

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

Newsletter

05.05.24

A note on worship...

Respect



'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it'

Genesis 2:15

At the beginning of the week we celebrated Earth Day by watching a video about our beautiful planet and talking about the small things that we can do to look after it.

This week was also St George's day. Reverend Janet came in to lead our worship and she brought a red dragon with her!

On Wednesday we learned about the Jewish festival of Passover which is being celebrated at the moment and we share the story of the Exodus from Egypt, led by Moses.



Stars of the Week



Katie, Tommy, Rosie, Anna, Elsie Ta, Charlie, Pippa, Matilda,

Keegan, Amelia & Erin

Well done to you all!

Events for the Week

Beginning

6.05.24

Monday

School Closed – Bank Holiday

Tuesday

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school rounders for years 4, 5 and 6

Wednesday

Brass Lessons

After school multi-skills for years 1 and 2

After school cricket for years 5 & 6

Thursday

Choir to the music festival

Cricket at Old Trafford

Water Polo

After school athletics for years 3, 4, 5 and 6

6.30pm Parent's meeting with Karen Bramwell

Friday

Sapphire class whole class brass lessons

From the office...

- Please order schools dinners by midnight on Sunday. **Twenty children did not have dinners ordered** for them which day this week. This can lead to children not being ordered a school dinner by the office staff. If you have not ordered a school dinner for your child, **please send them with a packed lunch** to ensure that they get something they will eat.

Academy Conversion Meeting

This has now been rescheduled to Thursday 9th May at 6.30pm. Karen Bramwell will be attending in person and not be on video call. All are welcome – please let the office know in advance if you are attending. Thank you.

Those that sent questions for the last meeting will have them answered on Thursday.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends – but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.



Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe – with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely – but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.



DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.



CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.



KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.



BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger *does* connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



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.



National Online Safety

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Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/en-gb/article/0285789256622-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-do-I-use-it> | <https://www.snap.com/en-gb/privacy/keeping-your-profile-and-new-safety-enhancements> | <https://nons.com.au/2021/04/16/expert-views-on-snapchat-features-for-adults/> | <https://help.snapchat.com/en-gb/article/0202438644>



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At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents and carers with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with their children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips on Supporting Children with SELF-REGULATION

Children need to learn to understand and recognise their emotions, while finding healthy ways to process them. Emotional self-regulation, however, depends heavily on age and development. While very young ones or children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may find it particularly challenging to self-regulate, nurturing these important skills can be hugely beneficial. Here are ten top tips for supporting children with their self-regulation.

1. DESIGNATE A TRUSTED ADULT

It's vital that children feel safe and know that there's someone they can always go to for help if they need it. Schedule consistent times for the child to develop a relationship with this person – ideally through play and games – allowing trust to grow and ensuring that the child is more likely to come forward if anything is wrong, rather than hiding their emotions.

2. MEET CHILDREN HALFWAY

Unless you know where a child is developmentally and tailor your approach to their needs, you're less likely to have an impact. In particular, younger ones and children with SEND can struggle to self-regulate and instead rely on others to help them. We call this 'co-regulation'. Rather than offering strategies for self-regulation, it could be better to start co-regulating with a trusted adult first.

3. FACTOR IN THEIR THEIR BASIC NEEDS

Remember that for a child to develop emotional regulation skills, their basic needs must be met first. Children who are hungry, tired, cold and so on – as well as those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences – may struggle to self-regulate. Before you develop strategies with any child, make sure they feel safe, secure and comfortable in themselves.

4. REMAIN PATIENT

If a child is struggling with their emotions, it can often become difficult to stay calm. Remember that dysregulation is beyond their control, so a display of frustration or anger could negatively impact the situation. Instead, children need to be met with comfort and understanding to help them manage these problematic feelings.

5. BE 'A DYSREGULATION DETECTIVE'

While some children can tell you why they become dysregulated, many others can't. You could investigate potential triggers by observing the child and talking to their family. When the child becomes dysregulated, note down details like the time, what they're doing and who they're with – the trigger may be someone they sit near, an unmet sensory need or something else entirely. Once we identify some triggers, we can help to avoid or overcome them.

6. USE SUITABLE LITERATURE

There are some wonderful books that can help you teach self-regulation to children. Reading these with a child can be especially powerful. Take time to discuss the content: ask questions about what feelings the characters had, why they felt that way and what strategies helped them. It can also be useful to refer back to snippets of these books at appropriate moments.

7. TRY SENSORY RESOURCES

An overlap between sensory needs and emotional regulation is possible. Children may struggle to self-regulate if they're experiencing sensory overload (a noisy classroom, for example). Positive sensory input can help calm them down. Use resources such as weighted blankets and fibre-optic lights. Of course, what works for one child might not work for another – so it's important to offer a choice of resources to discover which they prefer.

8. NURTURE INDEPENDENCE

If you feel it's appropriate, let children try out these strategies alone. Always offer them a choice: they could listen to music when they're feeling stressed, for example, or they could write down their worries or draw something to represent how they feel. This may take time for the child to get used to, so be patient. Encourage them to share any helpful strategies with a trusted adult.

9. MODEL GENUINE FEELINGS

Children learn a lot just from watching grown-ups. Don't be afraid to show your own emotions and self-regulation strategies. While you'll obviously want to avoid sharing anything too personal with children, they should still see us experiencing and handling our own feelings. Tell them how you are feeling, then show them how to respond in a healthy manner.

10. FORMULATE A PLAN

As much as we try to prevent children from experiencing dysregulation, it's always wise to have an appropriate plan for when it does happen. Discuss this strategy with the child (if appropriate) and their family. The best approach for an individual child is often a bespoke one; it's hugely important to know in advance what might help and what could worsen the situation.

Meet Our Expert

Georgina Durrant is an author, former teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and the founder of the award-winning SEN Resource Blog, where she shares activities, advice and recommendations for parents and teachers of children with SEND.



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Our School's Got Talent



Congratulations to the following children who have made it through the semi-finals. The semi-finals will be held in school in front of the rest of the children. All of the children will then be able to vote for who they want to see in the finals.

Erin, Isabella, Gosia and Josephine, Theo S., Scarlett F. and Evie, Lillie-May, Maisie and Raeann, Ronnie, Chester, Amelia B.W. and Ellie, Scarlett H., and Hattie, Matlida, Neave and Lillie S., Renaiya and Elsie Th. And Maddie.

Well done to all those who took part in the audition process. All of the children did well and it was a hard decision to choose the semi-finalists.

Bingo Night



The next bingo night is on Friday 17th May.

Tickets are available from Wisepay and cost £10 each. This is a really fun night. Funds raised will be going towards new interactive whiteboard for the classrooms.

Dates for the Diary...

Monday 6th May – School closed for Bank Holiday

Thursday 9th May – Water Polo session for year 4 and 5 children (limited)

Thursday 9th May – Music festival for the school choir

Thursday 9th May – Cricket at Old Trafford cricket (limited children)

Thursday 9th May – Academy Conversion meeting at 6.30pm

Monday 13th – Thursday 16th May – Year 6 SATs week

Friday 17th May – Our School's Got Talent semi-final (in school)

Friday 17th May – Bingo Night

Monday 20th May – Sapphire class visit to the Imperial War Museum North

Tuesday 21st May- Friday 24th May – Bikeability for year 6 children

Tuesday 22nd May – Rounders tournament for year 5/6 children (after school)

Thursday 23rd May – Ruby class to the music festival