



24th April 2026

Dear Parents/carers

As we return to school for the summer term, it has been a pleasure to welcome students back and see the calm, purposeful way they have re-engaged with their learning. We have been particularly impressed with the focus, creativity and resilience shown by students completing their Art and Textiles practical examinations. Their professionalism, sustained concentration and pride in their work strongly reflect our school ethos of Aspire, Believe and Succeed — aspiring to do their best, believing in their abilities, and succeeding through commitment and effort.

This week has also marked the first week of our behaviour adjustments, as outlined to parents last term. These changes are designed to ensure that every minute in lessons counts and that there is no lost learning time. We are pleased to report that there has been a positive start, with students responding well and classrooms remaining calm and purposeful. We would like to thank parents and carers for your support in reinforcing our expectations and helping students arrive each day ready to learn. Feedback on this trial will be sought at the end of Term 5 as part of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement.

At the time of writing this letter, students and staff are also undertaking their Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition on Dartmoor. During the expedition, students will be planning and undertaking a demanding multi-day journey, navigating unfamiliar terrain while carrying all their equipment and working independently as a team. This will be not just be a physical challenge but groups will also have the pressure of making decisions together as well as demonstrating maturity, perseverance and responsibility. What makes this particularly impressive is that the Gold expedition is just one part of a long-term programme that also includes volunteering, skill development, physical activity and a residential experience. Completing it shows determination, self-discipline and a willingness to step well beyond comfort zones. I look forward to hearing about the expedition next week.

There are lots of other activities taking place this term and students can find their termly update here <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/vMQwAGt7LKLvRGMI?ref=Link>

Other messages for the week can be found below:

School Uniform Update

We are aware that a number of parents and carers have raised concerns regarding the quality of the new polo shirts, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to share your feedback. We understand that school uniform represents a significant investment for families, and it is important that items are durable, comfortable and good value for money.



I value the strong partnership our school has with parents and carers and am always grateful when families take the time to share concerns, questions or feedback with us. Open communication helps us understand issues fully and respond appropriately in the best interests of our students. I particularly appreciated those parents who contacted me directly over the break via email, as this allowed for a constructive exchange and the opportunity to explain the wider context in full.

In response to commentary on social media, a large number of the new polo shirts have been returned to the supplier unopened. These returns were made as a direct reaction to the publicly shared concerns rather than to identified faults in the garments themselves. Since returning on Monday, our discussions with the supplier have not indicated any widespread quality issues, and many students are wearing the polo shirts comfortably and successfully in school. Many have specifically spoken positively about the increased levels of comfort, which inevitably supports learning, focus and concentration in school.

Whilst I recognise that social media can feel like a quick way to share views, comments made publicly can sometimes heighten situations, spread incomplete information and make it more difficult to resolve concerns effectively. Social media does not always allow for the nuance or clarity required when discussing matters related to a school community. I do, however, remain fully committed to listening to parents and working together positively.

As parents will know, although it was a non school uniform day for students today, I took the decision to reverse this trend and wear one of the polo shirts around school all day. Needless to say this did cause some amusement on the door this morning. On a serious note, me feeling comfortable in wearing the shirt around my workplace reflects the complete suitability of them for a school environment.

To support this view, in our communications this week with the uniform company, they have confirmed that the manufacturer supplying the new polo shirts provides garments to hundreds of schools nationwide, with thousands of shirts currently in use, and they have never received similar concerns regarding quality. For example one staff member has confirmed the exact same shirt is the expected uniform at her local school in a very large multi academy trust.

We fully recognise the concerns raised by a minority of parents and carers in our own school community which we have been discussing with the uniform company. Following investigation the summary of their feedback is as follows:

Quality of Garment

Our supplier has sold 350,000 of their White polos in the last 12 months. 25,000 of these have been the tipped polo that Nailsea School are supplied. The return rate is 1 in every 10,000 Polos and is usually for sizing errors etc. They have received no feedback from any other school or uniform retailers regarding them being too thin or of a poor quality



Comparison to other Polos

You are correct that the material composition of a comparable polo from another local school is slightly different. The version we supply is slightly softer on the skin. With regards to pricing some of the comments on Social Media don't seem to be comparing like for like. Our smaller sizes are £10.50 no vat, and our sizes from 14 years and over are £12.60 inc vat (14 is the age break for when we have to charge VAT). Another local school's equivalent prices are £12.25 for smaller sizes and £14.45 for large sizes - they are more expensive as they have a badge which adds extra cost. Nailsea chose not to have this to keep the cost as low as possible

Alternative supplier

We have 1 other supplier that produces tipped polos. They are pretty much identical to the current version you have, but they do not stock a version with amber stripes (Phoenix). The price would go up as they are being manufactured to order rather than being off the shelf.

We appreciate your patience while we conducted this review and your continued support. Given the additional work and research that has taken place this week, I am confident that our existing suppliers comply with our uniform standards and expectations. As previously mentioned, polo shirts can be worn this term and will be compulsory from September 2026 for all students apart from Year 11 who have the choice to wear them.

Your Space

The next drop in session for parents and carers will take place on Tuesday 28th April from 9.00 and the focus this week is SEND.

