



Mapplewells Primary and Nursery School Weekly Newsletter - Friday 4th September 2026

Welcome Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome Back!

A very warm welcome back to all of our children, families and staff as we begin another exciting school year at Mapplewells. We hope you had a wonderful summer break and enjoyed spending quality time with family and friends.

It has been fantastic to see the school buzzing with energy once again as children return with smiles, enthusiasm and a readiness to learn. A special welcome goes to our new Nursery and Reception children, along with any new families joining our school community. We are delighted to have you as part of the Mapplewells family.

The start of a new year always brings a sense of excitement and possibility. We are looking forward to a year filled with learning, achievement, creativity, friendship and memorable experiences. As always, we remain committed to ensuring that every child feels happy, safe and supported, enabling them to flourish both academically and personally.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Working together, we can ensure that every child has the opportunity to achieve their very best and embody all that it means to be a proud Mapplewellian.

We wish everyone a happy, successful and enjoyable year ahead.

Read on for all things Mapplewells...

'Meet the Teacher and Welcome' Sessions

Over the next couple of weeks we will be hosting our 'Meet the Teacher' sessions. During the session the teachers discuss the year group expectation, demonstrate and model activities that will help support your child and answer any potential questions you may have. These sessions are a wonderful opportunity for you to see what your child is doing in school and to see how best to support their English and Maths skills at home.

School Arrangements

As many of you will be aware, the school day begins at **8:45am** and finishes at **3:15pm**.

Nursery session times are:

- **Morning session:** 8:35am to 11:35am
- **Afternoon session:** 12:35pm to 3:35pm

For children accessing the **30-hour childcare provision**, the Nursery day runs from **8:35am to 3:35pm**.

Each morning, the school gates will open at **8:35am**, allowing children to enter the school site and make their way to their classrooms in readiness for the start of the school day. The gates will close promptly at **8:50am**.

This is an important safeguarding measure, as children begin moving around the school site independently after this time. We therefore ask all families to ensure that children arrive within the designated entry window to help us maintain a safe and secure environment for everyone.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast club is available and is led by Mrs Scott. Breakfast Club starts at 7.45am and will run to when children are delivered to their classes at the start of the school day. The cost is £5 per child per day. Children who are eligible for income based free school meals will receive a 50% discount and service children are able to receive 5 free sessions every half term.

Reporting absence

If your child will not be attending school, parents/carers are asked to make contact by 10.00am on the first day of absence by personal contact or telephone call informing the school of the reason for the absence and/or nature of any illness. They are also asked to inform the school if there is a likely return date.

If your child has a medical or dental appointment, please provide us with a copy of the appointment letter. It is expected that appointments of this nature will only require 1 session of absence. In the event that school are not provided with a reason for absence, the parent/carer will be contacted via telephone and via letter if a reason can't be obtained from this.

Parents wishing to request a leave of absence should complete an 'Application for withdrawal from learning form' (available from Reception), explaining the circumstances and providing a minimum of 4 weeks' notice. Head Teachers are only permitted to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. School will then confirm receipt of the application and outline any potential further action.

School Uniform

School Uniform Policy Update

As part of our annual review of school policies, we have updated our School Uniform Policy for 2026-27. The revised policy has been designed to ensure that our expectations remain clear, fair, affordable and inclusive for all families while continuing to promote the high standards that we value at Mapplewells.

What has changed?

The majority of our uniform expectations remain the same, however we have made several improvements to reflect current national guidance and feedback from families.

Affordability

We recognise the ongoing cost-of-living pressures faced by many families. Our updated policy makes it clear that branded uniform items are optional and that generic items purchased from supermarkets and local retailers are perfectly acceptable. We have also strengthened our commitment to supporting access to pre-loved uniform wherever possible.

Inclusion and Equality

The revised policy includes clearer guidance about reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, medical needs, disabilities, religious requirements and cultural practices. We are committed to ensuring that all children feel comfortable, included and able to access school life fully.

PE Kit

We have simplified the information about PE clothing and clarified that children should continue to come to school in their PE kit on their allocated PE days. This helps maximise learning time and avoids the need for changing during the school day.

