



MAPLEWELL NEWSLETTER

Preparing for Adulthood



BTEC Performing Arts Show

We are excited to announce that this year, the Performing Arts BTEC students will be presenting Jack and the Beanstalk!

Due to the fantastic number of students involved and limited seating, the performance will take place over two evenings, Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th March, starting at 6:30 pm.

Tickets will be priced at £6 each and will be available via ParentPay soon.

Please note that ticket priority will be given to Y10 & Y11 parents and carers only whose child is completing BTEC performing arts course. Additional tickets may be released at a later date if available.

Thank you for your continued support—we look forward to seeing you there!



Student Success

We are thrilled to celebrate the incredible achievements of Kellam, who has recently been accepted into the prestigious Paralympic Academy, marking a significant step toward his journey to the Paralympic Games. Currently ranked number one in the world in his sport, Kellam exemplifies dedication, perseverance, and excellence both on and off the field. His hard work and determination inspire our entire school community, and we can't wait to cheer him on as he continues to pursue his dreams on the global stage. Congratulations, Kellam!





Maplewell Hall Post 16 Young Enterprise - CAN

As part of the Young Enterprise programme, our company, Maple Crafts, decided to do something for the local community. Each tutor team engaged in a business discussion to explore their options and ultimately decided to produce four pieces of artwork to be presented to the wards at Coalville Hospital.

Every student on the Team Programme contributed to producing one square, on which they hand-painted a design. The artwork involved many skills, such as hand and machine sewing, stencilling, painting, and framing. On Friday, 10th January 2025, the students from 5LFL attended the hospital. They were given a short tour by the hospital staff and had the opportunity to discuss how each piece of art was created. The students were exceptionally descriptive when explaining the process and all demonstrating their awareness of different surroundings.

The photo shows Coalville Hospital staff being presented with the four individual pieces of art, each of which will be placed in a different ward.

If you happen to be visiting the hospital, please take a look at the artwork and congratulate the students and staff who were involved in this project.



MAP Rand Farm Residential

WOW, another successful trip to Rand Farm! Staff and students ventured out to the countryside of Lincolnshire on Wednesday, 22nd January 2025, and stayed at the working farm for the next three days, taking part in many activities, including farm jobs—morning and evening (and yes, everybody took part and mucked in!). Students worked hard to earn their morning breakfast and evening meal, ensuring they had cleaned the animals' homes and that they were well-fed and looked after.

During our three days, we also learnt a lot about life on the farm, including the animals and how to care for them, crops and plants. We had the chance to meet them all from the goats, pigs, horses, and chickens to guinea pigs. We made carrot cakes from the farm's own-grown ingredients, pavlova (meringue) from the farm's eggs, and pizzas too. Not only did we get to eat everything we made, but we also had delicious meals cooked each day, including a super yummy roast dinner and spaghetti bolognese.

After all this hard work, some fun was needed to be had! Each evening, we had the chance to play in the massive soft play area, often teaming up—staff against students. Who do you think got caught the most? Finally, bedtime offered a chance to chill with a drink and biscuit and talk about the day and the fun we had all had.

Staff and students had the best time, and we can't wait already for next year!





The 10 Keys to Healthy Eating:

As we approach the end of January (how did that happen?), it's a good time to pause and reflect. The month of fresh starts, gym selfies, and abandoned resolutions is nearly behind us. If you're still sticking to yours, well done. If not, no judgement—it's never too late to reset and focus on habits that actually stick.

Speaking of resets, I had the pleasure of meeting some of the wonderful parents at Post 16 during last Thursday's coffee morning. It was such a joy to chat with them and share a few of my creations—sweet potato brownies, cranberry orange and cacao energy balls, and an apple and blackberry oat bar topped with yoghurt. (For those curious, the oat bar's yoghurt topping works wonders in preventing glucose spikes. Food should work with us, not against us, right?)

