

NORTH STAR 240°

Issue number 3

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Head Teacher's Message

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope that you all had a good half term break.

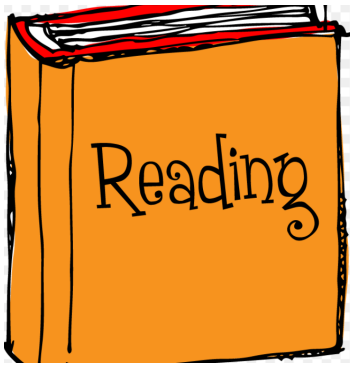
A highlight for me over the last 2 weeks was the assembly led by Mrs Lamkin on recycling. At the end of the assembly she asked all of the students to reflect on the situation in the Middle East whilst one student played the keyboard and another student and 3 members of staff sang "Let It Be". It was a superb performance and highlights the great work that is happening in music. Thank you to all involved.

As the weather is getting colder I would like to remind you all of the Bristol welcoming space network. [Find a Welcoming Space \(bristol.gov.uk\)](http://bristol.gov.uk) which offer a range of support including wifi access, drinks and in some cases, hot food.

Ms Grayson



Reading at North Star 240°



This term, with the aim of promoting reading and supporting the reading culture within our school, North Star 240° has introduced a new reward point for students who complete a reading quiz. Since this has been introduced, some classes have taken it upon themselves to leap above and beyond with their reading. One such class is Scorpius, where the students have gained over 350 reading points since the beginning of the year. Closely behind Scorpius is Gemini, where the students have also committed themselves to their books during reading time. As a school, we would like to say a massive congratulations to all students who enthusiastically embrace reading during reading time and to those who take it upon themselves to read at home. We would also like to extend our thanks to those at home who support reading.

Supporting Reading at Home



Reading can be a tricky habit to instil in young people. It takes effort and focus, and can sometimes be quite intimidating. Here are some ways that you can support your youngsters to read more at home.

- Set up a reading time. Having a set time each day for reading can help young people stick to reading for the long term. It is also useful to add this to something they already do each day, such as eating dinner or going to bed. By linking reading with a daily habit, they already do, it can help young people to remember to read and to stick with it.
- Start with a little. If you ask anybody to read for an hour a day, most would find it quite tricky. For young people who aren't used to reading every day, this will feel like a punishment. Instead, start with a short amount of time, like 5-10 minutes. Over time, as this becomes easier, gradually increase the time. This way it will feel less of a chore to sit and read.
- Create a safe and comfortable reading space. Forming a new habit can be difficult for young people, but we can make the reading habit easier for them by creating a safe space for them to read. This could be a comfy chair, a pile of blankets in the corner of their room, or in bed. By having this space, young people have somewhere safe where they can practice something that they might find daunting.

Here's to an amazing term of learning, reading and succeeding for all of our incredible learners.



Mr Cowman, Reading Intervention HLTA

Music at North Star 240°

We are pleased to say that the Music department at North Star 240° is well and truly back in action this year!

We are offering lots of exciting musical activities for the students at break and lunchtimes, which include keyboard sessions, ukulele and drumming workshops and the opportunity to join in with some karaoke style singing! We are in the process of upgrading the department with some brand new instruments which have included a class set of ukuleles, with African drums next on the list and with any luck...a school community piano!

Look out at Christmas for the end of term concert where we will be welcoming some live music and singing performances from not just the students, but also from the staff!

Music Room activities at break and lunch times



Monday – Keyboards and Singing group

Tuesday – Guitar/Ukulele workshop

Wednesday – Keyboards and Singing group

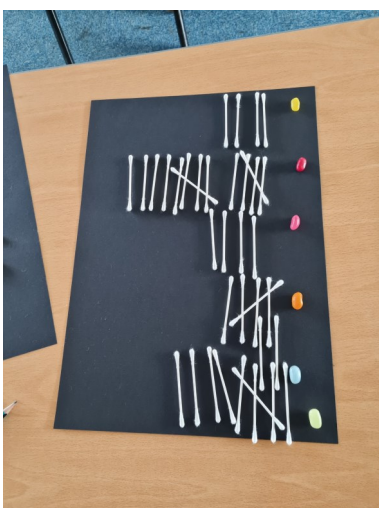
Thursday – Drumming/Percussion workshop

Friday – Karaoke singing competition

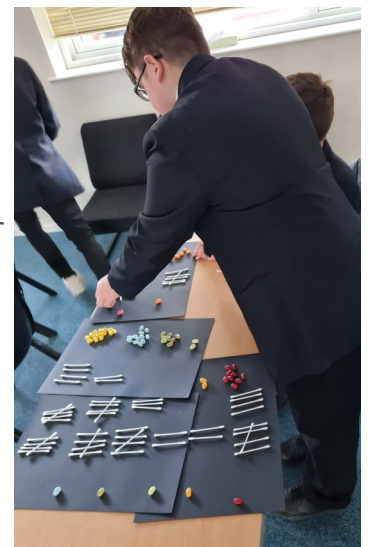


Halloween maths

To celebrate Halloween in maths, we practised our tally chart skills with a pack of “trick or treat” jellybeans and some spooky bones to make our tallies. Students worked in pairs to count up their jellybeans, plan out



their own chart and place the bones into groups of 5 to make counting easier. They then, of course, sampled a few jellybeans afterwards!



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about



AGE RESTRICTION
13+

In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote denial and hatred.

LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

BLUE TICK SALE

Advice for Parents & Carers

PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow: this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GCRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



NOS
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#WakeUpWednesday