



Weekly Bulletin 12th January 2026

[Headteacher's Message](#)

Welcome back to the Spring term. I would like to thank everyone for their patience and good spirit during the recent snowy weather.

This term, a key focus will be supporting our Year 11 students as they build on the progress made in their mock examinations. We have a programme of planned intervention in place, including additional support during tutor time, targeted PSHE sessions, and time allocated within Business Studies lessons.

We are also pleased to welcome visitors from Higher Horizons and Small Steps, who will be working with our students over the coming weeks.

In other news from the Penk Valley Academy Trust, the new parent code of conduct document has been published on the school website. Please take a minute to have a look.

SEN Update – Strong Attendance, Strong Foundations



As we begin this half term, I would like to thank you for your continued support and to celebrate the positive start our students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities have made.

We are incredibly proud of the effort our students show each day. SEN progress is not always measured in big leaps, but in growing confidence, stronger routines, and a willingness to keep trying.

Strong Attendance, Strong Foundations

We are particularly proud of the **strong attendance** shown by our SEN pupils. Regular attendance is vital for building confidence, establishing routines, and supporting learning and wellbeing, especially for pupils with additional needs. Thank you for working so closely with us to support this.

Targeted Support: Small Steps, Lasting Impact

Our SEN provision continues to focus on small, consistent steps that lead to long-term success. This half term, pupils will access a range of targeted, evidence-informed interventions to build skills, independence, and self-belief:

- **Lexonik** – supporting reading accuracy, spelling, and vocabulary through structured literacy approaches proven to improve outcomes.
- **Touch Typing** – enabling pupils to record ideas more fluently by reducing the physical demands of writing.

- **Handwriting** – developing fine motor skills, letter formation, and writing fluency to build confidence and focus on content.
- **ELSA** – providing emotional support to develop regulation, resilience, and positive relationships.
- **PSHE (adapted for SEN learners)** – focusing on emotional wellbeing, self-awareness, and communication.
- **Talkabout** – running separately to support social communication, confidence, and peer relationships.

Access Arrangements

We are pleased to confirm that **access arrangements for all Year 11 students are now complete**, ensuring pupils can demonstrate their knowledge fairly and confidently in examinations.

Later this term, we will begin **assessing Year 10 students** for access arrangements to ensure appropriate support is identified well in advance. Parents and carers will be informed as assessments take place.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss SEN support, please contact the SEN team at **SEN@ruralenterpriseacademy.com**

Mrs Fiddler

SENCO



1 - Strong Foundations for Wellbeing

Supporting emotional regulation is a key part of our SEN provision and helps pupils build strong routines, maintain positive attendance, and engage in learning.

In school, pupils are supported through:

- Safe spaces to reset when emotions feel overwhelming
- Calming strategies such as breathing and grounding
- Emotion check-ins to help pupils recognise and manage feelings
- Mental health drop-ins at lunchtime
- Reset for movement or sensory breaks where needed
- PSHE programme

We are seeing a positive impact, with more pupils asking for help, using coping strategies, and returning to learning more quickly after becoming overwhelmed.

Year 11 focus: As exams approach, we recognise this can be a demanding time emotionally.

Pupils are being supported to manage exam stress through clear routines, breaking work into manageable steps, planned breaks, and knowing when and how to ask for support.

Maintaining well-being during this period is essential for both attendance and exam readiness.

If you have concerns about your child's well-being or feel they may need additional support, please contact the SEN team at SEN@ruralenterpriseacademy.com.

Families may also find external support helpful

[The Sandbox](#)

[BEEU](#)

[Staffordshire Mental Health Apps](#)

[Staywell](#)

[Young Minds Exam Support](#)

Key Dates



28th January 2026 Coffee Afternoon SEN parents

24th March 2026 KS4 APDR Meetings

26th March 2026 KS3 APDR Meetings

Year 10 Parent/Carer Communications Survey

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share feedback about how we communicate with families. Although this was a small pilot group, your comments help us understand what works well and what we can improve.

What's Going Well

Strong communication when it matters

Families feel that staff communicate clearly, especially when there is an issue or something important that needs attention. Phone calls home, in particular, were highlighted as being helpful and reassuring.

