



— The Cooper School —

Parent Bulletin

No 16 - Friday 16th January 2026

Key Dates and Upcoming Events

Thursday 22 nd January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yr 11 English Language mock (Sports Hall)
Friday 23 rd January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INSET DAY

Next w/c Monday 19th January 2026 -Week B



OLIVER! The Musical



We are getting incredibly close to opening night, and the excitement in the corridors is palpable! Our talented students have been working tirelessly—rehearsing their lines, perfecting those iconic songs, and polishing the choreography—to bring the streets of Victorian London to life right here at The Cooper School.

If you haven't secured your seats yet, there is still time! We still have a limited number of tickets available for our upcoming performances.

[Oliver Tickets](#)

Assessment Reminders

We have been really impressed with year 7s and year 9s Working Hard and Dreaming Big to complete their assessments this week.

Soon it will be the turn of year 8 (from Tues 27th Jan) and year 10 (from Mon 26th Jan). Here is a reminder of the preparation they can be doing at home for these.

Please also be reminded that students should bring their charged Chromebooks in every day and this is especially important in assessment weeks.

[Year 8 Assessment Week 2 Preparation advice - Jan 2026](#)

[Year 10 Assessment Week 2 Preparation advice - Jan 2026](#)

It was fantastic to see so many year 11s and their parents/ carers at our revision event last week. If you missed it, there is a short catch up meeting on Weds 21st Jan at 5.30pm.

[Book your place here: Mrs McMillan](#)

DREAM BIG.WORK HARD.BE KIND.

Student Council Update

Upcoming Fundraising & Non-Uniform Days

Our Student Council has been working closely with school leadership to select a series of awareness days for the remainder of the academic year. We are excited to announce four non-uniform days, each featuring a variety of fundraising activities to support vital causes.

Save the Dates

Please mark your calendars for the following non-uniform days

Friday 30th January: Great Mental Health Day

Friday 6th March: World Book Day

Friday 20th March: Comic Relief

Friday 5th June: Oxford Pride

We kindly request a £1 donation from each student on these days. To ensure the impact is felt both nationally and locally, funds will be split 50/50 between the national awareness campaign (e.g., Comic Relief) and a specific charity chosen by each Year Group. Details on how to pay will be sent via a separate email and confirmed in next week's parent bulletin.

The Charity Shortlist

Each Year Group will soon be allocated their own specific charity to support for the year. The Student Council has shortlisted the following organisations, and students will be voting for their top three preferences in the coming weeks:

- Bicester Food Bank
- Helen & Douglas House
- Cancer Research UK
- Mental health- Oxford Mind
- Homelessness Oxfordshire
- Blue cross
- RSPA
- Children's Book Project
- Action4Youth - Charities Aid Foundation
- Oxfordshire Youth



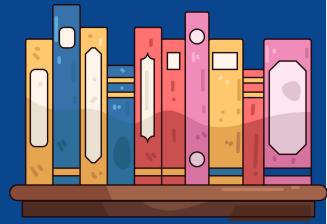
The Year Group Challenge

In tandem with our Pastoral Leaders, the Student Council is keen to foster a sense of community and healthy competition. We look forward to seeing which Year Group can raise the most for their chosen cause!

Once the student votes are in, we will announce the final charity allocations for each year group.

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students make a difference.

National Year of Reading



On Thursday 15th January 2026 the National Year of Reading was launched. Reading has so many benefits. Not only does it help young people in their studies but reading for pleasure has been found to help with creativity, well being, and motivation. To find out more about the National Year of Reading please follow this [link](#)

At The Cooper School all Year 7, 8 and 9 students have a reading lesson timetabled once a fortnight in which we look at what is available to read.

At the moment we are looking at detective writing: Robin Stevens with Year 7, Antony Horowitz with Year 8 and Robert Galbraith with Year 9. We

have many detective fiction novels in The Cooper School Library for students to borrow. Students can take out up to three books at a time and can loan books out for three weeks for free. The library is open before school, at break, lunch and after school. At these times students can use the library for quiet study and reading.

If you are looking for book ideas for your child, the following website has age appropriate lists of books which include a wide range of modern and well established reads,

<https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/secondary-ks3-ks4-reading-lists/> .

