

As a reminder within our school behaviour policy if students are clearly identified as being anti-social whilst travelling to and from school we can still apply behaviour sanctions. Disappointingly I was contacted by First Bus this week to pass on a complaint they received from a member of the public regarding the behaviour of the students using this service. The report included other bus users being sworn at/called names, barging into elderly travellers, refusing to move bags on seats identified for disabled users and littering. Although I am certain only a very small minority of students are involved in such activities, this has left this member of the public with a very negative impression of our school. First Bus have also asked me to share with families that if the conduct of participants do cause disruption and unrest to others on the service, the driver reserves the right to ask those involved to leave the service (see Section 6 of the Conditions of Travel found in full at [Conditions of travel | First Bus](#) for further information). Thank you in advance for reiterating expectations of conduct on the X7 if your child does use this service.

Contact from the public regarding conduct on the trains

It was reassuring to hear from a member of the public reporting they had observed a large group of students accessing the train at the end of the day from Nailsea and Backwell Station through to Yatton and on to Worle and Weston. Students were praised for their excellent behaviour on the platform and on the train itself and the member of public was impressed that despite such a large group there was no loud noise with students clearly knowing how to conduct themselves. Please do pass on this praise if you know your child was part of this group catching the train as their positive behaviour is very much appreciated.

IGNITE programme

As mentioned in the recent letter sent home, the bookings for the packages in our summer IGNITE programme will close on Monday 19th January. Further details can be found on our website <https://www.nailseaschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/IGNITE-Programme-2026-1.pdf>



As has been recognised by some parents that have made contact, a huge amount of work has gone into preparing events for the summer in this new format. As with any event, in school or in wider society, where there are a finite number of spaces available for certain packages there will always be some people who are disappointed. Thank you for your understanding that within the planning of this week there are certain parameters that we cannot control or change.

Wessex Learning Trust Catering Survey

The Wessex Learning Trust are conducting a survey across all 23 schools evaluating the current catering provision. The QR code, as a way of accessing the survey can be found on the attachment. As you may know we have our own team of in house caterers meaning, and if you have some time over the weekend, it would be great if you could complete the survey. Thanks, in advance.

Safer Internet Day 2026 – 10th February

As part of our commitment to promoting safe and responsible use of technology, we will be celebrating Safer Internet Day 2026 which takes place on 10th February this year. This year's theme is "Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI." With AI becoming an increasingly significant part of children's online experiences, it is vital that we equip our students with the skills and confidence to navigate smart technology safely.

To mark this important day, the Wessex Learning Trust is launching a **poster design competition** across all 23 schools. The aim is to engage pupils creatively while raising awareness about safe technology use. The hope is to select at least 10 winning posters from across the age groups. The winning posters will be shared across all schools to celebrate and promote Safer Internet Day. It would be great to have some entries from students here at Nailsea. Key details are:

- Submit your A4 Portrait Entries to Mrs Watts, Assistant to SLT, who is based outside Mrs Elliott's office. These will need to be handed in by 9am on Monday 19th January.
- Please ensure each poster includes the student's **first name, age and school** for identification.

Finally... one film I can watch over and over again is the original 'Rocky'. The story of a poor small-time club fighter and loan-shark debt collector from Philadelphia who gets an unlikely 'once in a lifetime' shot at the heavyweight championship held by Apollo Creed is an absolute winner for me – even though I can't actually ever stomach watching a real boxing match. There is no doubt the writing and the musical score are a key combination in getting the audience to cheer for the underdog and this week I have very much empathised with that feeling.

Working in schools, as is widely publicised, is an increasingly challenging choice to make, given the additional expectations and demands of staff in every role in the building. Some comments and conversations this week have been particularly difficult for a number of staff whom, in essence, are just coming to work every day trying to do the very best they can. We know some topics and conversations can be emotive for families but I would ask that when contacting the school, you are mindful that you are emailing and speaking to other human beings and treat them as such. We might not always get it right every time, but please be assured that it is not for the want of trying. I value hugely the importance of the relationship between school and home in ensuring the best outcomes



for children here and a key part of this being a successful partnership is through being honest and transparent, but also kind.

As Rocky says 'Nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But it ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can hit and keep moving forward; how much you can take and keep moving forward'. I have the privilege of working with an amazing set of staff and we will do just that next week, continuing to try our very best every day for you and your children.

Have a lovely weekend



Dee Elliott,

Head teacher

