



Whinstone Weekly

Academic Year 2025/2026 - Spring term

Friday 3rd April 2026

Whinstone Wide - General school information

Enrichment at Whinstone

Thank you so much for your responses to our parent enrichment form - we were delighted to receive nearly 100 responses. Your feedback is incredibly valuable and helps us to continue developing opportunities for all of our pupils.

We already offer a wide range of clubs and experiences, including chess, STEM, drama, chat and chill, arts and crafts, pupil leadership opportunities and a variety of sports and residential. Having carefully reviewed your responses, we are now looking at ways to widen our offer even further. For example, it was suggested that planting and gardening opportunities could be made available, and we will be looking to introduce something during lunchtimes in our wildlife area. It was also suggested that Forest School should be available for younger children, and we have already started to implement this. After Easter, we will share further details about what will be available for the summer term. This includes an exciting overnight proposal for our Y5 pupils!

If you would like to provide additional feedback, please send this to admin@whinstone.org.uk for the attention of Mrs Wilson-Dukes.

OPAL Stay and Play event

Yesterday, we were delighted to host our first OPAL Stay and Play event. This provided a wonderful opportunity for parents to experience first-hand the wide range of activities and resources available to children during lunchtimes, as well as to better understand why they may sometimes come home a little muddy or wet!

It was fantastic to see families enjoying the space and engaging with the provision. We have also received some lovely feedback, recognising the dedication of our staff and the significant effort that goes into developing and maintaining our OPAL environment.

While this is very much a whole-team effort, we would like to extend special thanks to Mrs Godwin and Mrs Wilson-Dukes for their leadership and commitment in driving this initiative forward.

One parent shared on social media:

'I just wanted to say a heartfelt thank you for the wonderful OPAL afterschool session held tonight. It was truly appreciated that the teachers, assistants and volunteers gave up their own time to allow parents to see what the children get to experience with OPAL.

The opportunity for the children to explore, play, and learn outdoors in such a creative and engaging way is invaluable, and such a wonderful experience for the children to develop tactile skills, problem solving and the resilience of the outdoors!

Thank you again for going above and beyond. It means a great deal'



It is lovely to receive such positive comments about our school; a school we are undoubtedly very proud of.

After-School Multi-Sports Clubs

We are pleased to share that *Live It and Get Active* will be running their popular after-school multi-sports clubs following the Easter break. These fun and engaging sessions cost £4 per week and can be booked via Arbor. The booking system is now live and will remain open until 10:00am on the first day back at school, so please ensure you secure your child's place in time. Details of the sessions are:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Year 2 Multi-Sports Club Mondays 3:15pm - 4:15pm Dates: 20th April, 27th April, 11th May, 18th May <i>*Please note: 4 weeks only due to the bank holiday on 4th May</i></p> | <p>Year 3 Multi-Sports Club Tuesdays 3:15pm - 4:15pm Dates: 21st April, 28th April, 5th May, 12th May, 19th May</p> |
| <p>Year 4 Multi-Sports Club Wednesdays 3:15pm - 4:15pm Dates: 22nd April, 29th April, 6th May, 13th May, 20th May</p> | <p>Year 5 & 6 Multi-Sports Club Thursdays 3:15pm - 4:15pm Dates: 23rd April, 30th April, 7th May, 14th May <i>*Please note: 4 weeks only due to the Year 6 Carlton Residential.</i></p> |

We look forward to seeing lots of pupils taking part and enjoying these active sessions!

Parents' evenings reminder

A reminder that parents evenings will be held on Wednesday 22nd April to Friday 24th April. All appointments are available to book on Arbor by going to 'Guardian Consultations', selecting the day you require, go to 'Meetings' and click on the time slot you would like, then confirm your booking. Once you have booked a slot, you are unable to cancel or amend any confirmed appointment. If you do need to change or cancel your booked time, please contact Mrs Rees-Grant or Mrs Thomas on admin@whinstone.org.uk or call 01642 750318 and they will be happy to make any adjustments for you.

Whinstone's Got Talent rearranged

We are pleased to be able to inform you that we have new, revised dates for this year's Whinstone's Got Talent which are Wednesday 29th and Thursday 30th April 2026.

