



17 July 2026

Dear Parents and Children

This is the last newsletter of the academic year.

There is much to celebrate and a lot of news to share so I do hope you enjoy reading all the information.

We have provided news about places for children to enjoy summer activities and we have also provided reminders about online safety.

Before we move on to the summer holidays and look forward to the next academic year, we must pause to acknowledge the great achievements of our children this year. A complete set of results can be accessed [here](#) but these are some headlines:

- **All** Year 6 children reached the expected standard in Reading, GPS, Mathematics and Science
- 95% of Year 1 children passed the Phonics screening

- 90% of EYFS children achieved the expected standard
- At the end of Year 2, over 90% of children met at least the expected standard in each subject

Teachers and support staff have worked hard to ensure children access all aspects of the curriculum and enjoy their learning. We are thankful to the parents who support their children's learning throughout the year.

We wish all our families a very happy and safe summer holiday.

Children return to school on Monday 7 September

God bless

Mrs Titus



Safeguarding

If you have any concerns for the safety and well-being of any child, please make an appointment to see Mrs Studd who is our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In an emergency, please call the police without delay.

We can also help parents through Brent's Early Help Assessment process.

If you are having difficulties with housing, finances or health, please speak with Mrs Studd who can signpost you to appropriate support and services.

Click here for information from the NSPCC on Positive Parenting

Click here for Brent Citizens Advice

Useful Contacts:

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Brent Social Services:
020 8937 4300

Community Dates

19 Jul World Ice-Cream Day

22 Jul St Mary Magdalene Feast Day

24 Jul Samaritans Awareness Day

Celebrations

We are always very happy to share news about the children's achievements outside of school.

Please email details and photos to:

info@stjo.brent.sch.uk

**St Joseph's
Roman Catholic
Primary School**
020 8965 5651
admin@stjo.brent.sch.uk
www.stjosephsrc.co.uk

News from the French Department

Our topic for our French morning on Monday 6th July was Paris landmarks.

The children took part in a variety of activities such as researching and finding key facts about famous Paris landmarks. The children enjoyed learning about Le Louvre museum, Notre Dame Cathedral, Sacré Coeur, La Conciergerie and Arc de Triomphe to name just a few famous monuments!



Some children created fact files as well as high quality leaflets for tourists planning a visit to this incredible city. There were also group tasks with a competition to find out who could remember as many key facts as possible by the end of the morning.

This year again we have seen some brilliant Power Projects on the topic. Well done to the children who have researched this topic and created very interesting Power Projects! Enjoy the selection of photos!

Mr Rebillard - French Teacher



ROY MEHTA

TURN UP THE BASSLINE:

HISTORIES AND COMMUNITIES OF BRENT

18 July – 2 August 2026
Church Path, Harlesden



NOTICE TO RESIDENTS

Dear Residents,

We would like to let you know that a temporary outdoor exhibition will be installed along Church Path from 18 July to 2 August 2026.

The exhibition celebrates Brent's rich history and cultural heritage through the work of the photographer Roy Mehta. Taken in Harlesden during the 1980s, these photographs document the lives of local communities and were recently exhibited at Tate Britain as part of The 80s: Photographing Britain. This project brings these photographs back to the community where they were originally created.

The exhibition is organised by the Harlesden Neighbourhood Forum and supported by Brent Council, the Young Brent Foundation, and the Wembley Stadium Foundation.

Throughout the exhibition, young people from Brent will be present in Church Path from Tuesday to Saturday, between 3:00pm and 6:00pm, accompanied by a supervisor. They will welcome visitors, and provide information about the exhibition and Roy Mehta's work.

Opening Celebration: Saturday 25 July, 10:00am

Join us for a small community celebration organised in partnership with Brent Council's Climate Emergency Team. Light refreshments will be provided, and everyone is warmly welcome.

We apologise in advance for any minor inconvenience, and thank you for your understanding and support. We hope you enjoy the exhibition and that it encourages you to celebrate Harlesden's remarkable history and communities.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Marco Ferrara
heritage@harlesdenneighbourhoodforum.com

Roy Mehta Exhibition – Community Engagement Schedule

Young participants from the Brent Youth Employment Programme will be on site with a supervisor to welcome visitors, provide information about the exhibition.

Date	Time	Activity
Saturday 18 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Tuesday 21 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Wednesday 22 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Thursday 23 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Friday 24 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Saturday 25 July	10:00am – 12:00pm	Official opening & guided tours
Tuesday 28 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Wednesday 29 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Thursday 30 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Friday 31 July	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information
Saturday 1 August	3:00pm – 6:00pm	Community engagement & visitor information

Notes

- No sessions will take place on Sundays or Mondays.
- Young people will always be accompanied by a supervisor.
- During these sessions, participants will provide information about the exhibition, engage with visitors and support guided tours.

Fantastic Readers!

A huge congratulations to our fantastic readers who have reached the top of our Reading Ladder this year! These children have shown outstanding dedication by reading ten Challenge Books, demonstrating a real love of reading, perseverance and commitment. In recognition of this incredible achievement, they were proudly presented with a Reading Medal.



An extra special 'well done' goes to those children who didn't stop there! They continued reading beyond the ten Challenge Books and, in recognition of their exceptional enthusiasm and determination, were awarded a Reading Trophy.



We are incredibly proud of every child who has taken part in the Reading Challenge. Reading regularly opens the door to new worlds, develops vocabulary and imagination and helps children become confident, lifelong learners.

Keep turning those pages—we can't wait to celebrate even more reading successes next year!



Parent Webinar 2026



Supporting Neurodivergent young people's wellbeing

Join this webinar to learn practical tools and tips to support the emotional wellbeing of neurodivergent children, including those who are Autistic and have attention differences (ADHD).

Thursday 29th October
Time: 12-1pm



Supporting Transitions and Change

A webinar dedicated to helping parents help their child manage transitions, such as moving from primary to secondary school, which can be anxiety provoking!

Friday 27th November
Time: 12-1pm

If your child/children is attending a Brent/Harrow/Hillingdon school, this is for you.

It is FREE to join! Please use the QR code below to register.
We look forward to seeing you.



