NEWSLETTER

13 March 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to begin by expressing how incredibly proud I am of the staff and students involved in our school production of *Oliver!* Their commitment, creativity, and hard work have been outstanding. While today has also seen students from Years 8, 9 and 10 representing the school at the North Devon 7s competition at West Buckland. Their participation, teamwork and dedication are a credit to them and to our school community.

Thank you to all parents who contributed their views in last week's parent questionnaire. It has been encouraging to see such strong support for our efforts to address mobile phone use. Nearly 90% of respondents are fully supportive of the proposed new policy, with many parents even encouraging us to go further. We will continue to review the options available, including whether the introduction of phone pouches may be a future step. The survey will remain open for one more week, and I would strongly encourage all parents and carers to share their views during this consultation period. The proposed policy information and the survey link are included again below.

We fully appreciate that some students travel long distances and that many parents need to drop their children at school before heading to work. While the school site is open early and students may go to the canteen, where breakfast is available, formal staff supervision does not begin until 8.30am. Until this time, students remain the responsibility of parents. Recently, some students have been arriving on site as early as 7.30am, during which time they are unsupervised. For safety reasons, we must remind parents to ensure that children are not arriving at school before 8.30am unless necessary, as the school cannot provide supervision prior to this time.

We wish to ask for views about changes to our behaviour policy regarding phone use. The school will take a three-tiered approach:

Stage 1: Visible or Audible Mobile Phone
If a mobile phone is seen or heard without permission, the member of staff will confiscate the device and take it to the school office. Students may collect their phone from Student Reception at the end of the school day . This is part of our current policy.

Stage 2: Repeated Breaches or Serious Online Incidents
Students who repeatedly break the school rules regarding mobile phones, or who have been involved in a serious online incident, will be required to hand in their phone to a designated member of staff upon arrival to the school site each morning. The phone will be securely stored and returned at the end of the school day.

Parents will be informed when a student has reached stage 2 of the policy.
Failure to hand in the phone as required, will result in one day in the Success Centre. The student will still be required to hand in the phone, which will be **confiscated for one week.** The Education and

Inspections Act 2006 (Section 91) enable's a school to confiscate, keep, or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary penalty.

Stage 3: Persistent Non-compliance and Serious Misuse
Where a student persistently fails to hand in their mobile phone in accordance with Stage 2 requirements or continues to engage in serious misuse of their device, they will be prohibited from bringing a mobile phone onto the school site. Parents will be informed they have reached this stage.

If a student subject to this prohibition is found to be in possession of a mobile phone on school premises, they will receive a **three day suspension**. The device will be **confiscated and retained securely by the school for a period of two weeks.**

The school recognises that parents/carers may have concerns regarding communication and travel arrangements when a student reaches stage 3. However, the safety, welfare, and orderly conduct of the whole school community must take precedence. It remains the responsibility of parents/carers to make appropriate arrangements for their child outside school hours during the period of the ban. Implementing such restrictions is both proportionate and reasonable given repeated non-compliance and is necessary to uphold a phone free learning environment for all students.

The vast majority of our students will never reach stage 2 or stage 3, but those that do will be placing themselves and others in danger though repeated misuse of mobile phones on site and will refuse requests to comply with school policy. We have attempted to weigh up the incredible safety risks and the impact on learning of phones within school and the responsible phone use of the majority of our students. Though we may in the long term move to another form of phone control, for example pouches, in the short term we have decided to focus on teaching students responsible phone use. This is an area where parental support is required, and this new suggested policy will aim to be in place for the summer term onwards and is in line with the direction of government guidance.

Please can you give your views in the short questionnaire linked below. We will be in touch shortly regarding the opportunity for an in-person consultation.

The Park Community School Parent/Carer Mobile Phone Feedback Form March 2026 – Fill in form

Ruben's article is published in The Day! In our last English cycle, Year 9 focused on writing persuasive articles. The unit culminated in students independently researching and writing their own articles, and we submitted the strongest pieces to *The Day*. This morning, Rueben's article was published! You can read his article here. He will now be automatically entered into the *Student Young Journalist of the Year Awards* this summer. The criterion for getting published is pretty stringent as submissions have to meet The Day's 'editorial standards'. A brilliant achievement for Reuben.

Year 7 North Devon Schools Netball Tournament. Our A team competed against seven different schools, securing six impressive wins and drawing 5–5 against West Buckland. With the final standings decided on goal average, the team achieved an excellent second place overall. This is a fantastic achievement, and the girls should be incredibly proud of their performance. They demonstrated outstanding dedication, teamwork and remarkable stamina, playing a series of back-to-back matches with great determination.

