St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior Schools' Weekly Newsletter
15th September, 2023
'Love one another; Always do our best; Take care of ourselves and the world around us'

First full week complete!

Our children have started off the year brilliantly; their behaviour has really been outstanding and we thank our parents and staff for working together to make this happen. Our children tell us that they feel safe at school and are happy to come to school each day, which makes all of our hard work absolutely worth it.

During assembly next week, we will be speaking to the children about online safety- we encourage parents to continue the conversation at home.

Meet the teacher

Thank you to all of our parents who attended our 'meet the teacher' event on Friday. The sessions were very well attended which was fantastic to see. We hope you found them informative and they answered any questions about the year ahead. If you were not able to attend we are running the same session on Monday 18th September at 9am. All slides and handouts will be shared on the website under 'Curriculum->Classes'.

A big welcome to Alex, our new PE teacher, and Canan, our new music teacher. We are so lucky to have specialist teachers delivering these lessons to our pupils.

Enrichment clubs sign ups begin next week. Our clubs are very popular so make sure you sign up in good time via Arbor.

End of the day:

For the most part, home time is running smoothly. At the Junior Gate (Years 4-6) we would appreciate if parents could make sure that they are in the right order and do not surround the teacher releasing the children. The children are released in this order: Year 6, Year 4, then Year 5.

We know how important it is for parents to speak with teachers. Please may we ask that you wait to the side until the teacher has released their class, and they will be happy to speak with you. Even what seems like a quick conversation as you're collecting your child can lead to a slowing down of the collection flow. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

Dates for your diary:
Our website now has a calendar which updates parents on events going on in the school (as well as this newsletter)
[Click here to see our calendar.](#) It can also be found on our home page.

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When:	What:	Who:	Where:	Time:
18th September	Meet the Teacher	Years 1-6 parents	Classrooms	9am
Every Thursday 12th October- 16th November	5-week parent workshop hosted by Trailblazers	All parents	Junior Hall	2.10-3.10pm
Wb 16th October	Parent teacher Consultations	Years 1-6 parents	Years 1-3 Infant Hall Years 4-6 Junior Hall	3.40-6pm

Reminders/Notices:

St Mary's Priory: Where great lives begin!

- Gates open at 8.40am and close at 8.50am. Lessons begin at 8.50am

BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN YOUR CHILD

A 5-week parent workshop hosted by Trailblazers!

The Trailblazers are a Mental Health Support Team working with Haringey Schools to support the emotional wellbeing of children. Zena is an Educational Mental Health Practitioner supporting this school. She is trained in evidence-based approaches for a range of wellbeing concerns including anxiety, low mood and behavioural difficulties.

What will be covered:

- Understanding worry and anxiety in children.
- Supporting your child to understand and manage their feelings.
- Helping your child to talk about and challenge their worries.
- Helping your child to face their fears and build confidence.
- Space for questions and troubleshooting.
- Parent peer support - sharing and understanding.

"Felt like a really safe space - really appreciated all the help and guidance."

"Just delighted with it so lucky to have this"

(Parent workshop feedback, May 2023)

BOOK A PLACE BY EMAILING:
admin@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk
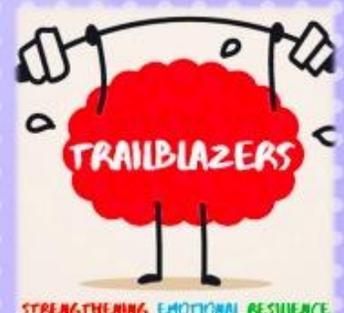
WHEN & WHERE?

2:10pm - 3:10pm @ St Mary's Priory
Thursday 12th October - 16th November 2023

Haringey LONDON

NHS Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust

TRAILBLAZERS

STRENGTHENING EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

Exciting news for the next academic year!

There will be a Parent and baby Group at St. Mary's Priory Catholic School every Friday at **9am to 10am**

Everyone with a baby is welcome!

Dear Parents,

we are inviting you and your baby to come along and enjoy a space with other parents, going through the same experiences as you. You will share the experiences and learn about your baby's development.

The facilitator: Gloria Jaramillo (Child Counsellor currently working with children across the schools)

Starting date: 8th September 2023

Email: admin@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk

Phone: 020 8800 9305

Hermitage Road, London N15 5RE

![St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior Schools logo — "Where great lives begin"]

Exciting news for the next academic year!