For query, please email:

Brent: cnwl.admin@brentnhs.uk
Harrow: cnwl.admin@harrownhs.uk
Hillingdon: cnwl.admin@hillingdonnhs.uk

Parent Webinar 2026

CNWL London Mental Health Support Team
Brent | Harrow | Hillingdon

is offering the following online parent webinars:



Promoting Positive Behaviour

A webinar packed with advice and support to help you promote desired behaviours and manage behaviours which you can find more challenging.

Thursday 30th July
Time: 12-1pm



Child & Teen Anxiety

A webinar aimed to support young people in an understanding of anxiety and coping strategies to help to manage anxiety.

Thursday 27th August
Time: 12-1pm



Parent Wellbeing

Sometimes parenting can be challenging and exhausting. Our practitioners will support you to think about your wellbeing in this creative and educational webinar.

Friday 25th September
Time: 12-1pm

If your child/children is attending a Brent/Harrow/Hillingdon school, this is for you.

It is FREE to join! Please use the QR code below to register.
We look forward to seeing you.



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Harrow: cnwl.admin@harrownhs.uk
Hillingdon: cnwl.admin@hillingdonnhs.uk

COMMUNITY WELLBEING DROP-IN SESSIONS

All welcome
Refreshments provided
No appointment needed



Date: 23 July



Area: Stonebridge



Venue: The Five Precious Wounds
RC Church, Morland Gardens, NW10



Time: 4:00pm–8:00pm

Attending:

- Brent Health Matters medical team
- Central and North West London Mental Health Advice
- Brent Housing and Benefits Advice
- Shaw Trust



Date: 13 August



Area: Harlesden



Venue: Our Lady Of Willesden RC Church,
1 Nicoll Rd, London NW10 9AX



Time: 11:30am–3:30pm

Attending:

- Brent Health Matters medical team
- Central and North West London Mental Health Advice
- SEEDS Hub (Caritas Westminster project)
- Brent Carers
- Home-Start Barnet, Brent and Harrow



Date: 27 August



Area: Stonebridge



Venue: Stonebridge Park, Brentfield Rd.,
London NW10 8ER



Time: 4:00pm–8:00pm



FULL HEALTH CHECKS

Blood pressure, blood sugar, height, weight,
BMI and diabetes risk score

Attending:

- Brent Health Matters medical team
- Central and North West London Mental Health Advice
- Brent Housing and Benefits Advice
- Shaw Trust
- SEEDS Hub (Caritas Westminster project)
- Citizens Advice Brent (CAB)



ACN

#REDWEDNESDAY®

CYCLE 4HOPE

LONDON TO ANTIOCH 2,900 MILES BY BICYCLE

ANDREW IS RAISING FUNDS TO
SUPPORT CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED
FOR THEIR FAITH



On the **Feast of the Assumption, August 15th**, Andrew will depart from **Westminster Cathedral** and follow the ancient **Via Francigena** route across Europe to Antioch. Andrew will then travel to Amman and walk to the **Holy Sepulchre** in **Jerusalem** to raise funds for **Aid to the Church in Need**.

**EVERY PENNY
WILL BE DOUBLED
BY ACN BENEFACTORS**



**Scan
to donate
today**

OUR LADY OF WILLESDEN

Andrew attends Mass at Our Lady of Willesden.
Please support Andrew on his pilgrimage.

 Follow updates on Andrew's journey @acnuk_communityoutreach

Aid to the Church in Need is a Pontifical Foundation of the Catholic Church. A registered charity in England and Wales (1097984) and in Scotland (SC040748). ACN 12-14 Benhill Avenue, Sutton SM1 4DA

PONTIFICAL
FOUNDATION



SUPPORTED BY
THE HOLIDAY
ACTIVITIES &
FOOD
PROGRAMME

CRICKET COACHING PROGRAMME

SUMMER HOLIDAYS

VENUE: THE CREST ACADEMY
CREST ROAD
NEASDEN
NW2 7SN

WEEK ONE: MONDAY 27th JULY to THURSDAY 30th JULY 2026
WEEK TWO: MONDAY 3rd AUGUST to THURSDAY 6th AUGUST 2026
WEEK THREE: MONDAY 10th AUGUST to THURSDAY 13th AUGUST 2026
Every day, 10am-3pm



PLATFORM
CRICKET

Developing London's cricket
in a fun and friendly way

THE COACHES

LEAD: JAHID AHMED



Jahid Ahmed is a former Essex seam bowler who has worked extensively in youth cricket. He is one of an exclusive group of Level 3 coaches, he has led the development of junior cricket in East London and he is a fast bowling and high performance coach with Kent CCC.

OTHER COACHES INCLUDE:

Matt Golding (current Minor County Cricketer; Level 2 Coach), Jonathan Rodda (Club Youth Lead; Level 2 Coach), Matt Stiddard (London Schools U14 Lead; Level 2 Coach), Ben Ralph (Highgate CC; Level 2 Coach).



IS THIS COACHING PROGRAMME FOR YOU?

This course is appropriate for any child in school years 3 to 6.

Children will experience cricket in a fun, safe and progressive environment, building on their development at an appropriate rate.

Both beginners and children who have experienced cricket before are welcome.

DETAILS

- COST:** These courses are Free of Charge
- PLACES:** Allocated to the first 30 respondents on a first come-first serve basis
- AGES:** 7-11 Years Old
- LUNCHES & REFRESHMENT:** Parents of children entitled to a Free School Meal will be provided with a hot lunch (Please highlight any dietary requirements when signing-up)
- CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT:** Regular sports kit & trainers (non-marking soles); Personal protective equipment preferred, although we can supply if a child does not have their own

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE OR TO DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF THE COURSE PLEASE CONTACT:

BEN RALPH

MOB: 07808 519 323

EMAIL: ben.ralph@platform-ldn.org

SPRING NEWSLETTER

brent school nursing

Our newsletters aim to provide families and young people with some useful tips for keeping healthy. Childhood is an important time to instil healthy habits and learn crucial life skills. Establishing these habits early on will help to improve your child's quality of life in the future and enable them to reach their full potential educationally.

DONT BE MEAN - KEEP YOUR HANDS CLEAN!

Hand washing is one of the **simplest** and **most effective** ways to stay healthy and prevent the spread of germs.

Our hands touch many surfaces every day, and germs can easily enter our body when we touch our eyes, nose, or mouth.



After coughing,
sneezing or blowing
your nose.