What really stood out during our conversation was the genuine interest in the healthy meals I provide for the students. It was heartening to see so much positivity and encouragement around the nourishment their young adults are receiving. Those moments remind me why I'm so passionate about this work: healthy eating isn't just about food—it's about equipping our students with the energy, focus, and resilience they need to thrive.

So, whether you're thinking about your own January goals or looking to make small but meaningful changes for your family, I've pulled together 10 science-backed principles to guide you. These aren't about perfection or going cold turkey on everything you love—they're about balance, flavour, and food that makes you feel good (inside and out).

1. Start Your Day Savoury

Sugary cereals and toast drowning in jam might give you a quick buzz, but by mid-morning, you'll be feeling as deflated as a soufflé in a windstorm. Swap the sugar rush for a savoury, protein-packed breakfast to keep you full and focused.

Ideas to try:

- Eggs—poached, scrambled, or baked with greens.
- Chia pudding or a handful of nuts and seeds.
- Savoury porridge topped with sautéed veg.

2. Love Your Fruits and Veggies

Aim for 800g of fruit and veg a day. Variety is key—each colour brings its own health benefits. And, no, juice doesn't count as fruit. Whole fruit is the real MVP, thanks to all that lovely fibre.

3. Embrace the Good Fats

Fat isn't the enemy—it's your brain's best mate. Good fats like olive oil, avocados, walnuts, and flaxseeds are essential for brain health and reducing inflammation. Avoid the sneaky ones hiding in processed snacks.

4. Slow Down and Chew

You're not in an eating contest, so slow down. Chewing properly aids digestion, prevents overeating, and helps you savour your meal. Plus, your jaw could use the workout!

5. Load Up on Antioxidants

Antioxidants tackle ageing, inflammation, and disease. You'll find them in berries, greens, turmeric, and dark chocolate (at least 70% cocoa—indulgence, not sugar overload).

6. Practice Mindful Eating

Turn off the TV, put the phone down, and stop multitasking. Eating mindfully helps you tune in to hunger signals and makes food way more enjoyable. Trust me, Instagram can wait.

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The 10 Keys to Healthy Eating:

7. Watch the Salt

Salt sneaks into almost everything, especially processed foods. Cooking from scratch is your best defence. Taste before seasoning and use fresh herbs, spices, and citrus instead.

8. Go Plant-Based for Dinner

Meat is great for energy during the day, but for dinner, try plant-based meals. Lentils, chickpeas, and quinoa are protein-packed and easier on digestion before bedtime. Magnesium-rich foods like almonds or dark chocolate promote relaxation.

9. Low and Slow Cooking

High-heat cooking isn't doing your health (or your food) any favours. Low and slow methods—like steaming or poaching—preserve nutrients and avoid harmful compounds.

10. Choose Raw and Unprocessed

Ultra-processed foods are trouble—full of additives, low on nutrients, and bad for gut health. Stick to whole, raw ingredients with simple ingredient lists. Yes, making things from scratch takes time, but it's worth it.

Final Thoughts

Whether it's a sweet potato brownie at a coffee morning or a simple shift to more unprocessed foods, small changes can lead to big results. Let's move past fleeting resolutions and focus on habits that last. Here's to ending January strong, feeling good, and maybe even looking forward to February.

Cheers,

Trevor The Unrefined Chef

PS: If you're tempted to reach for a mid-afternoon snack, try an energy ball. It's the closest thing to a chocolate truffle that won't send your blood sugar soaring!



Safeguarding Information

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we progress into the new year, our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students remains paramount. This month's newsletter safeguarding message focuses on key safeguarding topics and provides resources to support our school community.

Online Safety

With the increasing use of digital platforms, it's essential to educate children about online safety. The NSPCC offers valuable resources to help parents guide their children in navigating the internet securely. Their "Talk PANTS" campaign provides simple conversations to help keep your child safe from abuse.

NSPCC Learning

Parents can also find information and resources at The National College to help gain the confidence and skills to have age-appropriate, informed discussions with children to keep them safe, healthy and resilient to life beyond the school gates.