Class Charts works well for most parents

Many parents check Class Charts daily or several times a week, and most say they find it very easy or easy to use.

Positive overall experience

Most responses described communication as “somewhat satisfied” or better, with several parents expressing that the school has **improved communication significantly compared to previous experiences.**

Areas We Can Improve

More consistent communication in one place

A few parents mentioned it would be easier if **all messages came through a single platform**, rather than a mix of Class Charts, ParentPay, emails, and phone calls.

Clearer, quicker updates

Some families would appreciate certain messages being sent a little sooner, especially reminders.

Better personalisation

Suggestions included:

1. Shorter, more focused newsletters

2. Celebrating pupils' achievements more
3. Emails clearly stating **which child** the message refers to

Absence communication

A small number of parents felt that absence information isn't always passed on consistently between different school systems.

Newsletters

Parents told us they often or sometimes read the newsletter, but many rated the content as only "somewhat satisfying." You would like:

1. More **concise updates**
2. More **child-specific or year-specific information**
3. Clearer signposting to important dates

Parents' Evening Booking

Most parents found the online booking system easy to use, although one parent experienced difficulty finding a suitable appointment time. We will review the availability and release of slots to help reduce this issue.

A Selection of Comments From Parents

"Communication is clear when given."

"Always call to tell if there's a problem."

"All communication through the same platform would be great."

"Please specify which child in the email."

"Keep up the good work – a massive improvement from previous school."

What We're Going to Do Next

Based on your feedback, we will:

1. **Review how we use Class Charts**, with the aim of making it the main hub for messages where possible.
2. **Improve newsletter format**, making it shorter and more focused, with clearer celebrations of pupils' achievements.
3. **Increase clarity in emails**, including naming the specific child where relevant.
4. **Explore offering text reminders** for important notices, to avoid emails going to junk.
5. **Look at parents' evening slots** to ensure they are accessible for everyone.
6. **Offer alternative communication formats** (e.g., printed copies) for families who need them.

♥ Thank You

Your feedback is invaluable and helps us continue improving communication between school and home. If you have any further thoughts, please don't hesitate to get in touch



2 - Information from the Children's Commissioner

Dear Headteacher,

I am writing to inform you that I have recently published a new guide, [What I wish my parents or carers knew: A guide for parents on managing children's digital lives](#).

Supporting children's safety is a shared responsibility between families, schools and wider society. For parents and carers, this responsibility has become increasingly complex as children's lives are now deeply intertwined with the digital world. Many parents face difficult decisions about how to balance protecting children from online harm with enabling access to spaces that are now central to learning, socialising and play.

The last time I published a guide like this, *The things I wish my parents had known: Young people's advice on talking to your child about online sexual harassment*, in December 2021, it was to help parents and carers navigate difficult conversations about sexual harassment online. This guide is different in scope, in recognition of the complex, rapidly evolving landscape in which children – and parents – are navigating. It focuses on the challenge of managing children's everyday online habits.

This guide was written with the direct involvement of children in England. It is a reflection of their views. My office visited schools to speak to teenagers, and spoke to my Youth Ambassadors and Youth Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Panel to get their expertise on what works and what doesn't work between parents or carers and children in the 21st Century.

When I speak to children about what they would do differently when it comes to being online, with the benefit of hindsight, I ask them: would they give a smartphone to their own teenager? Almost unanimously, they tell me no. They want to be protected from it as long as possible.

As educators and leaders, you play a vital role in supporting parents and carers to navigate these challenges. Responses to my recent school survey show just how concerned school leaders are about their children's safety online, despite most already taking steps to limit or ban devices from the classroom. Children are clear that they value firm, informed and protective boundaries when adults have concerns about the content they are accessing online.

As parents, carers, and educators, our job must begin and end with our children's care and safety. It's what they expect and what they want from you.

As one young person told me: "Don't be afraid to be firm... If you are worried [that] your child is seeing harmful content and you don't know what they're watching and it's affecting the behaviour, just take it that you know best – they don't."

I hope this guide will be a useful resource for your school community, and I encourage you to share it with staff and parents where appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Dame Rachel de Souza

Children's Commissioner