Our B team also had a brilliant tournament, facing four different schools in 20-minute matches. Lamae Hill and Grace Griffin were both selected as Players' Player by other schools, recognising their

outstanding performances throughout the event. The team worked extremely hard, supported each other brilliantly, and finished the tournament in an impressive third place.

Finally, a huge thank you goes to our Year 9 students, Amelia Manning and Great Cormac, who did a fantastic job umpiring the tournament with professionalism and confidence.

Well done to all of our players for representing the school so brilliantly. 🏐👏

Wishing you and your family a relaxing weekend.

Kind regards
Ms V Owen
Headteacher

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES - SEND

Park SEND Team email: park.send@thsp.org.uk

Park SEND parent/carer referral form: SEND referral form

Park SEND website page and newsletter link SEND - The Park Community School

Devon Information Service - **https://devonias.org.uk/**

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING AND ADVICE & SUPPORT FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Mental Health website page link [Mental Health and Wellbeing]

Advice and Support for Parents website page link [Advice and Support for Parents]

SAFEGUARDING AND ONLINE SAFETY ADVICE AND INFORMATION

Email: park.safeguarding@thsp.org.uk

Safeguarding website page link: [Safeguarding and Online Safety]

Safeguarding newsletter link: [Safeguarding newsletter]

You won't know 'til you ask (DSIT)

The UK government has launched the 'Kids Online Safety' campaign to help parents and carers support their children to navigate the digital world safely and confidently.

The campaign brings together practical, trusted guidance on how to start meaningful conversations about online life, understand the types of content children may encounter, and build critical thinking skills so young people can question what they see and make safer choices.

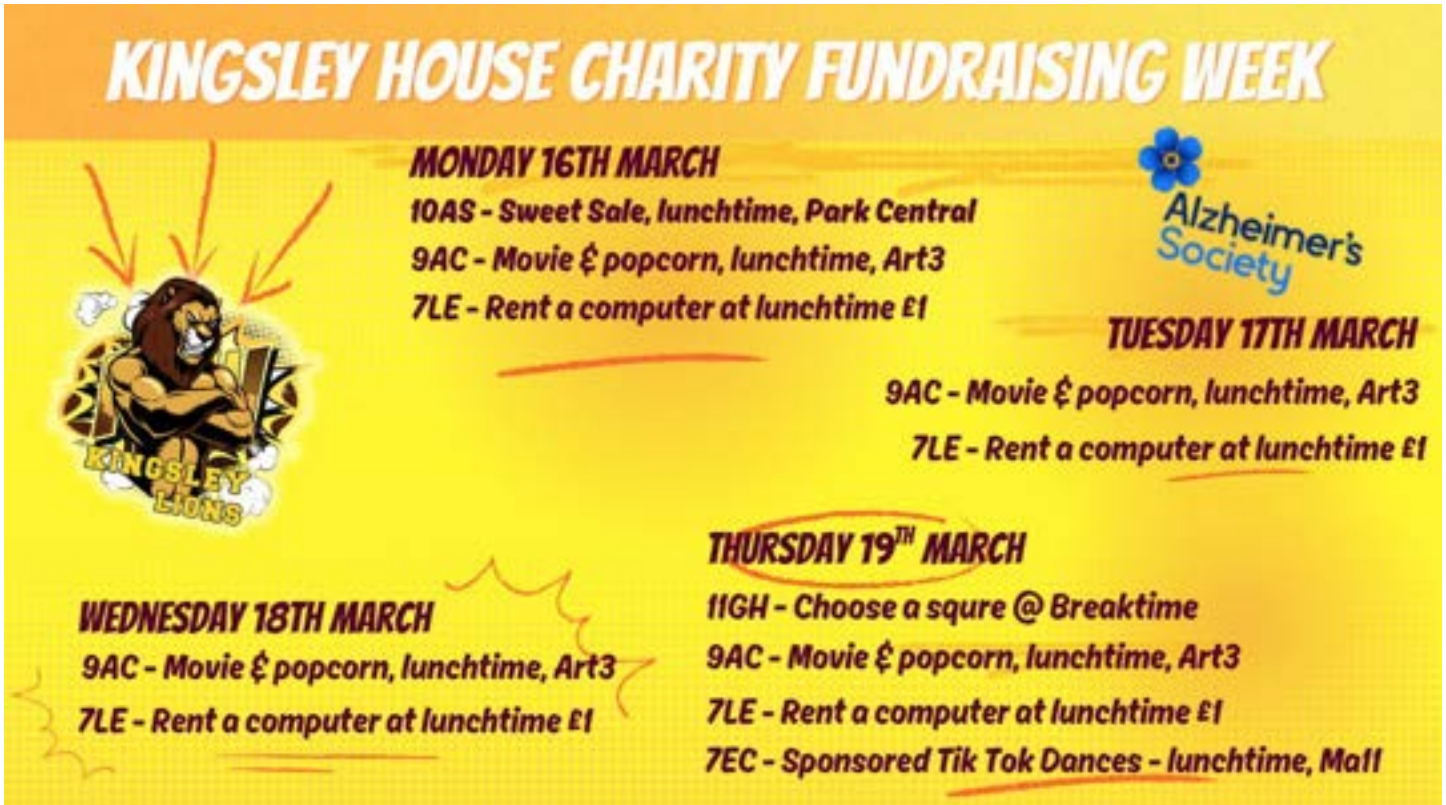
It also offers advice on using tools such as parental controls, recognising potential risks, and knowing where to seek help or report concerns. The overall aim is to make online safety an ongoing, open dialogue within families rather than a one-off conversation, helping children feel supported as they explore apps, games and social media.