When your hands
are dirty



After playing
outside



After using the
toilet



After petting or
touching an
animal



Before eating

MOVE.MORE.MAY

London is a never-ending playground of fun and adventure! Whether you're up for a huge thrill or just a tiny treat, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

EXPLORE THE MUSEUMS IN THE CITY!

Explore London's free captivating and interactive museums like the British Museum, Natural History Museum, National Gallery, and National Portrait Gallery for a magical journey with remarkable wonders.

UPCOMING EVENTS

19.4.2026: St George's Day Parade @ Trafalgar Square

3.4.2026-26.4.2026: Tulip Festival @ Hampton Court

23.4.2025-26.4.2026: North London Book Festival

4.5.2026: Early May Bank Holiday

25.5.2026: Spring Bank Holiday

30.5.2026: Eid on the Square @ Trafalgar Square

BRENT SCHOOL NURSING TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU!



If you would like to speak to a school health nurse, please call our 0-19 Single Point of Access number **020 8102 4900**. We will call you back if you leave a message.



You can also contact us through email on:
clcht.brentsnspaduty@nhs.net



We are based at:
Sudbury Primary Care Centre, Watford Road, Wembley HA0 3HG
Willesden Centre for Health and Care, Robson Avenue, London
NW10 3RY



HAYFEVER

Hayfever is a common allergy that causes sneezing, coughing and itchy eyes. You cannot cure it, but there are things you can do to alleviate your symptoms or medication to help tackle hayfever.

What are the signs & symptoms?



sneezing
and coughing



runny
or blocked nose



itchy throat,
mouth, nose and
ears



itchy, red or
watery eyes



headache/pain
around the
sides of your
head and your
forehead



loss of smell



extreme
tiredness
(fatigue)

How to manage hayfever?

- ✓ Put petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) around your nostrils to trap pollen
- ✓ Wear wrap around sunglasses, a mask or a wide-brimmed hat to stop pollen getting into your nose and eyes
- ✓ Shower and change your clothes after you have been outside to wash pollen off
- ✓ Keep windows and doors shut as much as possible
- ✓ Vacuum regularly and dust with a damp cloth



Ask a Pharmacist

Speak to a pharmacist if you have hayfever. They can give you advice and suggest the best treatments to help with symptoms, such as:

- Antihistamine drops, tablets or nasal sprays
- Steroid nasal sprays

Some Antihistamines can make you very sleepy, so speak to your pharmacist about non-drowsy Antihistamines if you need to.

Seek GP advice if:

- your symptoms are getting worse
- your symptoms do not improve after taking medicines from the pharmacy

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

* [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk)

* [ALLERGY.UK](https://www.allergyuk.org)

MEASLES

Measles is an infection that spreads very easily and can cause serious problems in some people. Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent it.

The first symptoms of measles include:



- a high temperature
- a runny or blocked nose
- sneezing
- a cough
- red, sore, watery eyes

Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later, a rash usually starts on the face and behind the ears before appearing on the rest of the body.

Some people may also get small spots in their mouth.

Contact your GP to check if your child is due for an MMR vaccine (measles, mumps & rubella)

* [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk)

* [NHS | MEASLES](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles)

HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (HFMD)

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common childhood illness that can also affect adults. It usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days.

Signs & symptoms: How to treat hand, foot and mouth disease yourself:

The 1st symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease can be:

- a sore throat
- a high temperature
- not wanting to eat

The 2nd stage usually starts a few days later and symptoms can include:

- mouth ulcers, which can be painful
- a raised rash of spots on the hands and feet, and sometimes the groin area and bottom

Contact your GP if:

- symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease do not improve after 7 to 10 days
- you're pregnant and get hand, foot and mouth disease

Hand, foot and mouth disease can be spread to other people.

Hand, foot and mouth disease usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. You cannot take antibiotics or other medicines to cure it.

To help the symptoms:

- drink cool fluids to soothe the mouth and prevent dehydration (but avoid acidic drinks, such as fruit juice)
- eat soft foods like yoghurt and avoid hot, salty and spicy foods
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to help ease a sore mouth or throat

* [NHS | HFMD](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hand-foot-and-mouth-disease)



CHICKENPOX

Chickenpox is a common infection that spreads easily and mostly affects children. It usually gets better on its own after 1 to 2 weeks without needing to see a GP, but can be serious in some people.

Signs & symptoms:

The main symptom of chickenpox is an itchy, spotty rash. It can be anywhere on the body.

Before or after the rash appears, you might also have:

- a high temperature
- aches and pains, and generally feel unwell
- loss of appetite
- spots all over your body which turn into blisters

Contact your GP if:

- you're not sure it's chickenpox
- you're concerned about yourself or your child
- tell the receptionist you think it might be chickenpox before going in to a GP surgery.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

* [NHS | CHICKENPOX](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox)

ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

New schools on the list.



PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- CARLTON VALE INFANTS SCHOOL
- CONVENT OF JESUS & MARY CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL
- FRYENT PRIMARY SCHOOL
- EASTLANE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- GLADSTONE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
- HARLESDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
- KILBURN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
- LYON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
- NORTHVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL
- PHOENIX ARCH SCHOOL
- ROE GREEN INFANT SCHOOL
- ST ANDREW & ST FRANCIS COFE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- ST JOSEPH'S RC INFANT SCHOOL
- ST JOSEPH'S RC JUNIOR SCHOOL
- ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
- ST MARGARET CLITHEROW RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
- ST MARY MAGDALEN'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL
- ST ROBERT SOUTHWELL RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
- STONEBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
- SALUSBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL
- UXENDON MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- ASHLEY COLLEGE
- HARRIS LOWE ACADEMY WILLESDEN

Note: Some schools are on the process of renewing the annual certificates.



JOIN THE 27
ASTHMA FRIENDLY
SCHOOLS NOW!

TO ENABLE EACH CHILD TO LEAD
A FULL AND ACTIVE LIFE!!

An Asthma Friendly School is one where children with asthma are safe and can fully participate in all elements of school life. By signing up, schools are committing to ensuring that all school staff know what to do if a child has an asthma attack.

A CHILD'S OR YOUNG PERSON'S ASTHMA IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY. WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN PROMOTING GOOD ASTHMA SELF-MANAGEMENT AND CARE.