<https://nationalcollege.com/parents>

Mental Health Awareness

Promoting mental health is crucial for our students' overall well-being. Young Minds offers downloadable resources to help parents with children and young people to create an open, supportive culture around mental health.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/>

For parents of students taking exams at the end of the year, the NHS has useful advice.

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-beat-exam-stress>

Preventing Bullying

The school works really hard to make Maplewell a safe space for everyone, but preventing bullying requires a proactive approach from parents to help their children develop confidence, empathy, and strong communication skills. Here are some practical steps parents can take:

1. Foster Open Communication

Talk Regularly: Encourage your child to share their day, feelings, and concerns. A supportive, non-judgmental environment helps them feel safe in discussing sensitive topics.

Teach Assertiveness: Help your child practice how to stand up for themselves in a calm, confident manner. Phrases like "I don't like that, stop it" can be empowering.

2. Build Resilience

Encourage Self-Esteem: Praise their efforts, not just achievements, to foster confidence.

Teach Emotional Regulation: Discuss ways to handle stress or anger and recognize when to walk away from negative situations.

3. Monitor Online Activity

Digital Safety: Educate your child about online etiquette and privacy. Ensure they know not to share personal information or respond to hurtful messages.

Parental Controls: Use tools to monitor and limit access to apps or platforms that may expose them to bullying.

4. Educate About Empathy

Teach kindness and understanding, helping them see the importance of treating everyone with respect. Encourage them to include others who might feel left out.

5. Build a Strong Support Network

Friendships: Help your child nurture healthy friendships that provide emotional support.

School Involvement: Stay engaged with teachers and staff, ensuring they know to intervene if bullying arises.

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Safeguarding Information

6. Recognize Signs of Bullying

Be alert to changes in mood, appetite, or behavior that may signal bullying. Early detection allows for quicker intervention.

If bullying occurs, report it to the school immediately and collaborate with staff to resolve the situation effectively.

Upcoming Events

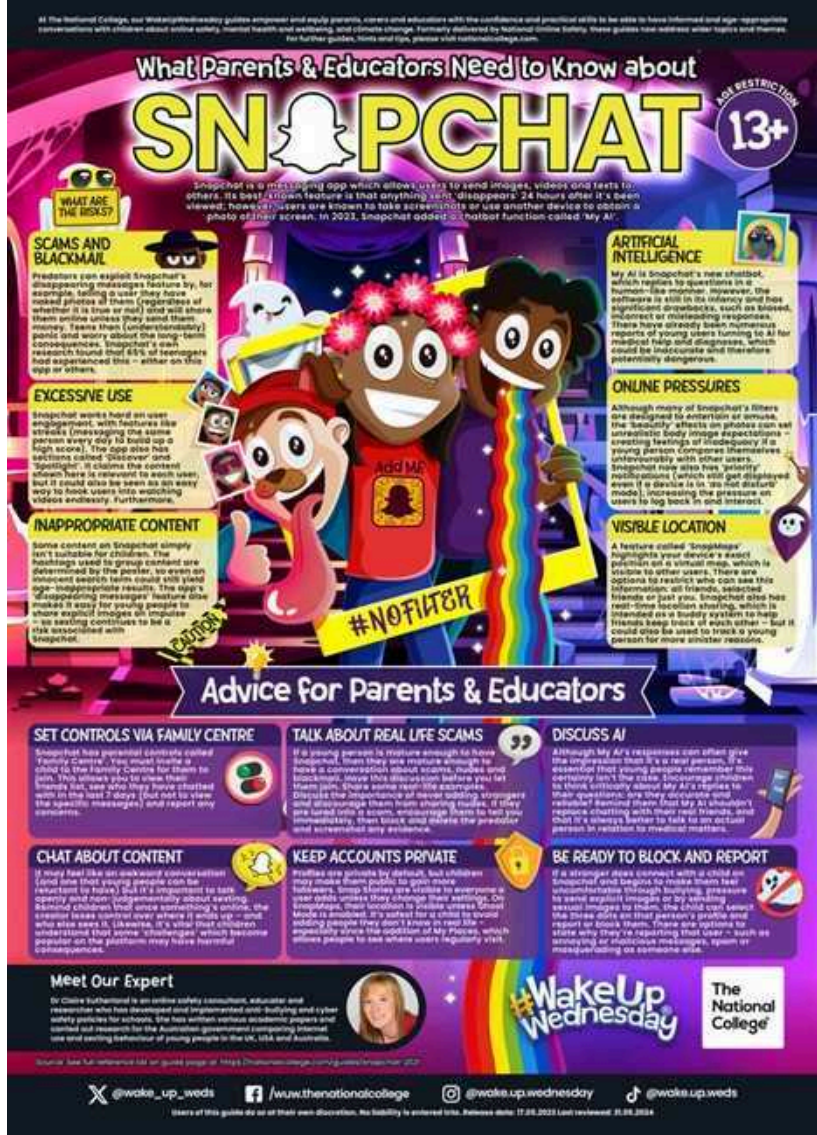
- **Safer Internet Day:** Celebrated on February 11th, this day promotes the safe and positive use of digital technology. The UK Safer Internet Centre offers resources and activities to engage children in discussions about online safety.
- **Mental Health Awareness Week:** Taking place from February 18th to 24th, this week focuses on raising awareness about mental health issues. Schools and parents can access materials to support children's mental well-being during this period.