You can find the resources here:

Help your child stay safe online - Kids Online Safety

KINGSLEY HOUSE CHARITY WEEK

Please could students bring change/cash for the activities next week. All money goes straight into charity pots for Alzeimer's Society.



STUDENT ROYAL MARINES CHARITY FUNDRAISER

A group of determined boys are preparing to undertake a challenging speed march from Park School to Royal Marines Barracks Chivenor as part of a fundraiser for the Royal Marines Charity & individual growth.

Covering the five-mile route through a mix of running and fast-paced walking, the event is designed not only to raise money but also to instil resilience, teamwork and self-belief in the lads taking part. We hope the experience will provide lasting and inspiring benefits, encouraging the boys to push themselves beyond their comfort zones and carry that positive mindset forward into their lives. Upon arrival at the barracks, they will be met by serving Royal Marines Physical Training Instructors (PTIs), who will give them a small taste of what it means to become "comfortable with the uncomfortable.

Mr Galliford has been working hard with these boys for some time now individually and as a group & wanted to give them not only something to inspire them, but something to be massively proud of achieving. Hence why we have set this challenge for them. We are hoping that the students involved will become role models within their community and demonstrate these values in the classroom & beyond.

As well as their own physical challenge, the other important aspect of this day is to raise funds for the Royal Marines Charity, supporting Royal Marines and their families, particularly those who have faced hardship, injury, or loss through service to the nation.

We would all like to express our appreciation to all those that have helped the boys raise so much money. It has gone well beyond what anyone imagined.

As a former bootneck myself, I am looking forward to sharing a tiny little snippet of not only the physical aspect, but the ethos and values upheld by the Royal Marines. If you would like to cheer the boys throughout their challenge en-route, please feel free to pop down and see us along the Tarka trail.
We envision starting at the war memorial at approximately 0930hrs.

Any encouragement would be much appreciated by the boys.

Many thanks
Mr Blanchard & Mr Galliford

If you wish to donate, please use the following link. https://www.justgiving.com/team/parkschoolyomp

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/EVENTS/REMINDERS

Parent Calendar | Website | Facebook Page | Instagram

Term Dates

Date	Year/s	Name of Event/Activity	Information
20th March	All Years	**PSHEE topic next week**	Year 7 – Healthy Relationships Year 8 – PREVENT Year 9 – Healthy Sexual Relationships Year 10 – Work Experience Year 11 – Revision *Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher, email: park.headteacher@thsp.org.uk*
16th March	Y11	**English Exam**	
17th March		**PE BTEC practical assessments**	
10th March	Year 7, 8 and 9	**Cross Country**	
24th and 25th March and 30th and 31st March	Year 11	**Art, Photography and Textiles Exam**	
31st March	Year 8 and Year 9, 10 & 11 catch ups	**HPV Vaccinations**	Letters have been sent to Year 8, 9, 10 and 11 parents. Please contact the Immunisation Team if you have any queries. Telephone: 01392 342678 Email:kernowhealthcic.schoolimmsdevon@nhs.net
1st April	Year 11	**GCSE Drama Component 2 Practical Exam**	
2nd April	All years	**Last day of term**	Non-uniform day. Finish at 12.30pm
20th April	All years	**Summer Term starts**	Timetable week 2
27, 28, 29th April	Year 11	**MFL Speaking Exam**	

Date	Year/s	Name of Event/Activity	Information
28th April	Year 10	**Year 10 Parents' Evening**	More information to follow
30th April and 1st May	All years	**Park Dance Show**	More information to follow
7th May	Year 11	**GCSE Exams**	
25th to 29th May	All years	**Half term**	
1st June	All years	**Return to school**	All years return on timetable week 1

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Please find a link to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

Please report your child absent by emailing: park.attendance@thsp.org.uk

Any absence interrupts the continuity of a child's learning. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Parents/carers are strongly urged not to take children out of school for holidays during term time. It is expected that a Request Form is submitted to the Academy/School Office **at least 4 weeks** in advance of the proposed absence.

