

# St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

## Newsletter

20.01.23

### A note on worship...



Keeping going against all the odds.

We started the week by reminding ourselves of the flight into Egypt by Mary, Joseph and Jesus and how they were made refugees. We shared the story of a young girl who fled Burundi during conflict and how she had to persevere, despite the challenges that she faced on a daily basis. Later in the week, we shared the story of Derek Redman, an Olympic athlete who suffered an injury during his final race at the Olympic Games in 1992. During the race he had to stop racing, but he wasn't ready to give up. With the help of his dad he was able to limp down the rest of the track – showing us all what perseverance is.

Christians believe that God is with us at every step of the way and will be there to get us through the tough times.

'Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character and character, hope'

Romans 5: 3-4



## Stars of the Week



**Heidi G., Archie, Landon, Martha, Freddie N.,  
Paddy, Xiaoton, Branden F., Hannah, Violet,  
Harrison and Sadie**

Well done to you all!

### Events for the Week

#### Beginning 16.01.23

##### Monday

Ukulele lessons and Choir after school

##### Tuesday

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school multi skills for Y1, 2 and 3 (4.00pm finish)

##### Wednesday

Guitar lessons

After school multi skills for Y4, 5 and 6 (4.15pm finish)

##### Thursday

##### Friday

Brass lessons

### From the office...

- Please ensure that school dinners are ordered by midnight on Sunday for the following week
- A suggestion box will be available in the school office for parents to post any suggestions they may have for school. These could be ideas about newsletter content, suggestions for timings of parent's evening, workshop content, homework etc.

### Attendance Trophy



Amethyst Class – 95%

Ruby Class – 96.9%

Opal Class – 98.93%

Emerald Class – 93.12%

Sapphire Class – 96.52%

This week's winners are **Opal Class**– well done

## Wellbeing

Wellbeing and mental health is a big part of school's curriculum. We explore wellbeing through PSHE lessons, through discussions, small group work and individual work. Mr Edwards works with our mental health champion's team to allow children to support each other and themselves with their wellbeing and mental health. Mr Edwards also works with individuals and small groups of children to support them with mental health and wellbeing.

Most of our staff are trained mental health first aiders and the senior mental health lead in school is Mrs Williams.

There will be a weekly mental health and wellbeing item on the newsletter to update you on the work we are doing in school, how you can support your children at home and the additional services that you can go to for further support.

# 10 WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH



- 1 Show them you love them and give them a hug if they will let you. If they don't like hugs, you could always give them a high five or make up a special handshake.
- 2 Try to create a home environment where they know they are safe to be themselves. Accept them as they are and don't try to force them to be something they are not.
- 3 Take a genuine interest in the activities and things they love. If they love dinosaurs, learn about it so you can chat to them about their interest - get them to teach you.
- 4 Tell them that you recognise their strengths and show them you notice when they do the right thing. Praising a child will show them that positive actions lead to positive results.
- 5 Make time and space for your child and give them your full attention. A little bit of undivided attention and active listening every day is great. Turn off your phone and really listen to them.
- 6 Show them that everyone is human and makes mistakes. By doing so you can model effective ways to deal with difficult situations. They will learn from you that it's okay to make mistakes and healthy ways to deal with it.
- 7 Make sure your child knows the family boundaries and what the consequences are if they cross the line. It's not the severity of the consequences that is necessarily important, but the fact they know there are clear boundaries and you will follow through.
- 8 Encourage your child to talk about emotions and mental health. Simply encouraging them to share their day and how things make them feel is a great way to support them.
- 9 Help your children to set and achieve goals. You can help them to do it and show them how to break their goal down into manageable sections. This is a really helpful life skill and very good for wellbeing.
- 10 Show children it's important to take care of your physical and mental health. Model good habits to them and explain to them why it's equally important to look after your mind as well as your body.



## Internet safety

Children are taught in school how to keep themselves safe in the online world as part of our school's curriculum. However, it is hard as parents to keep up with the latest trends – our children are always at least one step ahead.

There will be a weekly item on the newsletter relating to a particular app, game or area of internet safety.

This week's focus is TikTok, an app that many of the children use. The information guide below gives helpful hints and tips on how to keep your children safe whilst they are using this app. The guide has come from the National Online Safety website, an amazing site with lots of good advice parents and school staff to help navigate the complex world of internet safety.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

(certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

TikTok is a free social media platform that lets users create, share and watch short videos ranging anywhere from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in duration. The app gained notoriety for its viral dances, trends and celebrity cameos and can be a creative, fun platform for teens to enjoy. Now available in 75 languages, it has more than a billion active users worldwide (as of spring 2022) and is most popular with the under-16 age bracket. In fact, a 2022 Ofcom report found TikTok to be the most-used social media platform for posting content, particularly among young people aged 12 to 17.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's "Following" feed only displays videos from users someone follows, "For You" is a stream of clips based on their previously watched content. Most videos on a child's "For You" feed will therefore be light-hearted and amusing, but it could potentially surface something unsuitable. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the sheer volume of uploads mean they aren't manually monitored and vetted.

18  
CENSORED

### DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Due to TikTok's immense popularity, some young people have unfortunately been influenced by videos challenging them to perform harmful, criminal or even deadly acts. One extreme example was the "blackout" trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. It led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With around 1.1 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or youngsters using a false date of birth) are set to public by default. This not only means that someone's profile is visible to everyone else on the app; it also lets their videos be suggested to others and enables anyone to comment on them or download them.

### IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase emojis in the app. These emojis are then sent as rewards (retaining their monetary value) to other users for videos they've created. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; TikTok's policy is that they can't be bought by under-18s, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birthday.

### ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social networking platforms, TikTok can be addictive; figures show that young people are investing increasing amounts of time in it. In the UK, children with TikTok spend an average of 102 minutes per day on the app, versus 53 minutes on YouTube. This compulsive repeated use can interfere with their sleep patterns – leading to irritability – and distract them from other activities.

### TIKTOK NOW

Introduced in late 2022, the "TikTok Now" feature lets users post a daily video or photo at the exact same time as their friends. Users receive a synchronised notification at a random time of day, giving them three minutes to take a video or real-time photo. This addition can not only be a distraction to young people but could lead to them inadvertently sharing private content such as their location.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account with their child's and control their settings remotely. Parents can then, for example, turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content); set screen time limits; and manage their child's ability to send messages (and to whom). Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.



### MAKE ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Although under-18s will have their TikTok account set to private by default, bypassing this setting is relatively easy. However, parents have the ability to manually set their child's account to private – meaning that their videos won't be visible to strangers and they won't be able to exchange messages with people who aren't on their friends list.



### LIMIT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter the settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend that you enable this feature, as it's quite easy for a young person – without realising what they're doing – to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins so they can unlock more features of the app.



### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If your child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's crucial to talk about the potential risks in this type of app. For example, ensure they understand not to share any identifying personal information – and that they realise they could be exposed to inappropriate content. Thinking critically about what they see on TikTok can help children become generally more social media savvy.



### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something inappropriate or upsetting that they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the possible signs: increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as are failing to complete homework or regularly not eating meals.



### Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



NOS  
National Online Safety  
#WakeUpWednesday

### **NEU Strike Action**

I am sure that you have all heard that the largest teacher's union has voted for strike action. There are four dates that affect schools in the North West. These are:

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March.

It is possible that there may need to be a partial closure of school on these days to certain classes.

The NEU strike action does not affect Ruby class or Opal class.

I will update you with any further information when I have it.

The Young Voices concert planned for Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February will be going ahead as planned.