Contact us to know more on how to get your AFS certificates or talk your allocated School Nurse.

BRENT FAMILY WELLBEING CENTRES

The Brent Family Wellbeing Centres provide a range of community-led services that can support you from the moment you know you're expecting, through pregnancy and birth, until your child is 18 years old (or up to 25 for children and young people with special educational needs). The centres offer a wide range of free health, education and welfare services to families and aim to give everyone in Brent the best possible start in life. Register to join the Family Wellbeing Centres [HERE](#).

FOOD BANKS

It's a challenging time for everyone at the moment. Food banks are grassroots, community organisations aimed at supporting people who cannot afford the essentials in life.

To find a food bank near you, visit:
[Brent Foodbank](#)
[Trussell Trust](#)
[Suфра Foodbank and Kitchen](#)



NHS SERVICES

USE THE RIGHT SERVICE

Self Care Care for yourself at home. Minor cuts & grazes Minor burns Minor sprains Coughs and colds	Pharmacy Local expert advice. Minor illnesses Medicines Vaccinations Minor injuries	NHS 111 Non-emergency help. Feeling unwell Minor illness Need help?	GP Advice Out of hours. Call 111. Persistent symptoms Illnesses Long-term conditions New symptoms	UTCs Urgent Treatment Centres. Minor injuries Cuts & grazes Minor burns & rashes	A&E or 999 For emergencies only. Chest pain Stroke Serious injury
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Cycling Lives Empowering Minds



Highlights:

Cycle Awareness Course

- Build confidence
- Learn basic bike maintenance
- Gain essential safety awareness
- Balance, glide, pedal, and observe with skill
- All safety gear provided
- 5 weeks rolling enrollment-no-one misses out

MONDAYS :

4:30–5:30 PM Beginners

5:30–6:30 PM Confident Riders

Location: Jason Roberts Foundation (Pavilion), Stonebridge
Recreation Ground, London NW10 6LW

Contact: esherinnerbeing@gmail.com / 07931 787161



CO-OP MEMBERS CAN SUPPORT LOCAL PROJECTS

Choose our cause so we can help more people in your community.

seeds



Seeds for Growth charity was launched in 2006. We deliver many projects to enhance quality of life by improving health, wellbeing and access to outdoor, community spaces.



Scan the QR code, download the Co-op App or visit coop.co.uk/membership to learn how you can support us



www.seedsforgrowth.org.uk



OWNED BY YOU.
RIGHT BY YOU.



FREE CHILDREN'S DENTAL CHECK-UPS

At Clocktower Dental Surgery

CHILDREN'S DENTAL PILOT PROJECT

Aged 0 to 16 who haven't been to the dentist recently (or maybe ever!)



Seen by our friendly
Dental Therapist for
gentle check-ups
and treatments



Every Tuesday



Clocktower Dental Surgery
(Brent area – patients with
NW10 postcodes)



HOW TO BOOK:
Call our reception on
020 8965 3665



Attendance

Congratulations to Class 3D for the best attendance in 2025-26.

If your child is not going to be in school please call the office on **020 8965 5651** or email the school at: **admin@stjo.brent.sch.uk** before 8.50am on every day of absence.

If you have any medical questions about your child's health, please contact your GP or call NHS on 111.

In addition to making a telephone call by 8.50am on every day of absence, this must be followed up in writing. Parents may complete a **Reason For Absence** form (available from school office or school website) or you may write a letter / email to confirm the reason for the absence.

When you know in advance that your child will be absent, please inform the school in advance and provide appropriate documentation such as the medical appointment letter.

Please remember that all school policies are in place for a reason with the main purpose being to ensure the safety, well-being and secure development of your child.

If we have any concerns about a child's absence, we may carry out a home visit. We may also contact Brent Education Welfare and Social Services.

Please remember term time leave for family holidays and celebrations are not permitted in line with our Attendance Policy.

Unauthorised absences are referred to Brent Education Welfare who have the authority to issue Education Penalty Notices of £160 per child, per parent. This reduces by 50% if paid within 21 days.

School Uniform

Please ensure that children wear full school uniform at all times. All items should be clearly labelled.

Children should always wear their blazers to school. When the weather is warmer, children will be given permission to take off their blazers during the school day.

Safer Internet

At St Joseph's, we frequently communicate with our children and parents about online safety to help reduce the risk of children accessing inappropriate websites or becoming engaged in unsuitable communications online.

The school computers and digital equipment have been protected to prevent children, and any other persons on the school site, from accessing any inappropriate materials through the school's internet provision.

We encourage parents to ensure that their own home equipment has the same protections. Please also check regularly what your child is doing online.

Our website contains a number of links to resources for parents. Please [click here](#) for direct access to the information.



Parental Communication

Parents are reminded that it is very helpful for school to be kept informed of any factors that may impact on your child's learning or well-being. This is to ensure that we are working together to support your child and family.

Please make an appointment to see Mrs Studd to discuss any matters that school should be aware of so we can make informed decisions together.

Appointments can be made through the school office.

Online Safety

Parents frequently receive information from school regarding the safety of children while they are accessing online activities and games. Parents are reminded about the need for vigilance and strict monitoring of children's activity on online devices and social media apps.

At St Joseph's, we embrace the wonders of modern technology and online live learning was a great success during the most recent national lockdown. However, there are risks when children use their own devices outside of school.

Please be aware that it can take just a few minutes for a stranger to gain a child's trust online and this can often be achieved by the stranger pretending to be a child themselves so they can commit an offence against a child.

Children that know each other can also become involved in inappropriate conduct through online chat and social media. Previously, the school has become aware of a number of WhatsApp groups in which children have been extremely unkind and made hurtful comments. This then becomes an issue in the school community as the feelings caused by online activity in the home are still present when the children see each other in class.

Another important factor that parents must bear in mind is that children aged 10 years old or over are considered in law to be at the age of criminal responsibility. Children may therefore be part of a police investigation if they are involved in any malicious communications or accessing illegal content.

If you are unsure how to protect your child from the potential dangers of online activity, please [click here](#) to access further information.



Expressing Ourselves Safely Online

Many of us are using devices (tablets, laptops, games consoles, phones) to keep in touch with friends and family across the world.

Children enjoy using technology to share their passions and interests but this should be with parental supervision so they are expressing themselves safely and appropriately.