🐝 Huge News: Help the Eco-Bees Secure £1,500!🐝

We are thrilled to announce that the TCS Eco-Bees have secured a spot in the Tesco "Stronger Starts" blue coin scheme! From now until the end of March, the Eco-Bees will be featured in ALL Bicester Tesco stores (both the large Superstore and all local Express branches).

🌿 The Goal

This is an amazing opportunity to support biodiversity and environmental improvements at The Cooper School. While we have already secured a minimum of £500, we are aiming for the top prize! If we have the most blue coins by the end of March, we will receive £1,500 toward our green projects, including:

- New planters and vibrant plants to brighten our campus.
- Bird houses and bug hotels to support local wildlife.
- Sustainability projects led by our dedicated students.

📍 Where You Can Vote

Every time you shop, please collect your blue tokens and drop them in the Eco-Bees box at the exit of:

- Tesco Superstore (Lakeview Drive)
- Tesco Express: Langford Village (Nightingale Place)
- Tesco Express: Southwold (Holm Square)
- Tesco Express: Bicester Hart Place (Glory Farm)
- Tesco Express: Bowmont Square (Shakespeare Drive)

💡 How You Can Help

1. **Don't forget to ask:** If you use the self-checkout and don't see tokens, please ask a member of staff—they are usually happy to help!
2. **Spread the word:** Tell friends, family, and neighbors to choose the Eco-Bees box when they do their weekly shop.

Thank you all massively for your support.



Important Health & Safety Reminders

To ensure the safety of all students—especially those with severe allergies and respiratory conditions—please adhere to the following school-wide rules:

-  **No Nut Products:** We are a nut-free school. Please do not send any peanuts, tree nuts, or spreads (like Peanut butter or Nutella) in lunches or snacks. Even trace amounts can be life-threatening to some of our students.
-  **No Aerosols:** Please do not bring spray deodorants, body sprays, or hairsprays to school. These can trigger immediate asthma attacks. Students are encouraged to use roll-on or stick deodorants instead.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our environment safe and inclusive for everyone!



BICESTER CAREERS & APPRENTICESHIP FAIR



Thursday,
12th February



5pm – 7pm



John Paul II Centre
OX26 6AW

Discover exciting opportunities

Get advice on your next steps

Chat with local employers

Bicester Careers & Apprenticeship Fair

Looking to kickstart your career or find the perfect apprenticeship? Join us in person at the Bicester Careers & Apprenticeship Fair! Chat with local employers, discover exciting opportunities, and get advice on your next steps. Whether you're a student, job seeker, or just curious, this event's the place to be. Come along, explore, and network in a friendly atmosphere. Your future starts here!

Book your FREE spot [here](#)

Safeguarding

We have received reports that students from The Cooper School have been joining social media chats and that WhatsApp groups are being set up by individuals outside of school, who claim to be students from various schools. However, the original creators of these groups are unknown to the pupils involved. Alarmingly, we have seen evidence that children in Year 7 and below have been participating in these groups. It is important to note that participants in these chats can use false names, pseudonyms, or impersonate others. These groups can sometimes include hundreds of members, and as they are unfiltered, there have been instances where unsavoury and explicit material has been shared. Additionally, these platforms can unfortunately become venues where rude, mean, or even cruel behaviour takes place.

We fully appreciate that monitoring your child's use of social media can be extremely challenging. With that in mind, we hope the following information will assist you in conversations with your child, should the need arise.

Firstly, regarding unwanted messages on WhatsApp: the app accesses a device's address book and identifies which contacts are using the service. Without a mobile number, people should not be able to contact your child. However, in some cases, numbers might be guessed or shared in other contexts, allowing strangers to initiate contact.

Secondly, your child may receive messages from unknown numbers or from people they do not know well but feel pressured to respond to. Online predators often use grooming tactics to befriend children with the intention of exploiting them, sometimes sending sexually explicit messages or offering gifts in exchange for favours. WhatsApp uses end-to-end encryption, meaning only the sender and receiver can see the messages, which makes monitoring difficult.

Location sharing is another concern. WhatsApp offers a feature that allows contacts to track each other's real-time location. While this is intended as a simple and secure way to share whereabouts, children sharing their location with strangers can be put at serious risk. This feature is similar to others on apps like Snapchat's Snap Map and Facebook Messenger.