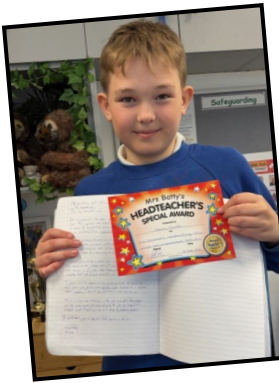
If your child was meant to be performing on the Wednesday night show, then they will be taking part on the show on the 29th. If they were meant to be performing on the Thursday, then they will take part in the show on the 30th.

Children need to arrive at school at 5:45pm and must be accompanied by an adult. The shows will start at 6pm and there will be a short interval where we will have refreshments and raffle tickets on sale. If there are any problems with these dates, please inform school as soon as possible so that we can finalise arrangements in good time.



School is now closed for the Easter break. We hope you all have a lovely two weeks and we look forward to having the children back at school on:
Monday 20th April at 08:45am.

Around Whinstone this week.



Well done to those who earned a Headteacher's certificate from Mrs Batty this week.

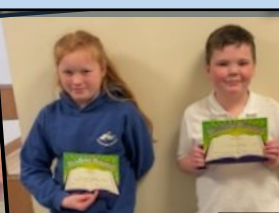


We opened a new zone for OPAL - Water Zone



We had our first OPAL Stay and Play event.

Mrs Gibson was delighted to present to each class a winner for reading this term. These children have shown they are keen to make progress, have found a new love for a genre (graphic novels inspired by World Book Week) or have continued to be committed to reading as they understand its importance.



Our KS1 children had an Easter assembly in school, whilst our KS2 children had an Easter Liturgy at the church.



Year 2 had a maths Easter egg hunt.



One of our Y1 children and her family made this amazing addition to our rockery area.



Year 2 were taking photos of wildlife for their computing lesson.



Representatives from DHL came in to deliver sessions on safety around vans for all KS2 children.



Our Year 4 children went on a residential to Robinwood.



We held our annual egg decorating competition. Once again, there were some amazing creations!



The winners of the egg decorating competition were....



Whinstone Stars

Vinnie travelled to Scotland to compete in a motocross event. He achieved five out of six possible 1st places which meant he was the overall winner of the Northern Elite Tournament.

Well done, Vinnie.



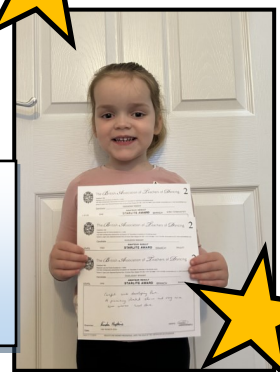
Maddison took one ballet exam and two acro exams. She achieved a pass in each of them and was commended for her exceptional performance.

Well done, Maddison.



Hadleigh took two ballet exams and an acro exam. She earned a pass in each one with a special recognition from her teacher for her wonderful discipline for such a young dancer.

Well done, Hadleigh!



Would you rather...?



Oracy - talk matters!

This week's random question to discuss with your child.

| | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| WOULD YOU RATHER | | WEEK BEGINNING 06/04/26 |
| HAVE TO SING EVERYTHING YOU SAY ALL DAY? | OR | DANCE EVERY TIME YOU ENTER A ROOM? |
| | | |

Whinstone next week

Digital Leaders

Some of our Digital Leaders are heading to Teesside University for an afternoon.

Year 5 and Year 6 Boys' Football tournament

Our boys' team that made it through the first round, are playing their previously cancelled match on Thursday.

Parents' evening taking place

Parents' evenings are taking place over three nights—Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Don't forget to book your appointment on your Arbor app.

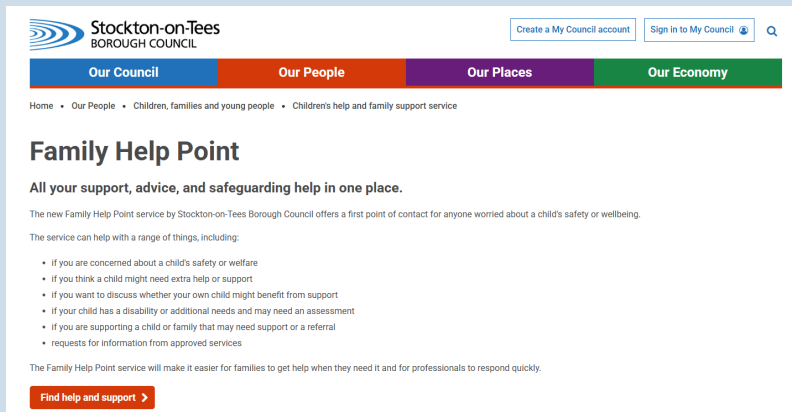
Y6 Carlton residential parents' meeting

On Wednesday, there is a meeting for any parents or carers of children going to Carlton. This starts at 3:15.