Jewellery and Smart Watches

The policy now includes clearer guidance regarding jewellery and the growing use of smart watches. For health, safety and safeguarding reasons, smart watches with communication, photography or internet functions should not be worn in school. Pupils may continue to wear a simple wristwatch and one pair of small stud earrings.

A Supportive Approach

Perhaps most importantly, the revised policy reflects our commitment to working positively with families. If parents or carers experience difficulties in meeting uniform expectations, we encourage them to speak to us. We will always seek to support families sensitively and practically.

Looking Our Mapplewellian Best

We know that wearing a smart school uniform helps to create a sense of pride, belonging and community. Thank you for your continued support in helping our children look their best and represent Mapplewells so positively every day. We are proud of our wonderful Mapplewellians and the way they wear their uniform with pride.

A full copy of the updated School Uniform Policy is available on the school website and from the school office on request.

Attendance

Mapplewells is committed to working together with parents and carers to ensure the highest possible attendance, which will in turn support the progress of our children, enabling them to achieve the best outcomes and access the best opportunities possible. You can support the school, and your child, to achieve attendance targets by:

- Making sure your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Contacting school on the first day of any absence
- Informing school of any problems that may impact your child's attendance, punctuality, and learning.
- Arrange routine medical appointments outside of school time. If this is not possible, please bring your child in prior to their appointment and ensure they return to school afterwards.
- Ensuring children are ready for school by having good morning and bedtime routines.
- Ensure that you do not book holidays in term time.
- If you feel your child is too ill to come to school, please try to provide medical evidence. This can be prescription medication, an appointment card, or a prescription.

Our current school attendance after 1 week is 97.04%. Our current attendance by class is:

Birch 98%

Elder 98%

Elm 97%

Hawthorn 100%

Hazel 100%

Juniper 100%

Maple 98%

Oak 98%

Pine 98%

Rowan 93%

Willow 95%

Well done to Hawthorn, Hazel & Juniper classes on their fantastic attendance this week!

Regular attendance plays a vital role in children's learning, progress and wellbeing. We can work together to ensure every child has the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential.



Headteacher Awards

Each week, I will be presenting Headteacher's Awards to children who have been nominated by staff for a variety of reasons — from producing amazing work, going above and beyond, to simply demonstrating what it means to be a wonderful Mapplewellian. These awards celebrate the values we hold dear and recognise the exceptional efforts of our pupils. We'll proudly share the names of our award winners in each edition of the newsletter, so keep an eye out for these special celebrations!

This week's recipients of a Headteacher's Award are:

- **Prisitine** - practicing his handwriting throughout the summer holidays and making a great start in his writing.

Class Dojo

At Mapplewells, we continue to use **Class Dojo** as a valuable tool for strengthening communication between home and school, as well as celebrating and supporting your child's learning journey. We will continue to use the platform to share updates, achievements and important information throughout the school year.

Whilst we aim to respond to messages as promptly as possible, this is not always feasible during the school day. We kindly ask parents and carers to be mindful that staff have teaching responsibilities during the day and family commitments outside of school. As such, staff are not expected to check or respond to messages outside of their working hours, which are **8:00am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday**.

If a matter is urgent or requires an immediate response, please contact the school office directly, as teachers may not be able to access messages until after pupils have been dismissed at the end of the school day.

Thank you for your continued support in using Class Dojo positively and effectively to support our children's learning and strengthen the partnership between home and school.

Together, we can ensure the very best outcomes for every child.



Guidance for using ClassDojo

Please use the following guidance for appropriate use of the teacher / parent messaging facility

 To request some support from the teacher via a phone call or a face to face meeting.	 To enquire about your child's progress – a phone call or face to face meeting is more appropriate for these matters.
To send a general short message that doesn't need a response from the teacher e.g. "Ella has forgotten her swim kit, I will drop off at school later this morning".	To send a message about absence, medical appointments, dinner enquiries or pick up arrangements. These messages should be sent to the school office.
To send a photo, certificate, or any special event they'd like to share with the class such as a recent achievement, a celebration, or a proud moment.	To make a complaint. Any complaints should be put in writing and sent to the school office for the attention of the class teacher in the first instance.