Would you like to understand more about your teen and emotion-based school avoidance? Follow this link for access to a FREE Webinar on School Avoidance FREE WEBINAR School Avoidance. This resource is also useful EBSA: Essential Guide for Parents | School Anxiety Support

We understand that unexpected circumstances and illness can sometimes impact attendance. However, we would greatly appreciate your support in ensuring your child attends school regularly.

- Talk to your child about the importance of attendance and the impact it can have on the results.
- Discuss their options and courses for next year - emphasise how important it is to get a 4+ in English and Maths.
- If your child is experiencing difficulties that are impacting their attendance, please do not hesitate to **contact us.** We are here to support you and your child in overcoming any challenges.

PARK ONLINE LEARNING

Often it is difficult for a child to come back into school after a period of absence due to missing lessons. Although we wouldn't expect someone to be working while they are unwell, we often get asked "How can

my child catch up?". Our English, Maths and Science teams have put together this Remote Catch Up Curriculum to support students if they are absent. There is a page for each subject which then splits into Year groups: the lessons follow the same units and topics as the students are being taught in lessons - not as good as a real lesson but a great way to catch back up if your child has been absent. We will continue to grow this over the year but hope you find it helpful.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AT THE PARK SCHOOL AND WITHIN THE TRUST

Please see our Trust website for current vacancies THSP website.

Our current vacancies include:

- Office Administrator
- Cleaner

FOOD AT PARK AND FREE SCHOOL MEAL ENTITLEMENT INFORMATION

Please see the **Food** page on our website for a *current menu* and prices and information about our food service at Park - Food - The Park Community School. Contact the School Office, park@thsp.org.uk or call 01271 373131 if you have any questions about how to top up or limit/cap your child's spending on their dinner money account.

Apply for **Free School Meals** through the Devon Citizens Portal. This is the quickest and easiest way to apply and will result in you getting an instant decision. Alternatively, call the Education Helpline on: 0345 155 1019.

Visit our website for more information and support How to access support for Pupil Premium students

RAISING FUNDS FOR PARK – SCHOOL LOTTERY AND EASY FUNDRAISING

Did you know we have a **School Lottery**? You can join our weekly lottery from £1 per week and it's an easy way to support our school and help raise funds - 40% of ticket sales come back to us. There is a guaranteed winner each week. It's so easy to sign up and start supporting our school today - just click here Support The Park Community School when you play Your School Lottery.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Hearts and Homes:
A Fostering Devon Conference

Find out how **you** could make a difference to a child or young person's life in Devon.

Join our team of experts for a special in-person event to learn about:

- Fostering with your local authority.
- Training and support, including a Skills to Foster taster session.
- Approaches to therapeutic parenting and the support we offer.
- What children and young people want from their carers.

Friday 20 March

Future Skills Centre, Exeter
10am - 12pm or 1pm - 3pm

Register your interest at **fosteringdevon.org.uk** or by scanning the QR code.

Inspiring futures. Changing lives.
Call **0345 155 1077**
Visit **fosteringdevon.org.uk**

Devon County Council

Fostering SOUTH WEST

SWIFT Teacher Training

Classroom Experience and Information Events in North Devon

Event Information

This is an opportunity to gain classroom experience and find out more about SWIFT Teacher Training, our route into teaching, courses and PGCE.

These events are based in one of our partner schools where you will be looked after by an experienced Campus Lead, who will be your host for the session.

Activities could include:

- a guided training walk with the campus lead and school staff
- introduction to observing lessons and different styles of teaching
- seeing how specific subjects are taught
- engaging in learning conversations with colleagues
- learning more about the SWIFT Teacher Training programme
- questions and Next Steps

Who

Educated to degree level; recent graduates, career changers, returners to work; teaching assistants, anyone interested in teaching.

To book

Online booking form HERE
Or contact: Jo Turnbull
Email: jo.turnbull@sw-ift.org.uk
PLEASE BOOK BY **Thursday 2 April 2026**

Time and Venue

Phase | Primary/Secondary

Tuesday 21 April 2026|10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Pilton Community College
Chaddiford Lane, Barnstaple, EX31 1RB

Monday 27 April 2026|10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Orchard Vale Community School
Westacott Road, Whiddon Valley, Barnstaple, EX32 8QY

Although Pilton Community College is a secondary school setting and Orchard Vale Community School is a primary school setting, we welcome anyone interested in either secondary or primary school teaching to either of the venues. The information sharing will also include applications for both primary and secondary school training, and the Campus Lead can discuss this further on the day.

Further Information

You can find out more information about future classroom experience and information events HERE.

SWIFT Teacher Training

Primary & Secondary QTS / PGCE Courses

Applications to train to teach starting in September 2026 are open

To find out more and apply visit www.swiftteachertraining.org.uk