



HEADTEACHER
Mr G Pendlebury
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER
Mr N Maguire

17th April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you had a lovely Easter break and enjoyed some quality time as a family. I wanted to touch base with you at the end of the first week of the Summer Term with a few key notices and reminders for the Year 8 cohort.

Uniform and Equipment:

Tutors have completed their standard uniform, equipment and planner signing checks this week and will be contacting you to communicate any outstanding issues. Due to the Longridge trip, we have allowed students a week's grace period for students to replace any missing equipment or sort out any outstanding uniform issues, including the removal of acrylic or false nails, ready for Tuesday 24th April where the usual same day consequences will apply. Thank you for your support with this.

Longridge Trip

A huge thank you to the students for their effort and engagement at Longridge this week. It was a fantastic three days, with students representing GMS exceptionally well.

It was wonderful to see them outside the classroom, demonstrating impressive resilience and overcoming challenges with the support of their peers. Their communication, teamwork, and encouragement of one another have been a real highlight—and will remain my favourite part of working at GMS so far.

GMS Phone Policy

A reminder of the phone policy in place for all students at GMS. Phones are not seen, not heard and not used anywhere and anytime on school site!

Social Media

Considering a few reports that have come to our attention this week, I wanted to remind you of the importance of monitoring your child's online activity at home and to offer guidance on keeping them safe when using social media and messaging apps.

We ask that you support us by:

1. Having regular conversations with your child about:

- What apps and platforms they are using
- Who they are communicating with online
- What groups they are part of (including class WhatsApp groups)
- The importance of respectful online behaviour
- What to do if they see something that makes them uncomfortable (report it, leave the group, speak to a trusted adult)

2. Monitoring their devices:

- Regularly check what apps are installed on their phone/tablet
- Review the content of messages and groups they are part of
- Use parental controls where appropriate
- Ensure devices are used in communal areas of the home, not bedrooms
- Consider setting time limits for social media use

3. Understanding the risks:

- Children can be exposed to harmful content including violence, extremism, sexual content, and discriminatory material
- Peer pressure can lead children to share or engage with content they know is wrong
- Screenshots and forwards mean content can spread rapidly
- What seems like "banter" or "a joke" to some can be deeply harmful to others

We recommend the following resources to help you keep your child safe online:

- Internet Matters - age-specific safety guides and advice on parental controls
- NSPCC Online Safety - practical guidance for parents
- Childnet - toolkit for discussing online life with your child
- ThinkuKnow - resources from the National Crime Agency

We are committed to educating students about online safety through our RSHE curriculum and assemblies.

However, parental involvement is crucial, while we understand that students may create WhatsApp groups to communicate about homework and school activities, please be aware that:

- WhatsApp's terms of service require users to be 13 or over
- These groups are not monitored or endorsed by the school
- Parents should regularly review the content of any groups their child is part of
- Students should be reminded that the same behaviour expectations apply online as they do in school

Thank you for your continued support in keeping our students safe both online and offline. Together, we can ensure that all our young people use technology responsibly and respectfully.

Kind Regards,

Miss C Roberts

Year 8 Director of Learning