Please support your child in being safe with online interactions, and how this should be appropriate and only with people they really do know and trust.

Encourage your child to let you know immediately if they see or hear anything on their devices that worries them.

Please also be mindful of the amount of time your child spends on their devices, particularly as they are online for home learning.

If you would like to discuss any concerns regarding your child's online activity, please make an appointment to see Mrs Studd.

SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF WILLESDEN



IN THE MARIAN HALL

(ENTRANCE FROM THE REAR OF THE CHURCH
BUILDING... FOLLOW THE PATH ON THE RIGHT-HAND
SIDE OF THE CHURCH, BEAR LEFT AT THE END TO THE
HALL DOORS)

11.30AM – 2.30PM

ON THURSDAYS

HOW TO SUPPORT *YOUR CHILD'S* MENTAL HEALTH

 @BELIEVEPHQ

www.BelievePerform.com



LOVE

Be there for your child and show care and love



EXERCISE

Encourage play, exercise and sport



BEHAVIOUR

Keep an eye out for any changes in behaviour



SUPPORT

Regularly support, encourage and praise your child



REST TIME

Help your child to manage stress by building in some rest time



BE PROUD

Tell your child that you are proud of them



PATIENCE

Be patient. Don't pressure your child



HELP

Don't be afraid to seek help from professionals



FEELING

Get to know how your child is feeling



EDUCATE

Educate yourself about mental health problems



PROBLEM SOLVING

Help your child to effectively problem solve



LISTEN

Make sure you take time to listen to what your child has to say



COPING

Help your child to learn some simple coping skills such as relaxation



SYMPTOMS

Be aware of signs and symptoms



CONVERSATION

Encourage your child to engage in conversation



ENVIRONMENT

Provide a positive environment for your child where they can thrive



Know where to get the right help



There are lots of NHS services that can help you.

Knowing where to go, and when, can help you get the right care when you need it.

Pharmacy



Local pharmacists are **qualified healthcare professionals**. They can help you with minor health concerns and illnesses including coughs, colds, upset stomachs and skin/eye infections. They can also give some vaccinations and help with medications.

They can be found on most high streets and are a quick and convenient way to get medical advice. They will see you face to face and provide confidential help on the same day, with no appointment needed.

GP/doctor services

local GP practice



Your local GP practice can help with a wide range of general health problems, injuries and illnesses that are not life threatening.

Who you see at your appointment depends on the help you need. There are lots of different people who can help including a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, physiotherapist and many other trained health professionals.

They might see you over the phone, online or in-person.

You will need to be registered before you can book an appointment. To register with a GP practice you do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number. Find a GP practice near you at: www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp

GP help

evenings and weekends

Call your GP practice as normal. The practice answer phone will provide details of where you can get local out of hours appointments. You can also use the online consultation form on the practice website if your need is not urgent.

NHS 111



NHS 111 helps people get the right advice and treatment when they urgently need it. 111 can direct you to the best place to get help if you cannot contact your GP during the day, or when your GP is closed.

Doctors, nurses, paramedics and other fully-trained advisors are available 24/7, and can get you the help you need by:

- finding out what local service can help you;
- connecting you to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist or GP
- getting you an appointment if you need one
- telling you how to get any medicine you may need or give self-care advice.

You can contact NHS 111 all day, every day. Visit 111.nhs.uk or call 111.

Know where to get the right help - Continued...



Mental health services



The NHS provides a range of talking therapies for people who feel anxious, worried, down, or depressed. If you need help you can **refer yourself**, you don't need to go to your GP first. To refer your-self and find more information visit: www.nhs.uk/2us.org

Mental health services for people in crisis:

If you need help for a mental health crisis or emergency, you can get immediate help on our freephone lines from trained mental health advisers and clinicians **all day every day**:

Ealing, Hounslow, Hammersmith and Fulham	0800 328 4444
Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster	0800 0234 650

If you, or someone you know, are experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency you should call 999 or attend an A&E immediately.

For adults:

- signs of a heart attack - chest pain, pressure, heaviness, tightness or squeezing across the chest
- signs of a stroke - face drooping on one side, cannot hold both arms up, difficulty speaking
- sudden confusion (delirium) - cannot be sure of own name or age
- suicide attempt - by taking something or self-harming
- severe difficulty breathing - not being able to get words out, choking or gasping
- choking on liquids or solids
- heavy bleeding - spraying, pouring or enough to make a puddle
- severe injuries - after a serious accident or assault
- seizure (fit) - shaking or jerking because of a fit, or unconscious (cannot be woken up)
- sudden, rapid swelling of the lips, mouth, throat or tongue.

For children:

- seizure (fit) - shaking or jerking because of a fit, or unconscious (cannot be woken up)
- choking on liquids or solids
- difficulty breathing - making grunting noises or sucking their stomach in under their ribcage
- unable to stay awake - cannot keep their eyes open for more than a few seconds
- blue, grey, pale or blotchy skin, tongue or lips - on brown or black skin, grey or blue palms or soles of the feet
- limp and floppy - their head falls to the side, backwards or forwards
- heavy bleeding - spraying, pouring or enough to make a puddle
- severe injuries - after a serious accident or assault
- signs of a stroke - face drooping on one side, cannot hold both arms up, difficulty speaking
- sudden rapid swelling of the lips, mouth, throat or tongue
- sudden confusion - agitation, odd behaviour or non-stop crying.

999

or A&E





In today's digitally connected world, children and adults are constantly presented with new ways to engage, react and contribute. We're sociable beings; it's a natural human instinct, especially amongst younger audiences, to want to belong and join in. Viral Challenges (as they're often known) draw on these emotions and, as the name suggests, spread and gather pace very rapidly. New challenges are constantly emerging and evolving. They're often completely innocent, raising awareness of worthy causes or simply providing amusement. However, they can have much more sinister undertones, putting children at risk of physical harm or, in extreme cases, fatal injury.



What parents need to know about ONLINE CHALLENGES

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

As well as having the potential to cause actual physical harm, some challenges can be extremely upsetting for children. Many are created with the sole purpose of instilling fear in an individual in order to coerce them into doing things that could have a long-term emotional effect on them.