There will be a Parent and baby Group at St. Mary's Priory Catholic School every Monday at *9am to 10.30am*

Everyone with a toddler is welcome!

Dear Parents,

You are invited to participate with their toddler (1 to 3-year-old) in a space to play, talk and learn together about your child's development.

The facilitator: Gloria Jaramillo (Child Counsellor currently working with children across the schools)

Starting date: Monday 11th September 2023

Email: admin@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk

Phone: 020 8800 9305

Hermitage Road, London N15 5RE

HARINGEY
MUSIC SERVICE
PRESENTS

Junior Vox
A vocal group for ages 8 -11
All singers are welcome!

Tuesday
4:15 - 5:00pm
Chestnuts Community Centre
280 St Ann's Road, N15 5BN

An amazing opportunity!

If you are looking for a challenge and want to push yourself musically and get the chance for some exciting performance opportunities, then this choir is for you!

No audition required!

This group is for singers who are looking to explore their vocal harmony and voices in a variety of ways, to eventually work alongside other musicians, vocalists and other ensembles.

Haringey
LONDON

*This is NOT a standard choir. This is a vocal group with an edge.

YEAR 6 ADMISSIONS OPEN EVENTS

(September 2024 Start)

Wednesday 20 September 2023 | 4.30pm - 6.30pm
(Tours. Principal's presentation at 4.45pm & 5.45pm)

Wednesday 11 October 2023 | 5.00pm - 7.00pm
(Tours. Principal's presentation at 5.15pm & 6.15pm)

Thursday 12 October 2023 | 9.00am - 9.45am
(Tours. Final Tour at 9.15am)

Skinners' academy

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

18 CENSORED

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

D@*#!

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 Lipscombe 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.

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Haringey, Here to Help

Haringey LONDON

Get valuable funding for your child's school!

Did you know, schools can receive up to **£1455** in extra funding through the **Pupil Premium** for every child who is eligible for **Free School Meals?**

CLAIM FREE SCHOOL MEALS

The funding is used to boost learning outcomes for pupils so every child in Haringey can achieve their full potential.

So, if you're eligible, speak to your school and complete a Free School Meals application today!

scan me to learn more!

www.haringey.gov.uk/FSM

*Please see the list of qualifying benefits on our website.

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Pupil Premium funding is used to help all children reach their full potential by:

Enhancing education

Enriching the curriculum

Boosting learning outcomes

CLAIM FREE SCHOOL MEALS

So, if you're eligible, speak to your school and complete a free school meals application today!

scan me to learn more!

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*Please see the list of qualifying benefits on our website.

How to Set up
PARENTAL CONTROLS
for
APPS
iPhone

Apple devices come with built-in apps already available: Mail, FaceTime and Safari, for example. However, you can choose which apps and features appear on your child's device and which ones don't. You can also manipulate the features in Game Centre to enhance your child's safety and privacy when playing games, as well as blocking iTunes or App Store purchases if you wish.
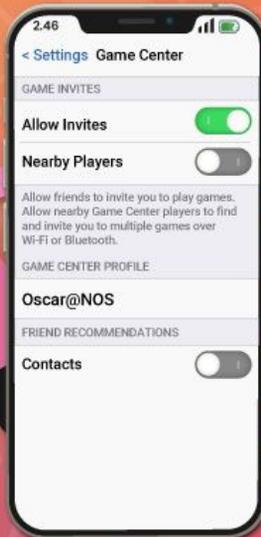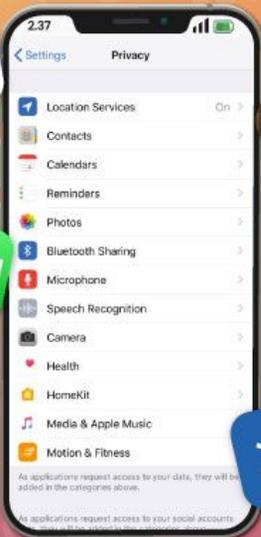
How to Restrict Built-in Apps/Features

1. Open Settings
2. Tap Screen Time
3. Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
4. Tap Allowed Apps (you may need to toggle this to 'on' at the top)
5. Enable or disable the apps you wish to appear(or disappear) on your child's device

How to Restrict Game Centre

1. Open Settings
2. Tap Screen Time
3. Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
4. Tap Content Restrictions (you may need to switch the toggle at the top to the 'on' position)
5. Scroll down to Game Centre
6. Choose between Allow, Don't Allow, or Allow with Friends Only in the settings for each feature

