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Dear Parent/Guardian

Online Safety and Digital Systems Newsletter

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for your continuing support of and engagement with our digital systems - from Class Charts to Microsoft, to Online Safety.

We know how busy parents and carers are, so we are trialling a video-newsletter version for the information below. You can listen and/or watch our 6 minute update about all things digital at WGA, by clicking on this video link https://youtu.be/sgLagdkXIMc, via our Class Charts announcements, on our social media feeds and as a link on our website. We would like your views on whether video newsletters are helpful – especially when we need to share a lot of information. There is a link to a brief survey to find your views in the comments section of the video or you can use this link here: Video Newsletter Survey. If the video version of this newsletter is not for you, then please read on.

All parents and carers need to be aware of some key changes that that are being implemented, ready for September 2024:

- Class Charts and school communication to parents and carers.
- Online Safety support for parents and carers.
- Artificial Intelligence: update to our ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Online wellbeing support for students at WGA.

Class Charts and Communication

From September 2024, we are streamlining our communications with you, by taking advantage of a range of features in the Class Charts app. As well as the current content of Homework, Attendance and Behaviour information, the following features will be used, replacing current processes, as detailed in the following table:

Process	Current Method	New Method (September 2024)
Parental Absence Reporting	Parent/carer telephone call to absence line.	Class Charts Absence Report (including attaching evidence, e.g. medical appointments)
School Letters (Newsletters, whole year groups and other large groups)	Email, and published on WGA website.	Class Charts Announcements (Parent/carer app receives a push notification) Published on WGA website
Detention notifications	Text (SMS)	Class Charts message to parent app(with push notification)
Messages home relating to small groups or individual students.	Phone call/ email to parent/carer.	Class Charts in-app message notification (parents/carers can reply until message thread is closed) Phone calls (in urgent circumstances)

As I am sure you can see, it is incredibly important that all parents and carers can confidently access the Class Charts application, in order to keep up to date and informed of all relevant information regarding your child or children.

To ensure that you are fully supported in the use of the Class Charts app, ready for September 2024, we are putting the following steps in place.

Parents and Carers: Accessing Accounts

> **Week beginning 24th June:** we will send an email message to all parents and carers **of Year 7 and 8 pupils**, whose Class Charts account is not currently active.

> **Week beginning 1st July:** we will send an email message to all parents and carers **of Year 9 to Year 12 pupils**, whose Class Charts account is not currently active.

All reminders will include your relevant access code and/or reminders on how to reset your password for your Class Charts account. If you still have trouble accessing your account, after following the guidance in the reminder message, then please contact our help team via **email only**: digihelp@woodgreenacademy.co.uk. Add your name, your child's full name, year group and tutor group, and a brief outline of the Class Charts issue you are facing within your message. Your case will be supported as soon as possible. However, in the event of a high level of support requests, please allow at least 10 working days for our team to respond.

Artificial Intelligence: ICT Acceptable Use Agreement

Please note that all reputable AI providers, such as Chat GPT have a minimum age requirement of 13 AND require 13-18 year olds to have parental permission before use.

The emergence of artificial intelligence such as Chat GPT is in no doubt a game-changer for many occupations, businesses and institutions. Schools are no exception to this. Throughout this academic year WGA has been evaluating our approach to AI. Our ICT Acceptable Use Agreement for both students and staff are being been updated for September 2024 and will be available from the policies section of the WGA website at this time. In the meantime, here are some key points to consider when your children are completing school tasks, especially at home, regarding learning, and online safety and AI:

- AI platforms have the potential to generate inappropriate responses. This is why these platforms have age limits detailed in their terms and conditions. Parents and carers should be aware of when their children are using AI, and discuss the content that is generated.
- AI platforms can present bias views as fact. AI "hallucination" is a growing concern, when AI bots appear to create completely made-up content. AI content should be fact-checked.
- Student use of AI at WGA is limited to Year 9 and above to reflect minimum age requirements. AI use in Year 7 and 8 lessons will be completed via the class teacher only.
- We require parent/carer permission before students use AI onsite at WGA or via our ICT systems (including loan devices). Consent options will be sent via Class Charts in September 2024.
- AI can be used, if directed to by the class teacher that has set the work. Teachers will advise on AI prompts and how to use any AI output. If a pupil is unsure if they are allowed to use AI, they should ask their teacher.
- If a teacher gives permission for AI use, pupils must acknowledge this in their work by adding information that explains which AI platform was used, and what the AI was asked to do, and how the pupil has used this information. E.g:
  - *I used Microsoft Co-Pilot AI to suggest a structure and sub-headings for my Geography task about volcanoes. I used the AI suggested sub-titles and followed some of the structure.*
  - *I used Chat GPT to suggest three similes for my creative writing English task. I have used these and highlighted them in my work.*
- If students attempt to use AI generated content and claim it as their own, this breaches our policies regarding plagiarism and malpractice. Sanctions will be put in place in line with our behaviour policy.

Online wellbeing support for students at WGA

All secondary school students in Sandwell now have 12 months FREE access to Wysa, an AI wellbeing coaching app which normally costs £69.99 per year. This access is being provided through the Black Country Health NHS Foundation Trust and is designed to give young people a space to talk, let off steam and share worries.

Pupils can obtain the app by accessing the "Wysa app for students" document located on the Wood Green Academy Student Hub.

As parents and carers, you can find out more about the Wysa app by downloading the information for parents and FAQs, located in the Wellbeing section of the WGA website. This is a great opportunity for young people to access a wide range of self-help tools, that cover everything from mindfulness and meditation to therapy tools for anxiety and depression.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Online Safety and Digital Systems newsletter. As ever, all at Wood Green Academy appreciate your continuing support as we move towards the new academic year.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Murray

Head of e-Learning