Parking and Road Safety

To help keep our children safe and support the local community, we strongly encourage families to walk to school wherever possible. If you do need to travel by car, we kindly ask that you park safely, legally and with consideration for our neighbours.

As a school, we are proud to be part of the local community and value the positive relationships we have with residents living on the streets surrounding the school. We therefore ask parents and carers to be particularly mindful of where they park, avoiding blocking driveways, parking across dropped kerbs, obstructing pavements or causing inconvenience to those who live nearby. A little extra consideration can make a big difference to our neighbours and helps maintain good relationships within our community.

Please note that the **staff car park is not available for parent or carer use**. The only exception is the two designated disabled parking bays, which are reserved exclusively for Blue Badge holders. Vehicles parked in these bays without a valid Blue Badge may be asked to move.

We would also like to remind families that **Nottinghamshire County Council operates CCTV parking enforcement outside schools**. Enforcement vehicles regularly visit schools across the county and record vehicles parked in contravention of parking restrictions. Where parking regulations have been breached, the registered keeper may receive a **Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)**.

These restrictions are in place to protect our children, particularly at the start and end of the school day when many pupils and families are crossing roads and gathering near the school entrance. By parking responsibly and showing consideration for both the safety of our children and the residents who live around our school, you can help ensure that the area remains safe, accessible and welcoming for everyone.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us care for both our school community and our neighbours.

Online Safety

What Parents and Carers Need to Know About What is Real Online

From deepfake videos and cloned voices to fabricated screenshots and fake accounts, it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell what is genuine online. This guide explores how AI-generated content, misinformation and impersonation can affect children and young people, while explaining why polished presentation, familiar voices and repeated claims should never automatically be taken as proof that something is trustworthy.

It also offers practical advice for parents and educators on strengthening children's digital literacy and safeguarding them from manipulation. Discover how to encourage source-checking, verify unusual messages through another route, discuss online experiences openly and respond appropriately when harmful or deceptive content targets a child – including preserving evidence, reporting concerns and seeking further support where necessary.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, facts and tips, please visit [thenationalcollege.com](https://www.thenationalcollege.com).

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHAT'S REAL ONLINE

Children are growing up in a digital world where seeing and hearing no longer mean they can always believe. One major emerging concern is what UNESCO describes as 'synthetic media': AI-generated audio, images or video, including deepfakes, that can convincingly imitate a person's voice or likeness. As these tools become easier to access, children may encounter manipulated content, cloned voices, and fabricated messages that appear or sound real. Parents and educators therefore need to help them question what they experience online, which can often feel harder when we're experiencing it for the first time, too.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AI-GENERATED CONTENT

Artificial intelligence can now create realistic images, audio, video, and text in a very short time. Online, children may encounter fabricated news clips, AI 'influencers', chat conversations, or already recorded events without ever realising they are fake. The real challenge is that the content often looks printed and convincing. Parents and educators need to help children understand that professional-looking content is not automatically reliable and that all digital material should be questioned before it is trusted or shared.

DEEPFAKES LOOK CONVINCING

Deepfakes use AI to alter or create images and videos that appear to show a real person doing or saying something that never happened. They are sometimes used to spread false information, embarrass someone, or target people through bullying and harassment. Deepfakes can also be used to spread false information, such as fake news, or to spread false information, such as fake news, or to spread false information, such as fake news.

FALSE INFORMATION SPREADS

Misinformation is false or misleading information. Disinformation is deliberately created to deceive others. Both types can spread quickly through social media, messaging apps, and video platforms. Their popularity, repetition, and convincing presentation can make these false claims feel true. Children may also be more likely to trust content shared by friends, influencers, or family accounts, making source-checking and verification essential parts of navigating their digital literacy.

VOICES CAN BE CLONED

AI tools can copy someone's voice using only a short audio sample. A child may receive a call or voice note that appears to come from a parent, friend, teacher, or trusted adult, but the voice is in genuine. These messages can be used to create panic, request money, obtain information, or pressure a child into doing something. A family voice is no longer enough to confirm someone's identity, especially when a message is urgent or critical.