School is now closed until Monday 20th April.

Safeguarding update

Stockton Family Help Point



Stockton on Tees have now separated from Hartlepool for all things regarding Safeguarding.

They are pleased to announce that from 1st April 2026, there is a new Family Help Point.

This is the service that gives everybody, including professionals, parents and carers, a central point to seek support or report safeguarding concerns.

The new Family Help Point portal can be accessed by clicking [this link](#).

You will also notice that our safeguarding information has now been updated below.

Safeguarding :

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school is **Mrs Batty**.

Our other safeguarding leads in school are:



Mrs Wilson-Dukes

Mr Carlton

Mrs Squires

Mr Ford



If you are worried about a child, please contact the Stockton Family Help Point using [this link](#).

Or, during working hours call: 01642 130080 or Email: familyhelppoint@stockton.gov.uk

In an emergency, please contact the Police on **101** or **999**.

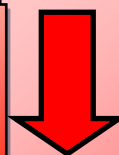


Attendance

Not a great end to the term as our attendance has dropped. We are confident that next term we will see some big improvements.

Miss Owens is available to support and help with any issues you have regarding attendance or to support around other concerns you have affecting your family. Contact the school if you would like to speak with her.

Whole school attendance
(year to date)



94.8%

National average =
94.6%

Safeguarding and Family Support



protecting children, supporting families



Stand up against child exploitation in Cleveland: Become a Community Guardian



Children are being harmed by exploiters on and offline in every neighbourhood, and too often it goes unseen. That's why we're looking for Community Guardians across Cleveland, people who are willing to use their position in the community to help spot the signs, raise concerns, and build stronger networks of protection for children.

Who are Community Guardians?

Community Guardians are everyday people who play a vital role in keeping children safe from being groomed and exploited by staying alert, knowing the warning signs, and being ready to share concerns. We would like to hear from people who have good connections in their local communities, who can see and hear what is happening on the ground.

This could be:

- Shop workers
- Business owners
- Park wardens
- Street cleaners
- Youth workers
- Group leaders
- Volunteers



Benefits of becoming a Community Guardian

- Create safer futures for children in Cleveland.
- Support the reduction of crime in your area.
- Connect with like-minded members of your local community.
- Improve your understanding of child exploitation.
- Receive free accredited training.



Help make a real difference in your community and sign up today.

ivisontrust.org.uk/communityguardians

About Iverson Trust
Iverson Trust is a national charity working to keep children safe from exploitation by supporting parents, disrupting exploiters and working in partnership with police and family services.

Iverson Trust Registered Charity No. 1092560.
Company limited by guarantee in England & Wales No. 4249272.



protecting children, supporting families

Keep Children Safe From Exploitation



Community Guardian Training

The Rings Community Hub, Ingleby Barwick, Thornaby, Stockton on Tees, TS17 5LL

23 April, 12.30 - 3.30pm

Children are being harmed in our communities, and too often it goes unseen. We're training people to become Community Guardians in Cleveland, so you can understand what child exploitation is, and what to do if you see signs of children being harmed. Please join us at to our next training session.

What you will learn

- Understand what child exploitation is.
- Learn how to spot child exploitation.
- Understand how children are being groomed online and in your community.
- Feel confident to raise your concerns and share information.

About Iverson Trust

We provide parents and carers with support, advocacy and advice about keeping children safe from exploitation.



Iverson Trust Registered Charity No. 1092560.
Company limited by guarantee in England & Wales No. 4249272.

Book your place →

Scan the QR code



If you are interested in becoming a Community Guardian, or you want to know more, [complete this form](#) and they will send you information about their first training course.