Policy Updates

We continually review our safeguarding policies to ensure they reflect current guidelines and best practices. Our latest policies are available on the school website for your reference.

Contact Information

If you have any concerns or need further information on safeguarding matters, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Cooper, our Designated Safeguarding Lead: 01509 890237 or DSL@maplewell.leics.sch.uk



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SNAPCHAT (Age Restriction 13+)

SNAPCHAT is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed, however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a 'hotbot' function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS AND BLACKMAIL
Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages feature by, for example, luring a user they have noted private to them (regardless of whether it is true or not) and will share them online unless they send them money. Teens then (understandably) panic and worry about the long-term consequences. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – either on the app or others.

EXCESSIVE USE
Snapchat makes hard an user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has features called 'discover' and 'spotlight'. It claims the content often has to be relevant to the user but it could also be seen as an easy way to look users into viewing videos endlessly, furthermore.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT
Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's disappearing messages feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images or language – so saving contacts to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
My AI is Snapchat's new hotbot, which reacts to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES
Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'sociality' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavorably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'gallery' recommendations (which still get displayed even if a device is in the 'hot bot' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION
A feature called 'Snapmaps' highlights your device's actual position on a virtual map, which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information; all friends, selected friends or just you. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a safety system to help friends keep track of each other – but it could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CONTROLS VIA FAMILY CENTRE
Snapchat has parental controls called 'Family Centre', you must create a child in the Family Centre for them to join. This allows you to check content on their friends list, see who they have shared with, the specific messages they receive and report any concerns.

TALK ABOUT REAL LIFE SCAMS
If a young person is mature enough to have Snapchat, then they are mature enough to have a conversation about scams, raffles and lockdown. Move the conversation before they get into a scam. Share a scam with the school. Discuss the importance of never sharing money and encourage them from sharing images. If they are hacked, they should report to you immediately, then block and delete the profile and screenshot any evidence.

DISCUSS AI
Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's your doctor, it's essential that young people remember this is certainly not a real doctor. Encourage children to think critically about My AI's replies to relevant questions. Don't let children's reliance on AI replace their own judgement and encourage them to talk to an adult person in relation to medical matters.

CHAT ABOUT CONTENT
If they feel the an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have), feel empowered to talk openly and non-judgmentally about sexting. Reassure children that once something is online, the content stays online even when it's deleted – and that once it's there, it's not their responsibility to understand that some 'anonymous' posts become popular on the platform may have harmful consequences.

KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE
Most apps default to public, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Stop children in their tracks if you notice a user adds unless they change their settings. On Snapchat, their location is visible to their 'Close Friends' list. It's safest for a child to avoid adding anyone they don't know in real life – unless you're the parent of My Place, which allows people to see where users frequently visit.

BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT
If a stranger does contact with a child on Snapchat and begs to make them feel uncomfortable or to share images or videos, they should report it to the app. Encourage them to think about why they're reporting that user – such as harassing or inappropriate messages, spam or inappropriate or offensive content.

Meet Our Expert
Dr Claire Buchanan is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber-safety policies for schools. She has also conducted pioneering research and written the research for the Australian government's comprehensive guide and setting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

WakeUp Wednesday
The National College

Source: See the original link on page 4 of: <https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/parents/parents-2023>

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Developing Literacy Skills at Maplewell

We know that developing literacy skills is essential in order for our students to be successful at Maplewell and in their lives outside of school. It can be difficult to know how to support them with developing these skills at home, so to support with this, [here is a link to our monthly literacy newsletter](#). Once a month we will share what students have been focusing on in reading time, as well as suggestions for things you can do together at home.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact me via email: k.durrands@maplewell.leics.sch.uk

Mrs Durrands
Head of English

Sparx Leaderboard

Sparx Reader		Sparx Maths	
1	Marcus W	1	Danyal M
2	Martha P	2	Cameron W
3	Lacey C	3	Aaron F
4	Summer W	4	Jibraeel D
5	Elijah W	5	Izzy S
6	Rocco M	6	Estelle B
7	Tyrion S	7	Samuel E
8	Chloe C	8	Alfie S
9	Sanjana T	9	Ruby R
10	Louis Go	10	Luke C

News & Information



In July 2025, a herd of magnificent Elephant sculptures will be stampeding into the city of Leicester, as part of a spectacular public art trail, raising vital funds for LOROS Hospice. To mark LOROS' 40th anniversary in 2025, 40 gentle giants will journey into Leicester's streets, parks and open spaces, forming a jumbo trail of Elephant sculptures across the city.

Each Elephant will be sponsored by a business and beautifully designed by a talented artist to create a free, fun, family-friendly trail of discovery for the community to enjoy, whilst exploring our great city.

Joining the giant Elephants roaming through Leicester will be mini-herds of baby Elephant sculptures, adopted and decorated by schools and community groups as part of an exciting Learning Programme.

The trail launches in July 2025 and the Elephants will march on to their new homes after the trail ends in September 2025. The giant Elephant sculptures will be auctioned to raise money for LOROS Hospice, helping terminally ill local people and their families at the most difficult times of their lives. The school's aim is to raise £1000 so that we keep our own baby Elephant. Please donate to our just giving page by following the link below: https://www.justgiving.com/page/maplewellhallchoolartcompetition?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL



A reminder to all drivers on our school site
For the safety of our students, staff, and fellow parents, please remember to adhere to the 5 MPH speed limit while driving on school grounds. Slow and cautious driving helps ensure a safe environment for everyone.
Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to everyone's safety!




Number Day!
Friday 7th February 2025

Wear your own clothes with a **NUMBER** on and pay £1 to raise money for the NSPCC!

Take part in a tutor **NUMBER** quiz. Top scoring group will win a prize!

Maplewell Hall School site only

Term Dates

Spring Term 2025

Half Term Break - Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February 2025
School Opens Monday 24th February 2025

School Closes - Friday 11th April 2025
Easter Break Monday 14th April to Friday 25th April 2025
School Opens Monday 28th April 2025
School Closed Bank Holiday Monday 5th May 2025

Key Dates

7th February - Number Day

11th February - Year 9 Options Evening

25th March - Year 11 & Post 16 Progress Evening

31st March - 2nd April 2025 Year 8 Beaudesert Activity Residential

2nd - 4th April 2025 Year 9 Beaudesert Activity Residential

11th - 13th April 2025 - Year 11 PGL Revision Weekend

6th May 2025 - Year 9 Harry Potter World Trip