THE WINSFORD ACADEMY

22nd April 2025



Ms Emma McLaren
Principal

Message from the Principal

Dear Winsford Families,

I hope that families have enjoyed a lovely Easter break.

Today we have our INSET day where staff will have safeguarding training with a focus on the Prevent Strategy. This week, Year 9 students will also engage in workshops where professional actors and facilitators explore issues around radicalisation. Most recently, there has been a lot of discussion in the media about how young people can become radicalised through social media and online material. Within our refreshed personal development curriculum, students will foster critical thinking and media literacy; within academy newsletters, I will also continue to include 'Need to Know' online guides for parents and carers.

Throughout the holiday, the academy has been a hive of activity! Year 11 students have engaged in numerous revision sessions and workshops. An additional 50+ Year 11 students also came into the academy for academic tutoring in English, Maths and Science. Tutors worked with students in small groups, consolidating knowledge and practising exam techniques. 40+ students also spent a fabulous week skiing in Santa Caterina, Italy. Students made excellent progress, with some beginners becoming confident skiers by the end of the week tackling the 'Black Run Challenge' with gusto!

I am incredibly grateful to staff for planning and leading sessions in the academy and supporting the school trip in Italy, especially after such a busy term.

For Summer Term 1, we have set students the target of achieving 100% attendance and punctuality. Students should be in full uniform, including blazer and tie, and through the gate by 8:40am. Families of children that are on time and attend school every day this week could win a £30 shopping voucher!

20 Week Notice: Advance Warning for <u>September 2025,</u> all students wear formal school shoes. This new expectation should reduce confusion and ongoing discussions about coloured trainer soles, laces and logos, this should also save families money, as some of the trainers that students are wearing to school cost over £100.

Diary Dates 2025

Easter Term Break: Monday 7th April – Friday 18th April	
Monday 21st April	**Bank Holiday – School closed**
Tuesday 22nd April	**INSET Day – School closed to students** Training will include Safeguarding (Prevent training) & Personal Development Curriculum Planning.
Wednesday 23rd April	**Students return to school through the gate by 8:40am**
Thursday 24th April	**Year 9 Odd Arts Workshops (*Throughout the day*)**
WC 28th April	**Y11 Photography & Fine Art Exam**
Monday 5th May	**Bank holiday – School closed**
WC 5th May	**Y11 Fine Art Exam & Spanish Speaking Exams**
Thursday 8th May	**Year 7 Parents' Evening 3:45pm – 6:45pm**
WC 19th May	**Year 10 Assessment Week**
May Break: Monday 26th May – Friday 30th May	
WC 2nd June	**Year 10 Assessment Week 2** **Year 9 Assessment Week**
WC 9th June	**Year 9 Assessment Week 2**
WC 16th June	**Year 7 & 8 Assessment Week**
WC 23rd June	**Year 7 & 8 Assessment Week 2**
Tuesday 24th June	**Year 8 HPV Vaccines**
Friday 27th June	▪ **WA Cultural Capital Day** ▪ **Year 5 Day** ▪ **Year 11 Prom**
Tuesday 1st July	**Year 6 Day**
Wednesday 2nd July	**Year 6 Day 2 & Induction Evening**
Thursday 10th July	**Celebration Evening 5pm – 7pm**
Friday 18th July	**End of Summer Term**
Year 11 Exam Results Day – Thursday 21st August 2025	
Students return to school on Wednesday 3rd September 2025 ***For September 2025 students must wear a formal school shoe.***	



New Lesson 1 Materials!

In preparation for Lesson 1, hundreds of reading books have arrived!

Each book has been carefully chosen for each year group to further develop students' reading skills, vocabulary, knowledge of the wider world and other cultures.





Be In and Be On Time!

Students need to be in through the school gate for 8:40am.

Data shows that students that are punctual and have a 'strong start' to the day, also have a better day and earn more achievement points.

For the Summer Term, students that do not attend lesson 1, will also miss out on valuable careers advice and guidance.

In preparation for GCSEs, Year 11 students will have an additional 45 minutes of English, Maths and Science.

We want to work in partnership with families; if families would like additional support with their child attending school, please contact the attendance team attendance@winsfordacademy.org.uk

*** Advance notice – Preparation for September 2025, no trainers.***

WA School Uniform September 2025

All students should wear the following items at all times.