Cyberbullying is also a significant issue. This involves sending threatening or humiliating messages, voice notes, pictures, or videos with the intent to cause harm. Group chats, while useful for socialising, can sometimes be used to exclude, blackmail, or hurt others through comments or jokes.

Finally, scam messages occasionally appear on WhatsApp. These may come from fraudsters pretending to offer prizes or warning users that their subscription has expired, aiming to trick recipients into providing payment details. Other scams involve forwarding hoax messages promising rewards. We hope this information helps you support your child in navigating these digital challenges safely. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns or require further advice on safeguarding@thecooperschool.co.uk

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

GUIDING YOUNG VOICES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Bullying impacts the lives of many young people. In the UK, one in five pupils aged 10 to 15 report being bullied. The effects can be long lasting, affecting mental health, school attendance and self-esteem, and can impact long-term development into adult life. Adults play a key role in building young people's confidence to speak out, support one another, and stand up to unkind behaviour. This guide offers ways to help youngsters make a positive difference.

1 CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

Help young people value diversity by showing that what makes us different is also what makes us strong. Encourage them to learn about different cultures, identities, and abilities through books, films, and conversations. By appreciating uniqueness in themselves and others, children can grow into open-minded individuals who build inclusive and welcoming environments.

2 MODEL RESPECT

Children watch and learn from how adults behave. Use respectful language, show patience in disagreements, and treat others with fairness – especially in front of children. By modelling inclusive behaviour and challenging unkindness, adults set a lasting example that respect should be part of every interaction, whether online, at school, or at home. Be the change you want to make.

3 SPOT THE SIGNS

Adults and young people should learn how to recognise signs that someone may be experiencing bullying. This might include withdrawal from friends, hobbies or interests, changes in mood, reluctance to go to school, or unusual injuries. Helping young people recognise these clues ensures that support can be offered sooner and problems do not go unnoticed.

4 VALIDATE FEELINGS

When a child shares something that worries them, it's important to listen carefully and validate how they feel. Respond with empathy – not judgement – and let them know it's okay to feel upset or confused. Offering reassurance and understanding helps young people feel safe about opening up, and builds the trust needed to talk again in future.

5 TEACH ALLYSHIP

Show children how to stand up for others in safe, respectful ways. Allyship might look like sitting next to someone who's been excluded, reporting hurtful behaviour, or speaking up when they witness bullying. By practising these responses together, you're helping children develop the courage to be kind and to take action when it really counts.

Meet Our Expert

Robert Allsop is an experienced pastoral and safeguarding practitioner, specialising in tutorials, behaviour interventions, and attendance management. A recipient of the Diana Award for Anti-Bullying, he has helped raise standards and improve Ofsted outcomes in some of the country's most challenging schools and colleges.



See full reference list on our website.

6 PROMOTE REPORTING

Ensure young people know how to report bullying and feel confident that they'll be taken seriously. Talk to them about who they can speak to and what to expect when they do, such as reporting school incidents to teachers, and out-of-school bullying to parents or teachers. Reassure them that reporting is a brave and helpful choice – not tattling – and that it plays a vital role in keeping everyone safe.

7 ENCOURAGE KINDNESS

Everyday acts of kindness can make a big difference in creating safer, happier spaces. Encourage children to look out for one another by being helpful, saying kind words, or including someone who feels left out. These small actions set a strong example that kindness matters, and that it can be a powerful response to bullying.

8 USE YOUR VOICE

Encourage young people to speak up for themselves and others. Whether through storytelling, school campaigns, or peer-led projects, children can learn that their voice has power. Support them to express themselves confidently and safely, helping them understand that sharing experiences can challenge injustice and inspire real change in their communities.

9 BUILD COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

Children thrive when they feel supported. Help them build strong friendships, join clubs or teams, and connect with trusted adults who care. These networks offer comfort, encouragement, and protection – particularly during challenging times. Remind children that they don't have to face difficulties alone and that support is always within reach.

10 SUSTAIN THE CONVERSATION

Bullying awareness shouldn't be limited to one week each year. Create regular opportunities to talk about kindness, respect, and inclusion. Use books, news stories, and personal experiences as conversation starters. Embed anti-bullying initiatives into the school, and make tackling bullying a shared, ongoing commitment.

#WakeUp
Wednesday®

The
National
College®

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