VARYING LEVELS OF RISK

As a parent or carer, it's important to take a balanced view and understand that not everything online has the potential to do harm. Mass-following and interaction can be a force for good. For example, the Ice Bucket Challenge, which swept the nation, set out to raise money and awareness of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). At its height, over 28 million people uploaded, commented on, or liked Ice Bucket Challenge related posts on Facebook. It's equally important to be aware though that online challenges often have a darker side. Malicious trends and challenges can expose children to dangerous or even life-threatening situations, so it's critical that parents and carers are aware of the latest risks and understand what steps to take to mitigate them.

'FOMO' - FEAR OF MISSING OUT

The 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) is a strong emotional characteristic, particularly displayed in young people. The nature of viral challenges encourages children to explore and push boundaries. They tap into FOMO by feeding on a child's natural desire to join in, be accepted and share experiences with their friends and the wider online community. A recent study also found that FOMO is one of the greatest causes of Social Media addiction.



STRIVING FOR LIKES

In a major study by the Children's Commissioner, it was found that children as young as ten years old are reliant on 'Likes' for their sense of self-worth. A major concern around viral challenges is not knowing how far children will go to earn 'Likes'. Couple this growing appetite for acceptance with commonplace peer pressure and the potential problem is compounded. The result is that when young people are drawn into online challenges, because it is what all their friends are doing, saying 'no' can seem like a very hard thing to do.

"The coolest person at school will start a trend and then everyone copies her"
Merran, 12, Year 7

"If I got 150 likes, I'd be like that's pretty cool it means they like you"
Aaron, 11, Year 7



National Online Safety



Top Tips for Parents



COMMUNICATION & MONITORING

It's important to talk to your child regularly and monitor their online activities. Encouraging honesty and openness, will give you a much clearer viewpoint of how your child is interacting online and what concerns they have. Create an atmosphere of trust. Ensure they feel they can confide in you or another trusted adult regarding anything they may have seen or experienced online that's upset them.

THINK BEFORE ACTING

As with most concerns in life, let common sense prevail when it comes to Viral Challenges. Young people need the freedom and space to explore and going in all guns blazing may well be counter-effective. Address the importance of safety and wellbeing, both online and offline, by getting the facts and understanding the risks. Start a discussion about the Online Challenges that may have captured your child's interest, gauge their likely involvement and explain the importance of thinking and acting independently when it comes to participating.

SETTING UP EFFECTIVE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all online activity, ensuring you have effective parental controls set up on all devices will help filter and restrict the dangerous or inappropriate content you don't wish your child to access. Additional measures for protecting your child include checking the privacy settings on your child's devices, monitoring their friends list, ensuring their personal information is safe and secure and keeping a watchful eye on the content they're sharing.

REPORTING & BLOCKING

Parental controls can only go so far in blocking potentially harmful content. A rise in the decoding of social media algorithms, has led to age inappropriate content increasingly appearing on platforms and apps used by children. Where possible, you should regularly monitor what your child sees online and flag/report any content which is inappropriate or dangerous. You should take the time to talk to your child, define what you consider to be appropriate content and show them how to report and block users/accounts themselves.

VALIDATE SOURCES

Not everything is as it seems. Some people create fake content that's designed to 'shock' in order to encourage rapid sharing. If your child has seen something online that has triggered concern you should encourage them to, check its origin, verify that it came from a credible source and check the comments made for any clues to its validity.

FACING REALITY

Trends and Viral Challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they may seem. As a parent or carer it can be difficult to keep pace with the very latest Online Challenges emerging. In recent months these have included potentially dangerous crazes, including the 'Bird Box' challenge, which was inspired by Netflix's popular film and encourages followers to upload videos of themselves attempting everyday tasks while blindfolded. The best advice is to keep talking to your child. Show that your taking an interest and not just prying. Ensure your child knows they don't have to get involved and if they're unsure, let them know you're there to talk before they consider participating. Children often need reassurance that not everything they see online is real. If your child has viewed distressing or frightening content it's important to talk to them about their experience, support them and, if required, help them find additional support.

SOURCES:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/fake-news-twitter-spreads-further-faster-real-stories-retweets-political-a8247491.html> | <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2209452/Teen-dies-copying-pass-game-time-YouTube.html> | <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6307331/Boy-11-dies-YouTube-choking-challenge-mother-warns-parents-son-strangled-himself.html> | Children's Commissioner Life in 'likes' report - RSPH - Status of mind report <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-29013707> | <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-health-wellbeing/fear-of-missing-out-fomo-one-of-greatest-causes-of-social-media-addiction-study-finds-36975296.html> | <https://www.thr.co.uk/news/children-as-young-as-10-addicted-to-social-media-likes/>



Publish date: 06/02/19

What parents need to know about AGE RATINGS



If you have children, it is understandable to have concerns about the films and TV shows they watch, as well as the games they play. In this guide, we take a look at the two official ways you can assess if a particular title is suitable for your child. Both the BBFC and PEGI have search facilities on their websites that can be used to look up individual titles so you can check their ratings.



RATINGS FOR FILMS, TV & MUSIC VIDEOS

Since 1912, the BBFC (British Board of Film Classification) has informed UK residents of the age suitability of films, TV and music videos - providing parents with the information needed to assess whether or not it is appropriate for their child's age. This applies to cinema releases, DVDs and streaming video services such as Netflix.

WHAT ARE THE BBFC RATINGS?

BBFC ratings are broken down into seven age categories:



WHAT ELSE CAN BBFC REVEAL?

Accompanied with the age suitability rating, BBFC also provide an additional warning regarding the content and what to expect, such as swearing, sexual content, violence and anything you may consider to be inappropriate for your child. In addition to this, the content is also rated in three levels: frequent, mild or strong.

LIMITATIONS OF BBFC RATINGS

It's important to note that there is no obligation on streaming video services to use or display BBFC ratings. Due to this, we advise that you check the rating online before your child streams the content. It may also be a good idea to watch the content first yourself or discuss it with other parents to help you decide whether or not it is suitable for your child.

Source: www.bbfc.co.uk

RATINGS FOR GAMES

PEGI (Pan European Game Information) is a content rating system that ensures all video games are labelled with a minimum age recommendation. These age recommendations are based on the types of content featured within a game. With each game, PEGI also provide a content descriptor that indicates the potential issues and concerns, including sex, violence, bad language and drugs.

WHAT ARE THE PEGI RATINGS?

