

St Barnabas CE Primary School Newsletter

23/10/2026



'Let your light shine'

Congratulations Miss Kinlin.

Congratulations to Miss Kinlin who got married on Saturday in a beautiful ceremony. Miss Kinlin was the most beautiful bride and is now Mrs Brinksmann. Congratulations to you both.

Good Luck Miss Rossiter

Miss Rossiter leaves today after being our year 5 teacher for the past year. We would all like to thank Miss Rossiter for her hard work and wish her good luck for the future.

We welcome Mrs Emmott back after her maternity leave, on 2nd November.

It's been an incredibly busy half term at St Barnabas, with so much going on from trips, after school clubs, fundraising organised by our children and children taking on important leadership roles. In school, you will often hear me talking about 'letting your light shine,' and I don't think there has ever been a term when I have seen so many examples of our children living out our vision in so many different ways. From extremely high standards of work, superb sporting achievements, kindness and support for friends, I could talk all day about the achievements of our children and they just keep getting better and better! A big thank you to our amazing staff team who all work tirelessly to support our children to be the best they can be.

Have a lovely half term everyone. We look forward to seeing you back at school on Monday 2nd November.

Miss Hodgkinson

Meet our Science Ambassadors

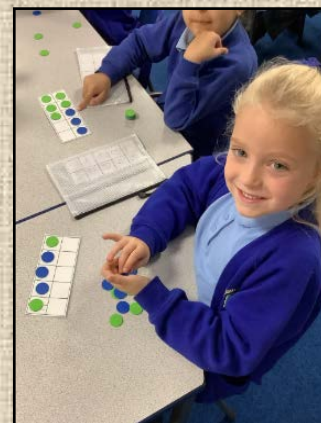
Our Science Ambassadors are children in years 3-6, who are good role models in science using correct scientific vocabulary and use good reasoning and explanation. Also, as part of their role this year, they will continue to lead our school forward in achieving its Climate Education vision, participating in projects such as reducing temperatures in school and supporting with recycling.





Last week, we enjoyed our visit to the farm. We met a pony, sheep, goats, chickens, rabbits and a sheepdog 🐾🐾🐾🐾🐾

Superstars in year 2 using counters and ten frames to help them compete equations with three addends!



SCIENCE CLOSE THE GAP!

Year 2 sorted animals into different categories such as omnivore, carnivore and herbivore, lives in water, lives on land and many more!



Our Christian Value for this half term is:

'Friendship'

'A good friend is a blessing from God.'

Samuel 1 18.3



This week's big question:

What makes a good friend?

This week we pray for those who are lonely.

Starting reception class

If your child was born between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023, they are due to start reception class in September 2026. You will need to apply for a place here:

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/primary-school-admissions>

Playtime Snacks

We are a healthy school and constantly reinforce with our children that healthy eating and regular exercise lead to positive mental and physical health. Part of this is to educate our children to eat as healthily as possible, as this contributes to future success. The only snacks we allow at playtimes are **toast or fruit**, these can be brought in from home or toast can be purchased via ParentPay. Thank you for your support.

AI companions are becoming increasingly popular with young people, offering round-the-clock conversations with virtual characters designed to feel like genuine friends. Platforms such as Character.ai, Replika and Snapchat My AI can provide entertainment and creative opportunities, but their human-like interactions also raise concerns. This guide explores potential risks including emotional dependency, inappropriate content, oversharing personal information and harmful mental health advice.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 18+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school – such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 1111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book *Ethical AI and Education*, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2026 by Taylor and Francis.



The National College

See full reference list on our website



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MENU AUTUMN 2026

Menu Cycle Week One: 1st Sept, 21st Sept, 12th Oct, 2nd Nov, 23rd Nov, 14th Dec

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
- Vegetarian Sausage roll with baked diced potatoes & beans - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Pork or Quorn sausage with Yorkshire pudding, creamed potatoes, carrots & peas - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Beef or vegetarian burger in a bun with baked diced potatoes & fresh salad - Vegetable fajitas with savoury rice & sweetcorn - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Barbecue chicken with baked wedged potatoes & sweetcorn - Vegetarian option served with baked wedged potatoes & sweetcorn - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Fish fingers - Crumb coated chicken - Served with chunky chipped potatoes & peas or baked beans - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans
Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit
Vanilla ice cream	Yoghurt	Orange jelly and fruit	Homemade blueberry cake/muffin	Homemade biscuit
Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water

Menu Cycle Week Two: 7th Sept, 28th Sept, 19th Oct, 9th Nov, 30th Nov

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
- Margarita pizza with baked jacket wedges & sweetcorn - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Chicken or Quorn Tikka Masala - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Pasta bolognese (beef or vegetable) served with garden peas - Garlic and herb chicken pitta with vegetable rice & broccoli - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Brunch lunch (sausage, beans, hash brown, omelette) - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Battered fish - Crumb coated chicken - Served with chunky chipped potatoes & peas or baked beans - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans
Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit
Doughnut	Yoghurt	Arctic or chocolate ice cream	Raspberry jelly and fruit	Homemade biscuit
Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water

Menu Cycle Week Three: 14th Sept, 5th Oct, 16th Nov, 7th Dec

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
- Tomato & mascarpone pasta bake with seasonal vegetables - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Chicken or vegetable katsu curry served with rice - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Pizza (pepperoni/cheese) served with jacket wedges & salad - Sweet and sour chicken/quorn served with rice/noodle - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Pork or Quorn meatballs in tomato & basil sauce with pasta & peas - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans	- Oven baked fish stars - Oven baked chicken poppers - Served with chunky chipped potatoes & peas or baked beans - Jacket potato with cheese/tuna/beans
Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit	Fresh fruit
Strawberry ice cream	Yoghurt	Jelly and fruit	Vanilla and chocolate marble cake	Homemade biscuit
Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water	Milk/water

Term Dates for the Academic Year 2026 – 2027

Term	First Half Term	Half Term Break	Second Half Term
AUTUMN	Wednesday 2 nd September to Friday 23 rd October	Monday 26 th October to Friday 30 th October inclusive	Monday 2 nd November to Friday 18 th December

Christmas Holiday Monday 21st December 2026 to Tuesday 5th January 2027 inclusive

Term	First Half Term	Half Term Break	Second Half Term
SPRING	Tuesday 5 th January to Friday 12 th February	Monday 15 th February to Friday 19 th February inclusive	Monday 22 nd February to Thursday 25 th March

Easter Holiday Friday 26th March to Friday 2nd April 2027 inclusive

Term	First Half Term	Half Term Break	Second Half Term
SUMMER	Wednesday 7 th April to Friday 28 th May	Monday 31 st May to Friday 11 th June inclusive	Monday 14 th June to Wednesday 21 st July

Closure Days

BANK HOLIDAY Monday 3rd May 2027

WARRINGTON WALKING DAY Friday 25th June 2027

School Uniform

- Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan with school logo
- Pale blue polo shirt
- Grey trousers or blue tartan skirt/pinafore
- Black shoes must be worn NOT boots please



PE Kit

St Barnabas CE Primary School and Nursery

School PE Uniform

- PE sports t-shirt with school logo, royal blue shorts or black/navy joggers/leggings & trainers.
- Children should come to school in full PE uniform on planned PE days.