Book your place →

Scan the QR code



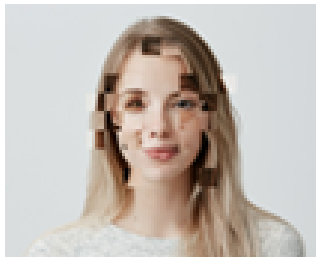
THE SAFEGUARDING TIMES

'Staying Safe Online' Edition

Written by young people, for young people.

Deepfakes: What You Need to Know

Written by KS4 Students from Ingleby Manor



You've probably seen videos online that look real, but something just feels... off. Welcome to the world of deepfakes — videos or images where AI changes someone's face, voice, or actions to make it look like they did or said something they never actually did.

Sometimes it's obvious, but most times it is hard to spot. If it looks a bit unrealistic, trust your gut — it probably is.

Here are some quick ways to spot a deepfake:

- The person's mouth doesn't match the words properly.
- Their voice sounds kind of robotic or computer-y.
- There are strange watermarks or signs that AI was used.
- Something just feels... off. (Yes, your brain is actually good at noticing this!)

The big thing to remember?

You can't believe everything you see online.

So stay smart, stay curious, and always think twice before sharing something that seems a little too wild to be real.

What Is Online Blackmail?

Written by KS3 Student Council at St Hild's CofE School

Online blackmail, sometimes called 'Sextortion', is when someone threatens to share private information, images, or videos—stuff you'd never want shared - unless something is done for them (often asking for money or gift cards). It is a form of abuse and is a criminal offence.

What are the warning signs?

- They might have a fake profile (not much content, very few images, no mutual friends).
- They try to get to know you very quickly.
- It seems too good to be true - they might pretend to be a modelling scout or say they can help you make quick money etc.
- They pressure you to do things you're not comfortable with.

What to do if something feels wrong, or if someone is threatening you:

- Report the account to the app you're using
- Block the account
- Talk to a trusted adult (parent, teacher, youth worker—anyone you feel safe with).
- If someone is threatening you, tell the police straight away, you can also report it CEOP.

If someone has shared an image or video of you online without your consent and you're under 18, you can get help to get it removed from Report Remove, and Take It Down.



CEOP



Report Remove



Take It Down



For more information, support, resources and more, visit the HSSCP Children and Young People's webpage!

People Who Help Us: Cyber Crime

Written by KS3 Students at High Tunstall College of Science

Earlier this term, we interviewed Kelly Close, who is a Cyber Protect and Prepare Officer for Cleveland Police. Kelly works to make the online space safer for all, including helping to protect young people from cyber-crimes. We put together a Q&A to find out more about the work that Kelly does and how she helps to make the online space safer.

What is your role and how do you help to protect young people online?

Protecting young people online can be very challenging as most of our lives are online now – young people spend lots of time online talking, playing games, social media etc. My role includes looking for the risks online. I also do lots of webinars online with parents to help them to recognise what they need to know and help them to understand the risks and how to manage them.

I also help them to learn how to spot AI – there is something called AI hallucinations where it will 'fill in the gaps' if it doesn't know all the information, which can lead to some pretty big mistakes! AI can have a darker side too and can be used inappropriately at times which can be very serious for the victims and can have very serious consequences for the perpetrator, even if they didn't realise that what they were doing was illegal.

What is the most common cyber-crime you see that affects young people?

For young people, it is social media account take-over to try and scam for money or things like concert tickets. Once someone has taken your account, it can be very difficult to get it back and the hackers often use it to try and scam your friends who are linked to your account.



Unfortunately, one of the other most common crimes against young people online is 'sextortion', which is where someone might ask for private images and use this to try to blackmail a young person. It is very serious and needs to be reported at the earliest opportunity so we can help to protect the young people who might be involved.

What advice would you give to young people to help them use the internet safely?

Think BEFORE you post or share. There are tools that can help to get things taken down, but there is a limit to what can be done once something is up on the internet and please remember that there can be very real-world consequences to what happens online. Use really strong passwords and use a good core password for your account – NEVER have the word 'password' as part of your password! If something happens, please tell someone and get help.

Don't click any links, especially on sites like Discord.

Make sure your devices are updated as they often include fixes for security issues. Most importantly, look after each other.