

VARIOUS NEWS ITEMS FROM SCHOOL & EXTERNAL PARTIES: 02.10.26

Help us win £1,000 of LEGO® Education resources!

We're taking part in the **LEGO® Education Token Collect Competition** and need your help!

From **26th September to 5th November**, tokens will be printed in your local newspaper. The more tokens our school collects, the greater our chance of winning fantastic LEGO® Education resources worth up to **£1,000**.

Tokens will be printed in:

- Eastern Daily Press, Norwich Evening News, Dereham and Fakenham Times, North Norfolk News, Beccles and Bungay Journal and Lowestoft Journal
- East Anglian Daily Times and Ipswich Star
- Hunts Post and Ely Standard
- Echo and Welwyn and Hatfield Times
- Colchester Gazette, Mid and Coastal Titles

How you can help:

- Pick up a participating local newspaper during the promotion period
- Cut out and save the LEGO® Education tokens

Every token counts, so please ask family members, friends and neighbours to get involved too.

Thank you for supporting our school and helping us bring more LEGO® Education resources into the classroom!



Important Update: Free School Meals

The Department for Education (DfE) has updated its guidance on Free School Meals (FSM), with important changes that have come into effect from **September 2026**. Please read the following carefully to understand how this may affect your child.

From 1 September 2026

There are two types of FSM eligibility:

- **Targeted FSM** - this continues to be based on the current eligibility threshold. It applies to pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less. In addition to receiving FSM, pupils in this group will attract Pupil Premium funding for their school and they may qualify for additional support, such as the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) and the 'extended rights' element of school travel assistance.
- **Expanded FSM** - This is a new category for pupils whose households receive Universal Credit but do not meet the criteria for Targeted FSM. Pupils in this group will be eligible for free school meals only.

Transitional protections have ended

Children who were previously assessed as eligible for FSM had their eligibility protected. This meant they could not lose their FSM, even if the household was no longer eligible. These protections ended on 31 August 2026, meaning some children may have lost their eligibility and no longer be eligible to receive a FSM within school.

Annual eligibility Checks

We will recheck the eligibility of all children on an annual basis during the summer holidays.

No Recourse to Public Funds

Families with British National (Overseas) status, or families with no recourse to public funds, may be able to apply for free school meals.

Applying for FSM

If you have not previously applied for Free School Meals and believe you may be eligible under the new expanded criteria, please submit an online application via the Suffolk County Council website: [Apply for free school meals - Suffolk County Council](#).

Need More Information?

If you have any questions or are unsure whether you meet the new eligibility criteria, please contact us at: freeschoolmeals@suffolk.gov.uk

September 2026

Is my child too ill for school?

Does your child have a high temperature (38°C or more)?

YES

Keep them off school until it goes away.

NO

Follow the guidance below.

Your child can usually go to school with a mild cough or cold if they are otherwise well. If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day and give them the reason.

Should go in	Should go in (let the school know)	Seek treatment before returning to school	Keep them off (at first)
A cough, cold or sore throat Fine with slight cough or common cold symptoms, such as a runny nose, sore throat or headache, as long as they're otherwise well and do not have a high temperature.	Cold sores Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels. Conjunctivitis Fine unless they are feeling very unwell. Seek advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly. Head lice & nits You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP. Hand, foot & mouth disease If they seem well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly. Slapped cheek syndrome Once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. Let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.	Impetigo They'll need treatment from a pharmacist or GP, often with antibiotics. Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment. Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school. Ringworm See your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment. Scarlet fever They'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics. Chickenpox Keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.	Ear infection If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away. Measles They'll need to see a GP. Call the GP surgery before you go in, as measles can spread to others easily. Keep your child off school for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears. They should also avoid close contact with babies and anyone who is pregnant or has a weakened immune system. Vomiting & diarrhoea Stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea due to illness for at least 2 days (48 hours).
Threadworms Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.			

Feeling worried or anxious: It's normal for any of us to feel worried sometimes. We may get a tummy ache or headache, or have problems eating or sleeping. Avoiding school can sometimes make a child's worries about going to school worse. If your child is struggling, please speak to school as soon as possible to explore available help. If your child is still struggling and it's affecting their everyday life, you should contact GP or school nurse.

