



— The Cooper School —

# Parent Bulletin

NO 26 - FRIDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026

## Key Dates and Upcoming Events

Monday 20th April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TDP/MenACWY Vaccinations (Year 9)</li></ul>
Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Year 10 Blood Brothers Theatre Trip</li></ul>

**Next week w/c - Monday 20th April 2026 - Week B**

### Headteachers Update - Nathan Thomas CEO

Thank you for the warm welcome at the start of term. It has been a real pleasure to spend time as Headteacher at The Cooper School this week. I have been struck by the positivity, energy and sense of community across School, the students have been a real pleasure to spend time around the school. I have loved teaching my delightful year nine English group and talking to students in assembly about family, careers and their ability to change the world!

One of the highlights of my week has been seeing the work students are producing. As a result, I am delighted to be relaunch something I used to do as a Headteacher 'The Book of Distinction' next week. This is a simple way of recognising outstanding effort and achievement. Students who are invited will come along during break, share their work, receive a certificate and sign the Book of Distinction. It is a small thing, but an important way of celebrating success, and I am very much looking forward to it.

As you would expect in my first week, I have also been making a number of observations about daily school life. We are continuing to focus on high expectations in lessons, particularly around student engagement and positive learning behaviours. Small improvements in this area can make a significant difference to the quality of learning for all students.

I would also ask for your support on a couple of practical points. We have noticed a number of students cycling home without helmets and sometimes wearing headphones, which is a concern from a safety perspective. We will be addressing this in school, but your support in reinforcing this message at home would be very helpful.

We are also continuing to embed our expectations around students not self referring to intervention and first aid etc. This is part of creating a calm, purposeful environment where all students can focus on their learning. If students need to see someone they simply need to ask a teacher first.

Alongside this, we are reviewing some of our systems around student support, including first aid and reception processes, to ensure they are as effective as possible.

Mrs Broom was in this week, as she will be every week on Thursday until the end of May when she takes up post. Today she was consulting with staff on the potential new Cooper Logos as well as meeting with staff to talk about teaching and learning and pastoral support.

Thank you again for your continued support. I have thoroughly enjoyed my first week and look forward to the term ahead.

**DREAM BIG.WORK HARD.BE KIND.**

## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

We're excited to be entering some of our Design & Technology students' into this year's High Sheriffs young Engineer awards 2026

After last year's incredible achievement—where Wojciech, one of our A Level Design & Technology students won the prestigious Award, we're proud to be entering not only our talented Year 13 students this year, but also some amazing work of our GCSE Design & Technology students.

The creativity, innovation, and sheer hard work from our students has been outstanding this year—we can't wait to find out if any of them have been selected for an award.

We are unable to share the work with you, due to exam board rules, so here are some photos from the award ceremony last year



## Supporting Our Students' Future: SEND Employment Newsletter

We are excited to share the latest edition of the SEND Employment Newsletter, a dedicated resource designed to support our students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as they navigate the path toward the professional world.

This month's issue is packed with valuable insights, including:

- General tips, support & information on Supported Internships.
- Employer Spotlight: Find out about Mollies Hotel & Diner and how they approach their recruitment.
- Hear about the experiences from some of our City of Oxford Students who are currently on a Supported Internship (SI).

Click the [here](#) to read



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## SKI TRIP 2026

On Saturday at the start of the Easter holidays 85 students and 10 staff left on a epic journey lasting 26 hours to San Martino ski resort in Italy. We arrived on Sunday afternoon and after settling down in our room, the students were able to go for a wander around the local town. On Monday everyone was up very early as we had to visit the ski hire shop to get skis, helmets and poles. We then caught the gondola to meet up with the ski instructors and get sorted into ability groups. On Tuesday the main slope was closed so the beginners had to use another nursery slope, which really helped build their confidence and improve their skills and by Wednesday they were able to start tackling their first blue run. Some students found this a big challenge whereas others took to it very easily and were soon tackling their first red run. The most advanced groups were taken all over the mountain to test and improve their skills. The middle groups were also soon tackling some of the more challenging red runs and by the end of the week most groups had skied back down to the start of the gondola, going on an icy and sometimes thinning piste.

Our evening entertainment was tobogganing, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Lots of races took place, even the coach driver's took part and raced each other. We all enjoyed a pizza at a restaurant nearby the hotel and then went ice skating at an outdoor arena. It was great to see that by the end of the evening there were very few students hanging onto the edges.

The in house entertainment that was on offer was a quiz night, hosted by Mr Green and then a games evening. All the staff were immensely proud of all the students who took on the challenge of trying this new skill and for some perfecting already learned skills. The behaviour especially on the long journey to Italy and back was outstanding. The students were also respectful of the instructors, coach drivers and teachers, which obviously makes it an easier task for us especially with that number of students. I am immensely proud of them all and I hope that they all enjoyed their trip.



