

ST. JAMES' (C OF E) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day.



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2025

YEAR 4 DIGESTION WORKSHOP...

On Tuesday, our Year 4 children took part in a Digestion Workshop. They were discovering some interesting, and in some cases, pretty gross, facts about the digestive system and how the body works!

YEAR 3 TRIP...

On Wednesday, our Year 3 children visited Derby Museum as part of their theme work for this half-term. After the museum, the children also visited Derby Cathedral for part of their RE work. They had a wonderful time and their behaviour was fantastic.

ATHLETE VISIT...

On Wednesday, Nekoda Smythe-Davis, a former Commonwealth gold medalist in Judo, visited school to run some fitness workshops with the children. A huge well done to everyone who took part... it looked very tiring!

YEAR 5 & 6 MEGAFEST...

On Wednesday, some children in years 5 and 6 took part in a sports Megafest at Derby Tennis centre. The children took part in a variety of different sports and had a great time.

ZOOLAB...

On Thursday, children in year 6 had a hands-on experience with Zoolab! Children were able to learn about a variety of different animals, and even had the opportunity to hold a snake! I was especially pleased when the tarantula was put back in the box! Although, Leonard and Miss Mac decided it would be a good idea to show me a photo of it on the iPad 🐍🦋

RAMMIE'S FITNESS CLUB...

Today, we had a very special visitor to collective worship! Rammie came into school to introduce the new Rammie's Fitness Club that will be running at lunchtimes. The idea of the club is to improve fitness and stamina in fun ways! Anyone can join... you might even see me joining in too! More details will be shared soon.



This week's theme for the Golden Book is 'Someone who is always kind to others.'

This week's winners are:

3R	Ruby-Rose
3W	Saara
3/4MS	Valentina
4A	Fikky
4B	Jennifer
5F	Uriela
5H	Fatima
5/6FB	Zara
6K	Sharon
6Q	Luciannah

A huge well done to all this week's winners.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Conspiracy theories are false or misleading beliefs that explain events as secret plots, often involving powerful groups. While once fringe, they are now more accessible through digital media, online influencers and because of algorithmic recommendations. The DfE guidance document, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE) explicitly recognises conspiracy theories as potential content risks. This guide will help parents and educators understand the risks, spot the signs, and build children's resilience to conspiracy theories.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

UNDERMINING TRUST

Conspiracy theories can lead children and young people to distrust democratic institutions and British Values, teachers, and even their own families and loved ones. This erosion of trust makes young people more vulnerable to extremist narratives by isolating them from reliable sources of information.

ONLINE ALGORITHM TRAPS

Social media platforms can often recommend sensationalist content. Once a child engages with one conspiracy-themed video or post, algorithms push more of the same, thereby creating an echo chamber that can intensify their beliefs.

MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT

Exposure to frightening conspiracy content, such as global plots, viruses, or government control, can fuel feelings of anxiety, paranoia, or hopelessness. For some young people, it can trigger prolonged distress or obsessive thinking.

GATEWAY TO EXTREMISM

Conspiracy theories can often overlap with extremist ideologies. Narratives that blame specific groups, such as politicians, scientists, or particular ethnic groups, can groom children in ways that foster hate, bigotry, and radicalisation.

CONFLICT WITH PEERS

Belief in conspiracy theories can lead to isolation or conflict at school. Children may struggle with peer relationships if they express these beliefs or become distrustful of others who disagree; sometimes, confrontation can even result in a strengthening of the belief in the conspiracy theory.

ERODED CRITICAL THINKING

Young people influenced by conspiracies may reject evidence-based learning. This risks undermining their academic progress and weakening their ability to think critically, assess risks, or engage in healthy debate.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CREATE SAFE CONVERSATIONS

Don't mock or dismiss any questions that children and young people ask about conspiracy theories. Instead, create open, judgement-free spaces to talk. This strengthens trust and makes it more likely they will confide in you.

PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING

Teach young people how to assess information critically. Encourage them to ask appropriate questions, such as: Who is telling me this? What evidence is there? What do other trusted sources say? Use real examples from current media to explain your answers and reasoning.

MONITOR DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR

Be aware of the content children are accessing, especially on platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, or Reddit. Use parental controls, but more importantly, maintain ongoing dialogue about online experiences and influencers.

REINFORCE RELIABLE SOURCES

Point children toward trustworthy and reliable sources of news and information in a variety of formats tailored to the young person's age. Build habits of verifying facts using reliable sources, and teach them how to spot misleading content.

Meet Our Expert

Brendan O'Keefe is a headteacher and digital education consultant with over a decade of experience in education. As Director of Digital Strategy across multiple schools and an advisor to The National College, he specialises in digital safety, PREVENT, and pastoral care.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/conspiracy-theories>