PEGI ratings are split into age restriction and content descriptors. Additional 'content descriptors' help parents and children to understand the type of content featured within a particular game, including sex, fear, bad language, discrimination, gambling, drugs, violence, and in-game purchases. In combination, the two different ratings can provide a good level of information to help make informed decisions regarding the suitability for your child.

PEGI age ratings are broken down into five categories:



PEGI content descriptors are broken down into eight categories:



LIMITATIONS OF PEGI RATINGS

It's possible for young people to buy games online without a required proof of age, opening them up to age-inappropriate content without you knowing. We advise that you regularly monitor your child's gaming activities and maintain a honest and healthy dialogue with them about the online world.

PARENTAL CONTROLS

It is a good idea to put in place parental controls for all online accounts which your child may use to purchase or download online games e.g. The App Store, Google Play Store, PlayStation Store and Microsoft Xbox Store etc.

Source: www.pegi.info

Part of our Online Mental Health & Wellbeing Series



Brought to you by



What are they?

'Age Ratings'

A game's age rating can be used by adults to make an informed choice as to whether or not a game is suitable for their child. The PEGI (Pan European Game Information) system rates games and, instead of indicating the level of ability required to physically play a game, it indicates the suitability of content for that age group. 3, 7, 12, 16 and 18 are the labels that can be awarded to games and a variety of content descriptors such as violence, bad language and fear are used to further clarify why the label was assigned.

16 & UP ONLY

12-15

What you need to know about...

AGE RATINGS



Know the Risks

18+

Inappropriate content

The biggest and most obvious risk of not following the age rating system is that children may view or hear age-inappropriate content. Many games now include scenes of a violent or graphic nature which could be upsetting or considered too intense for younger players.

Peer pressure

Peer pressure has a large role to play in age ratings being overlooked. Children don't want to be the ones left behind and can put their parents under pressure to allow them to play a game beyond the recommended suitability, especially when all of their friends are playing it already.

Level of 'Kudos'

Playing a game with a label that is higher than their age can be viewed by some children as a challenge and to gain a good reputation amongst friends. 'Kudos' is attributed to the child playing the age inappropriate game resulting in more children wanting to follow suit.

Free Platforms

In order for a game to be released on popular platforms, such as PlayStation and Xbox, game developers must pay for a PEGI rating. However, smaller development teams are sometimes reluctant to pay these fees and games are often released on other platforms, such as Steam, without any age restrictions.

FREE

Spot the Signs

Being vague

Be aware of children being vague around the content of what they want to play. If they are unwilling to supply you with information about what the game is about, this can be an indicator that you wouldn't allow them to purchase it if you knew.

Unofficial sites

There are plenty of indie games that can be bought using online stores that don't necessarily have age restrictions. If you notice your child using sites such as GOG or Itch.io rather than official channels such as the Google Play Store, they might be accessing games that aren't officially rated but still aren't age appropriate.

Unfamiliar terminology

Your child might start using phrases or terminology that is new to them or mimicking actions that they have learnt from a game without realising their inappropriateness.

Wanting to be secluded

Be aware if suddenly your child wants the move the device that they play their games on into a more secluded area of the house away from adults. It is a good idea for your child to play online games in a shared area where you can see the screen.

Be aware of spending

Setting up accounts with online stores require bank account details. Keeping an eye on your bank balance means that you will be able to tell if there has been a new purchase and can provide you with an opportunity to ask about what new game they've purchased.

Safety Tips

Do your research

If you've noticed a new game that your child has downloaded then use quality resources to make sure that your knowledge is up to date. Online websites, such as National Online Safety, can provide you with the information you need.

Review parental controls

Review your parental controls on the stores where you buy games from. Most sites allow parents to set passwords to block games with certain age restrictions from being downloaded.

Encourage open dialogue

Encourage open dialogue with your child. You don't want to be in position where they won't talk to you if something has made them feel uncomfortable in a game because they are worried they will get in trouble for playing the game in the first place.

Discuss ratings

Talk to your child about why the game has been awarded a certain label. Debate the positives and negatives of playing a game and decide on some ground rules together.

Our Expert

Heather Cardwell



Heather Cardwell is a practising Online Safety Lead and senior school leader who is passionate about safeguarding online and educating children around online risks. She has over 10+ years as a Computing Lead and has successfully developed and implemented a whole school approach to online safety in schools, delivering online safety training to both school staff and parents and helping to roll-out a bespoke online safety policy across her local network of education settings.

Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary: emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.



FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable: what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Upcombe is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. He has also written 15 guidebooks for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft. With work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247, he has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



Source: <https://hipal.app/about/privacy.html>

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azmi is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



NOS National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+

In UK and Europe;
rest of the world 13+

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

ONLINE

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval: you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



...HEY OSCAR...



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about LIVE STREAMING

Live streaming involves broadcasting and watching videos online in real time, often on social media or via platforms like YouTube and Twitch. Viewers can interact through comments, chats and reactions during the broadcast: such instant engagement makes this an exciting way to share experiences, learn from others and build digital communities. Despite the many positives, live streaming also creates a potential platform for unsuitable content and poses some risks to children: it's essential to keep privacy and safety in mind and comply with each site or app's age restrictions.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LACK OF AGE VERIFICATION

Despite their age restrictions, some platforms don't require proof of age at sign up – meaning that anyone can register for an account (and potentially pretend to be older or younger than they actually are). In many cases, this means that young live streamers can never be totally certain exactly who they are broadcasting to and who is engaging with their live stream.

DISCLOSING PERSONAL INFO

A characteristic of live streaming is the ability for videos to be instantly shared worldwide. Without the correct privacy settings enabled, a child could inadvertently reveal personal information or their location, making them vulnerable to online predators or identity theft. It's wise to regularly check the privacy settings (and what data is being shared) on any apps your child has signed up for.

ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN

As the video streams are live, children might encounter (or inadvertently share) inappropriate content. Most live-streaming apps have rules to prevent this and monitor their services, also providing report buttons where content can be flagged for review. It may not be dealt with instantly, however, meaning that your child could be further exposed to harmful content during a live stream.