To find out more, search www.NHS.uk for the specific illness or infection, or 'Is my child too ill for school?'



ONLY £3!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

TEACHER TRAINING SWIMMING LESSONS!

Open to all swimmers 3yrs+
without a parent / guardian in
water

STA Stanley through to
Advanced Swimmer levels

Swim England Stage 1 – 10

LIMITED SPACES

**Book now to avoid
disappointment**



HARLESTON POOL

- **Saturday 24th October — 2-4pm**
- **Sunday 25th October — 2-4pm**

**30 minute lessons
every half hour**

To book email: info@waterliliesswim.co.uk



COMMUNICATION STAY & PLAY

Half-term sessions for children aged 3–7 years



Wednesday 28th October
Thursday 29th October
10am–11.30am



Parents and carers
stay and join in



WHY JOIN US?

- ✓ Communication Stay & Play offers a relaxed, welcoming environment where children can enjoy carefully planned activities designed to encourage their language and communication development—without the pressure of a formal therapy session.
- ✓ Up to four qualified, specialist Speech and Language Therapists will be available throughout the morning to chat, answer questions and offer practical advice.
- ✓ Parents and carers will see simple ways to create a language-rich environment through everyday play, with plenty of ideas that can easily be continued at home.
- ✓ It is also a lovely opportunity for children to play alongside others and for parents and carers to meet and connect with other families.

ONE
SIBLING
CAN COME
ALONG AND
PLAY FOR
FREE!



Communication-
rich play



Sensory
activities



Arts &
crafts



Songs, games
& child-led fun



Up to 8 booked
children per
session



£35 per child,
per session



Parents and
carers stay and
join in



We are a Norfolk
County Council
Short Breaks
approved provider

BOOK VIA EVENTBRITE

These sessions book up fast —
click here to book via Eventbrite
today and avoid disappointment.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillies is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on a secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

X @wake_up_weds

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@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 14.01.2025



Oct 26 Mendham Message

All Saints Church Open 9am-dusk daily. **Food & household essentials for anyone** to take if needed! **Weds 10am** prayers for village in pub; hot drink/chat 10.30am



Sun 4th Oct 9.30am Village Service to end Creationtide with refreshments.



Sat 10th Oct 9.30 -11.30am NE District Suffolk Guild Bell-ringing practice. Come & find out more/try if you are interested!

Fri 16th Oct 11am Jimmy Kent's funeral at All Saints followed by wake at Village Hall.
Our thoughts and prayers are with family.



Sun 18th Oct 9.30am Holy Communion for St Luke with Revd Canon Andrew Vessey. Refreshments after.

Advance notice: Sun 1st Nov All Saints and All Souls Village service 9.30am including lighting candles to remember a loved one

St Mary Magdalene, Withersdale

Sun 11th Oct 9am BCP Holy Communion

Sir Alfred Munnings Hotel 01379 854861

Please help to keep it thriving!

Mendham and Withersdale Village Hall.

12th Oct. 7-7.15pm Public Inclusion session suggestions, help, queries. Or ring 0800 612 7323, email info@mwvillagehall.co.uk.

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Thurs 15th Oct 2-4pm Good Afternoon Club For all. Chat/company. £1. Refreshments.

Welcome back or to all new members of Mendham Primary School. Congratulations to **Mrs Nicola Jones, now Academy Head.**



Interested in helping hedgehogs? Do join Diane & SWT at St John the Baptist church, **Metfield Thurs 29th Oct 10.30-noon.** For all.



Info. Children's activities. Refreshments.

Suffolk Wildlife Trust

Hedgehogs need YOUR help!

Can you imagine a world without hedgehogs? Neither can we!

Join Suffolk Wildlife Trust and members of your community to find out how you can help make your local area hedgehog-friendly.
Everyone welcome.

- Information & advice
- Children's activities
- Refreshments

Thursday 29th October 2026

10:30am-12pm

St John the Baptist Church, Metfield

Hedgehog Friendly County

Thank you for donating to All Saints Church Mendham.