Students can ask permission to remove their blazers during lessons



White school shirt
- ✓ Top button fastened
- ✓ Shirt tucked in

School Tie
- Year 7 Gold Tie
- Year 8 Blue Tie

Academy Blazer with WA Crest

Black School Trousers
- No skinny trousers
- No tapered trousers
- No tracksuit bottoms



White school shirt
- ✓ Top button fastened
- ✓ Shirt tucked in

Black Pleated Skirt
- ✓ On Knee

OR

Black School Trousers
- No leggings
- No flared trousers

Plain Black Tights
- ✓ 80+ denier

All Black Formal School Shoe – No trainers

See guidance on acceptable shoes

Wearing our Uniform - The Winsford Way

- School coats and jackets are removed when inside the building
- Hoodies, gilets, tracksuit or 'zip up' tops are not to be worn on the academy campus.
- A school bag is worn at all times (School bag should be able to fit an A4 folder inside)
- Blazers are worn at all times – Blazers should never be worn around the waist.
- All shirts are fully tucked in
- Skirts should not be rolled-up
- Black 80+ denier tights should be worn with skirts
- No leggings or flared trousers
- A black formal shoe must be worn *(Please see guidance on what is acceptable)*

Cheshire West & Chester Council

The Work Zone
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FREE COURSE

FREE if you are 19+ and on an out of work benefit OR earning less than £25,000 per year

Would you like to become a teaching assistant?

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Study through face to face workshops alongside your paid or voluntary role in a school setting. Must have GCSEs A-C in English and maths or be willing to complete an assessment to demonstrate Level 2 skills.

Enrolling now for September 2025

Contact your nearest Work Zone for more information:

Chester - 07775 717122 or chesterworkzone@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Ellesmere Port - 07990 532869 or ellesmereportworkzone@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Northwich - 07833 236675 or northwichworkzone@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Winsford - 07766 205389 or winsfordworkzone@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Skills and Employment

Work Zones & Adult Education

Learning & Skills Hubs
Cheshire West and Chester

Cheshire West and Chester

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. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SEARCH ENGINES

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Search engines are an integral part of everyday life – with Google alone processing around 100,000 searches every second. Search engines use algorithms to predict which results will be useful to us, though this can expose children to inappropriate content, misinformation and even scams. This guide explains the risks associated with search engines and offers practical advice to help safeguard young users online.

MANIPULATED SEARCH RESULTS

Although search engines take site reputation into account, trustworthiness isn't the main factor. Instead, they use algorithms that can be gamed via tactics like search engine optimisation (SEO), which is big business. As a result, users may encounter misleading content and low-quality commercial products that appear more credible than they actually are.

ILLEGAL CONTENT CAN SURFACE

Search engines are designed to retrieve content based on keywords – not to judge whether that content is lawful. As a result, even illegal or harmful material can appear in search results. Children might assume that anything found through search engines must be safe, just because they're so widely used. This misunderstanding can lead to accidental exposure to seriously inappropriate content.

MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION

Search engines index billions of web pages – and not all of them are factual or safe. Children might stumble across false information or even deliberate disinformation, especially when searching for trending topics or controversial issues.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT EXPOSURE

Although parental controls like Google's SafeSearch exist, they aren't foolproof, and search engines may bypass them. Young users may still see inappropriate images or content, especially in image searches, even though they may not be able to click on the results. Some niche search engines lack even basic filtering, posing further risks.

ENGINES BEYOND GOOGLE

Even if Google's SafeSearch is enabled, children may use lesser-known search engines that don't have similar protections. Some of these alternatives are less effective at blocking unsavoury content – sometimes by design – making it easier for children to encounter harmful or explicit material. Parental controls may also struggle to detect and block these sites.

UNRELIABLE AI SUMMARIES

Some search engines now offer AI-generated answers at the top of results. While these can be helpful as webpage summaries, they're not always accurate. There have been instances where AI summaries have presented false or even dangerous information, reinforcing the need for critical thinking.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS

While no parental controls tool is perfect, this software can help reduce the likelihood of inappropriate content appearing in search results. Use tools like Google Family Link to set search restrictions and monitor your child's browsing activity.

IDENTIFY AND AVOID ADVERTS

One of the ways search engines generate revenue is by showing adverts to their users. Sponsored search results are labelled, but they're not always easy to spot and can sometimes be malicious. Show your child how to distinguish between paid ads and organic search results – explain why some ads might be misleading or unsafe.

QUESTION AI-GENERATED CONTENT

While AI content is generated quickly and often appears legitimate, teach children that, just because an AI summary is well presented, it doesn't mean it's accurate. Encourage them to review the sources behind AI summaries and check the information with reputable sites or fact-checkers.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Encourage children to question the motivation behind online content and develop critical thinking, as not all sites can be trusted. Some deliberately misinform users in order to sell products or promote misinformation. Developing a critical mindset is one of the best defences against these tactics.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



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