UNAUTHORISED RECORDINGS

Each live streaming platform stores completed videos for different periods (Twitch saves broadcasts for 60 days, for example, while Facebook and YouTube remove them only at the creator's request). Deleting a video, though, doesn't always stop it from being shared: in some cases, streams have been illegally recorded (or screenshots taken) by certain viewers and redistributed on other sites.

ROGUE CONTENT CREATORS

Children can also watch other people's live streams, which could potentially contain anything at any time (such as nudity, drug use or profanity). Most apps claim to monitor live streams and will stop any that don't adhere to their guidelines – but with millions of streams per day, it's complicated to regulate them all, so children could be exposed to inappropriate content without parents knowing.

DANGER OF GROOMING

There are increasing reports of children being coerced into performing "suggestive acts" by strangers on some live-streaming apps. Due to the lack of verification required for certain apps, almost anyone can sign up to these services (including anonymously or under a fake identity). It's vital, therefore, to ensure the correct safety measures are in place before your child begins live streaming.

Advice for Parents & Carers

PUT PRIVACY FIRST

Through the streaming app's settings, switch your child's account to 'private', so only their friends and followers can see their broadcasts. You could also turn off the live chat, shielding your child from any upsetting comments – although viewers' feedback is often seen as an integral part of the fun. Identify any nearby items (such as school uniforms or visible landmarks) that could give away your child's location.

MANAGE MULTISTREAMING

Some apps and sites let users stream their content through multiple social media platforms at once. A broadcast on SteamYard, for example, can be shared on YouTube, Twitch, X and Facebook if the accounts are linked. The privacy settings can differ on each of these, so we'd suggest only streaming via one platform at a time to maintain greater control over who's watching your child's videos.

GET INVOLVED YOURSELF

Research suggests a significant number of streams show a child on their own, often in a supposed safe space like their bedroom. If your child wants to live stream, ask if you could be present because you're interested in how it works. You could even set up your own account to gain a more detailed knowledge of what your child talks about in their live streams – and who they're broadcasting to.

TALK ABOUT LIVE STREAMING

Try to start with positives before discussing potential risks. You could ask which live streaming apps your child likes and how they use them. Do they just watch streams or create their own? Explain why it's unwise to reveal personal information while streaming (even to friends). If you feel your child's too young for live streams, explain your reasoning to them and perhaps agree to review this decision in the future.

CONSIDER THEIR ONLINE REPUTATION

As the broadcasts are live, it often causes the misconception among young people that whatever happens in their video simply 'vanishes' once the stream ends. However, videos can stay online indefinitely or be recorded by other users. It's important that your child understands what they do and say in a live stream could potentially damage their online reputation and, quite possibly, be seen by prospective future employers, colleges or universities.

Meet Our Expert

Rhodes Smith is Head of Digital Learning at Thomas's Kensington, London. Recognised in the EdTech 50 UK Awards Yearbook 2021/22 for his efforts in the digital transformation at Cubitt Town Primary School and Tower Hamlets, he is also a Google for Education Certified Trainer and guest lecturer at University College London on the integration of technology across the curriculum.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

4 Ways to Wellbeing

It's okay not to be okay, but there are some things you can do to fix that. If you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed try these top tips for positive mental health.



Keep in touch

Communicating and creating meaningful relationships is an essential step to having a healthier state of mind. Keeping lines of communication open can also help reduce stress.



Stay active

Step outside, Stretch, take a walk or do some sort of activity. Staying active also helps reduce stress and increases your physical and mental energy.



Take some time out

Take a break, disconnect from your phone, and relax. Do something you like and take some time to focus on yourself until you are in a better head-space.



Reach out for help

Everyone needs someone to lean on sometimes. You don't have to get through everything alone. Reach out to someone and tell them how you're feeling, they may be able to help you find a solution.

OUT WITH STRANGER DANGER IN WITH CLEVER NEVER GOES



TEACH THE CLEVER OPTION AT HOME

CLEVER NEVER GOES is the new, child-friendly lesson that teaches children how to stay safe from abduction when they are outside (e.g. walking to or from school), or online.

It's been created to help parents/guardians talk to their children about staying safe in a simple way.

Instead of creating a fear of people it teaches them to recognise the danger in a situation, regardless of who's involved.

THE RULE:

If anyone asks you to go - even someone that you know - if it hasn't been agreed, remember: CLEVER NEVER GOES



The **CLEVER NEVER GOES** rule means children shouldn't go anywhere with anyone - even if they know them - if it hasn't been agreed in advance by a parent or guardian.

And please remember, children learn through repetition so make sure you remind them regularly of **CLEVER NEVER GOES** when they're going outside or online.

For more information, ideas and resources to have that clever conversation go to: clevernevergoes.org

WHY CHANGE?

Since it was introduced in the 1970's, the 'stranger danger' message has been fundamentally flawed.

Most strangers will help rather than harm a child, and many people that do pose a risk to children are not strangers.

Furthermore, it demands that all strangers should be treated with suspicion, which breeds fear in our communities. This has led to children spending less time outdoors, fuelling a rise in obesity and mental health problems.

Add to this, children are spending more time online, increasing their risk of being groomed. Now is the time for a new approach that creates safer, happier and healthier children.

Backed by more than 1,000 schools across the UK, **CLEVER NEVER GOES** is more practical than stranger danger and gives children the skills and confidence to safely explore their outdoor and online worlds without fear. And gives parents the reassurance to let them.

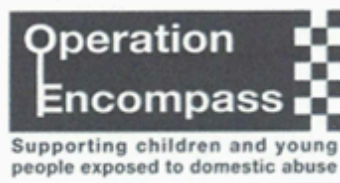
**clever
never
goes**



**POLICE & CRIME
COMMISSIONER**

Serving
Hampshire
Isle of Wight
Portsmouth
Southampton

This leaflet has been brought to you by the charity Action Against Abduction (registered no. 1081904) with the support of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire.



Dear Parent/Carer,

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools and the Metropolitan Police Service. This project is known as Operation Encompass.

Operation Encompass is the notification to schools that a child (under 18) has been exposed to, or involved in, any domestic incident. This will ordinarily be done by the start of the next school day.

Operation Encompass will ensure that a specially trained member of the school staff, known as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), is informed. The DSL can then use the information that has been shared, in confidence, to ensure the wellbeing of the child.

The school may be able to make provisions or adjustments to assist the child and their family.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils and we believe this will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

Signed

Head Teacher