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**Congratulations to our year 11 boys that played in the Rugby International competition, for Bicester RFC, in Malta and won the entire tournament!! We are so proud of you boys and know that you will go on to amazing things inside the world of professional Rugby!**

**A massive thank you to parents and pupils for a really positive start back to term in PE, with regards uniform! It's fantastic to see the majority of pupils in the correct blue uniform at the start of this term! This saves us time as PE teachers at the start of lessons, in terms of checking uniform and issuing sanctions, meaning we can maximise learning time and ensure we can get playing in our lessons from the word go!**

**A reminder that if for some reason the uniform requirements can not be met, that an email must be sent to the school office or the students PE teacher before the start of the day.**

**To all GCSE PE parents and guardians, this is just a reminder that the final, external GCSE PE moderation is taking place on the 1st May 2026. Mr Cook will send out a timetable in due course with the final details of the day via ecomms.**

**A reminder that lunch time PE electives resume this week, with lots going on at both break and lunchtime! There is no need to sign up or wear a PE kit just turn up and play.**

**The PE elective timetable can be found here;  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MU0gWnJ1MJPBKSDmxt5yJxOP0JPJE4nMzY2LhsBrUag/edit?tab=t.0>**

**Have a great weekend!**

**Mr Cook**



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### Public Exams

- EARLY LUNCHES FROM WEDS 6TH MAY - FRI 26TH JUNE -

To accommodate nationally set exam start times for yr 11 and yr 13 exams, lunch will be 12:35-1.10pm for all students between these dates. Students will then have two lessons after lunch, finishing at the usual time of 3.10pm

### End of Year Assessments

Yr 7 & 8 Assessments: 5th - 15th May

Yr 9 Assessments: 18th May - 5th June (either side of half term)

Yr 10 & 12 Mocks: 17th - 26th June

Information about dates and revision advice to follow shortly

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After school revision sessions are still running for all year 11s every day! We would welcome any donations of biscuits, fruit, pastries/ cereal bars, bread, tea bags, hot chocolate, honey, marmite etc  
Also any raffle prizes (eg chocolate, sweets etc)

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### FREE SCHOOL MEALS

We want to ensure all our students stay nourished, even when they aren't feeling well enough to be in the classroom.

If your child is currently eligible for Free School Meals and is at home unwell, you are welcome to arrange a packed lunch for collection from the school office.

Please call or email the school office by 10:00 am

Lunches will be ready for pickup at a designated time (usually during the standard lunch break).



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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# APP & PLAY STORES

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Since the introduction of Apple's App Store and Google's Play Store, an estimated two million apps have been made available on each. Ofcom's 2025 media use and attitudes report states that more than half of children aged between 3 and 7 use apps or sites to communicate with each other, and, by the ages of 10 to 12, 45% of children are playing games on their mobile phones. This guide will help you ensure that children use the app stores and their content safely.

### MALICIOUS APPS WITH MALWARE

Although Google and Apple must approve the apps on their official stores, inappropriate content sometimes slips through the net. For example, in 2025, the security company Kaspersky found that multiple iOS and Android apps contained screen-reading software, primed to look for passwords and stealing crypto-wallet recovery phrases captured in screenshots.

### UNOFFICIAL COPYCAT APPS

Both official app stores contain copycat apps – often games – designed to look like popular rivals, mimicking their branding, layout and logos. While these will usually just offer a poor experience packed with ads as a quick money-making exercise, they're also more likely to be vessels for malware than the products they're counterfeiting.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

As the App Store and Play Store are for all ages, there's a lot of content available that's inappropriate for children. Examples include apps that have references to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence or gambling. In general, these are sensibly age-rated, but social media sites such as YouTube and TikTok, which both have an App Store age rating of 12+, can be gateways to adult material.

### PREDATORY IN-APP PURCHASES

App-making is a business, and most creators have found that 'freemium' software is the way to make money. That means the app will be free initially but will either require the user to watch ads or rely on them making in-app purchases. Some 'free' apps can be predatory, and there are plenty of examples reported where parents have racked up huge bills on behalf of their children's app activity.

### ADDICTIVE BY DESIGN

Phone addiction is fast becoming recognised as a real concern, and apps are a big part of this. Freemium apps have a real incentive to keep children checking in every day in order to generate more ad views or secure extra in-app purchases. This can interfere with schoolwork and other offline hobbies.

### SIDLOADED BANNED APPS

'Sideloading' – the more complicated practice of installing applications on a device from sources other than the official app stores – bypasses Google's and Apple's security procedures; however, it is possible for tech-savvy users. This opens up huge risks – not just apps that would be forbidden by Apple and Google, but pirate ones packed with malware too.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR APPS

Both Google and Apple have apps that can give adults greater control over children's phone activity. 'Screen Time' (iPhone) and 'Family Link' (Android) have a range of features, such as letting you set age-related restrictions on the app stores, require permission to download an app, set daily time limits on specific apps, and control real-world spending.

### DO YOUR RESEARCH

If children ask permission to download an app, do your due diligence and research it. Read the app summary and search the internet for reviews and discussions to establish its legitimacy, safety and appropriateness – if it doesn't seem to be appropriate, look for safer alternatives instead.

### LOOK BEYOND THE REVIEWS

App store reviews are helpful, but they are easily gamed, and some unscrupulous developers will pay for quick reviews to give their work perceived legitimacy. Take more than a cursory glance at listings by digging out the one- and two-star reviews and looking closely at the developer – for example, if they've published a lot of unrelated apps, that's a red flag.

### TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Talk to children and make sure they're aware that apps can be risky. As part of a wider talk about internet literacy, ensure they don't download apps outside of the official channels, nor grant apps permission to access their camera, microphone, or photos without a good reason. Make sure they understand that in-game currency costs real-world money.

### Meet Our Expert

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



## Contact Details:

Telephone Number: 01869 242121

Office/Reception Email: [office@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:office@thecooperschool.co.uk)

Absence/Appointments Email: [absence@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:absence@thecooperschool.co.uk)

For any safeguarding concerns: [safeguarding@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@thecooperschool.co.uk)

IF YOU HAVE ANY SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS OUT OF SCHOOL

HOURS PLEASE CONTACT MASH TEAM ON 0345 050 7666

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