Reminder regarding Upcoming Vaccinations – Year 9

Parents/carers are required to give their consent for the upcoming Meningococcal ACWY and Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio vaccinations. These are happening on 14th May and the consent link is here: <https://imms.sirona-cic.org.uk/dtp/2025/consent?v=2>

Attendance Focus: Every Percentage Point Counts

As we begin the summer term, we are renewing our focus on improving attendance — one percentage point at a time. Our whole-school attendance target this year is 94%, and reaching this consistently is essential for students' academic progress, wellbeing and long-term success.

Regular attendance supports strong learning routines, positive relationships with peers and staff, and the self-discipline needed as students progress towards examinations, further education and employment. As subject content becomes more demanding, even short periods of absence can quickly lead to gaps in learning, increased pressure and reduced confidence.

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We are pleased to share the attached attendance information, which shows the progress made during Term 4. These improvements reflect the collective efforts of students, families and staff. Any acknowledgement of attendance is linked to students being in school when they are expected to be here, and we recognise that for some students there are authorised and unavoidable reasons for absence. Our focus remains on maximising learning time wherever possible and supporting students to attend whenever circumstances allow.

Looking ahead, Term 5 is just 25 school days long, which means every day really does count. This is a valuable opportunity for students to be in their seat, on time, every day they are expected to attend, and to build or maintain a positive attendance pattern. Consistency across these 25 days can make a significant difference to individual attendance figures and overall outcomes.

Our expectation remains that students attend school every day unless they are genuinely unwell or have an authorised reason for absence. We will continue to work in partnership with families to support good attendance, recognise improvements where attendance is expected, and address any barriers early. Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us move closer to, and beyond, **our 94% attendance target, ensuring all students are given the best possible opportunity to succeed.**

Rewards and Recognition Fund

As a school, we are committed to recognising and celebrating students who demonstrate our ethos of Aspire, Believe, Succeed — whether through academic effort, positive behaviour, improved attendance, resilience or personal progress.

Like many schools nationally, we are operating in a context where funding is increasingly tight, which limits the range of rewards and recognition we can currently offer. During student voice activities in Term 4, pupils told us that while recognition is important to them, they would value a greater variety of meaningful rewards that acknowledge both achievement and improvement. Many of these ideas cannot be fully resourced in the current financial climate.

In response, we are launching a voluntary Rewards Fund, which will be used exclusively to enhance how we recognise and celebrate students. Contributions to this fund would allow us to introduce a wider range of rewards, such as:

- Subject-based or whole-school reward events
- Certificates, badges or branded recognition items
- Reward experiences (for example, celebration activities or end-of-term rewards)
- Tutor group or year group incentives linked to effort, attendance or behaviour
- Enhanced recognition for sustained improvement, not just high attainment



Contributions to the Rewards Fund will be collected through the MCAS app, where parents and carers will be able to make a secure, straightforward payment. Further details will be shared shortly to guide families on how to access this option.

Any contribution, no matter how small, would make a meaningful difference. We would like to reassure families that contributions are entirely voluntary, and all students will continue to be recognised and supported regardless of whether parents are able to contribute.

Thank you for your continued support and for working in partnership with us to ensure every student feels valued, recognised and proud of their achievements.

Year 11 and 13 Leaving Arrangements

Year 13 Leavers Week will run from Tuesday 5th May - Friday 8th May, with students expected to attend all lessons up until lunchtime on Thursday 7th May.

Subject revision sessions following this week will be coordinated by curriculum areas and communicated to students and parents/carers through Bromcom.

Year 11 Study leave will begin on Friday 8th May 2026 at 3pm. Students are able to attend their usual lessons the following week (w/c 11th May 2026) in between their exams, but this is optional and they are able to sign out at reception following exams.

From Monday 18th May 2026, lessons will not continue to run, but some subjects will run study sessions, and details of this will be sent home in advance from curriculum areas.

We will celebrate Year 11 leavers' day on Friday 22nd May 2026.

- There is a GCSE PE exam scheduled for the morning
- If your child does not take GCSE PE, they should arrive in school at 11:30am for an assembly starting at 11:45am in the Auditorium.
- Shirt signing and year groups celebration will follow the assembly, with students leaving school by lunchtime (1:20pm).

Finally... although clearly not the target demographic, over the Easter break, I had the opportunity to watch *The Magic Faraway Tree*, a story enjoyed by generations and one that continues to carry powerful messages for young people today. Beyond the sense of adventure and imagination, the story reminds us of the importance of kindness, courage and resilience, as well as the value of embracing change and learning from new experiences.

At its heart, the story encourages curiosity, cooperation and belief in oneself — themes that strongly align with our school ethos of *Aspire, Believe and Succeed*. As the story itself reminds us, *"You never*



know what is going to happen next,” and it is how the characters face uncertainty, support one another and rise to challenges that shapes their journey and growth.

As we move through the summer term, this feels like a timely reminder of the importance of imagination, perseverance and positive relationships. Thank you, as always, for your continued support and for working in partnership with us to nurture these values in our young people.

Have a lovely weekend



Dee Elliott,
Head teacher

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