ACCOUNTS MAY BE FAKE

Not every online profile represents the person it claims to be. Fake accounts may represent a stranger, a pupil, a teacher, a family member, or someone connected to the child. They can be used for cyberbullying, sexting, grooming, or manipulation. A convincing photograph, username, or message does not prove that an account is genuine. Children should be cautious when someone asks for their or someone else's personal information, images, passwords, money, or access to private accounts.

ALGORITHMS INFLUENCE REALITY

Many online platforms, such as social media, are shaped by algorithms that recommend content based on what users like, watch, like, and share. This means children do not see a neutral or balanced version of the world. They may repeatedly encounter similar opinions, misleading claims, or increasingly extreme content. Over time, this repetition can make an opinion feel more common or credible than it really is, because the child may never see the opinion opposed or countered.

Advice for Parents & Educators

PAUSE, CHECK, COMPARE

Teach children not to accept content as true simply because it looks professional, sounds confident, or has been widely shared. Encourage them to pause, identify the original source, check the date, and compare the claim with another reliable source. Ask questions such as: Who created that? What evidence is provided? Could anything have been altered? What is the real motive? Parents, age-appropriate practice helps children develop the critical thinking needed to navigate their online worlds.

VERIFY ANOTHER WAY

A familiar face, voice, or account is no longer enough to confirm someone's identity. If a message is unusual, urgent, or asks for secrecy, money, personal information, or immediate action, children should verify it through a separate route. They should be encouraged to call the person directly using a known number, speak to them face to face, or check with another trusted adult. Families can also agree a private code phrase to help them authenticate genuine emergency messages from each other. This should be something serious, non-personal, and known only to the family.

KEEP TALKING OPENLY

Create regular, non-judgemental conversations about what children see, hear, and experience online. Make sure you use parental controls where appropriate and understand each platform's age rating. Asking children about new platforms, influencers, unusual messages, or content they are unsure about can help open up valuable conversations. Avoid immediately blaming the child or removing their device, as this may discourage them from disclosing their concerns in the future.

SAVE, REPORT, SUPPORT

When fake content, impersonation, or manipulation targets a child, take it seriously, even if the material is fabricated. Save relevant messages, usernames, links, and screenshots without sharing the content any further. Report it through the platform, follow safeguarding procedures, and escalate concerns involving threats, grooming, sexual content, sexting, or extortion. Be aware that creating or sharing fake content, even as a so-called 'joke', can have serious consequences for them and others, and may be difficult to remove once shared online.

Meet Our Expert

Philippa Weatherall is an educator, author and digital transformation specialist with expertise in digital safeguarding, online safety, AI in education and whole-school digital strategy. She is the founder and CEO of CollapTION and works with schools, organisations and policymakers to help create safer, more ethical and more effective digital learning environments for children and young people.

See full reference list on our website

[X @wake_up_weds](https://www.wake_up_weds.com)
[f /www.thenationalcollege](https://www.thenationalcollege.com)
[@wake_up_wednesday](https://www.wake_up_weds.com)
[@wake_up.weds](https://www.wake_up_weds.com)

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 19.08.2026

Key dates

Please keep updated with our key dates as we add to this. Our term dates are published on the website - <https://www.mapplewellsprimary.co.uk/page/?title=Useful+Information&pid=86>

Diary Dates	
2026	
September	
14 th September	Year 5 and 6 trip to National Holocaust Museum
October	
16 th October	Last day of Autumn 1 term
November	
2 nd November	1 st day of Autumn 2 term
12 th November	Foundation Diwali Dance Workshop
December	
1 st December	School trip to the Panto
18 th December	Last day of Autumn 2 term
2027	
January	
4 th January	1 st day of Spring 1 term
April	
26 th April	Year 4 residential
July	
23 rd July	Last day of Summer 2 term
26 th July	INSET day
27 th July	INSET day
28 th July	INSET day

Mr Whittle

Head Teacher

Mr Latkowski

Deputy Headteacher