How to Restrict iTunes & App Store Purchases

1. Open Settings
2. Tap Screen Time
3. Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
4. Tap iTunes & App Store Purchases
5. Select Allow or Don't Allow for each feature (you can also lock these settings with a password)

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about
AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence – particularly in terms of how it generates natural language – has seen significant development over the last six months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat, for example). One form of AI to become especially popular has been the 'AI friend' or chatbot, as children eagerly experiment with these new-found computer-generated companions. There are now numerous apps available with this 'virtual friend' functionality, with the likelihood of it being added to other successful platforms soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always be able to recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. So there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could very likely hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour (as many originate from the USA or the UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview). This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, creativity and ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts are warning that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties, for instance).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If your child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with your child and perhaps do your own research to ensure you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit with your young one and begin exploring AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If your child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space at home, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside your child to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children are still getting plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps your child can download and use. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to your child. In particular, emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something that isn't entirely impartial or accurate.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.

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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 21.06.2023

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

INFLUENCERS

In today's digital age, social media influencers play an increasingly significant role in shaping the opinions, interests and behaviours of our children. While many of these individuals can have a positive effect, influencer culture can also present certain risks – such as encouraging consumerism, affecting self-esteem and blurring trustworthiness. To help ensure a safe online environment for young people, it's vital to maintain open communication, set sensible boundaries, promote a healthy self-image and teach digital media literacy. Our guide delves deeper into all of these.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

HEIGHTENED CONSUMERISM

A major way that influencers make money is through brand partnerships and sponsored content. As a result, children who follow them may be exposed to a steady stream of advertising: this can lead to materialistic attitudes, unrealistic expectations and an increased desire to have the latest products. Many influencers have built huge brand empires around their large, impressionable following.

THE SOFT SELL

Some influencers aren't always transparent about the motivations behind their posts, blurring the lines between genuine recommendations and paid-for promotions – and young people sometimes find it difficult to distinguish authentic content from advertising. Many major social platforms have taken steps to make sponsored content and ads easier to identify, but it remains an area of concern.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Inspired by their favourite influencers, children may start sharing more of their own lives online – which could reveal personal information or details about their daily routine. This openness can put them at risk of cyberbullying or even predatory behaviour. This is exacerbated by live streaming, which gives young people no time to consider the potential consequences of saying too much.

UNDERMINING SELF-ESTEEM

Many influencers share images and videos of themselves and their activities, which are often painstakingly curated and edited to present an idealised version of their life. Children who follow these influencers may develop distorted expectations about body image and the concept of beauty, which can potentially lead to negative self-esteem and even mental health issues.

Advice for Parents & Carers

KEEP TALKING

Chat to your child about the content they consume on social media and the influencers that they like. Encourage them to think critically about what they see and hear online, and listen to any concerns they might have. Maintaining this line of open, honest communication can help your child to make informed decisions about which individuals they follow and what content they engage with.

SUPPORT A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE

Reinforce your child's awareness that real life isn't usually as picture perfect as it may appear on social media – and how some content (particularly that of influencers) is often curated, staged or edited to look more glamorous. If possible, highlight examples of other influencers who share authentic, relatable material which acknowledges their imperfections and struggles as well.

SET SOME BOUNDARIES

Agree age-appropriate boundaries for your child's social media use, including time limits and privacy settings (the two major operating systems on mobile devices, Android and iOS, have these controls baked in). Try to keep an eye on your child's online activity and discuss it regularly with them – including reminding them of the potential risks that can arise from following influencers.

PROMOTE MEDIA LITERACY

Talk to your child about the concepts of sponsored content, advertising and potential influencer bias. Teach them to critically evaluate the information they're presented with online and to consider the possible reasons behind content creation. This can help young people develop the skills to make healthier decisions about the influencers they choose to follow and the content they consume.

Meet Our Expert

A former director of digital learning and currently a deputy headmaster and DSL, Brendan O'Keeffe's experience and expertise gives him a clear insight into how modern digital systems impact the experience of children, staff and parents – and which strategies help to ensure that the online world remains a useful educational tool rather than a minefield of risks.

National Online Safety

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SEND

Special **E**ducational **N**eeds and **D**isabilities

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR LOCAL OFFER?

The Local Offer is information for parents and carers of children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It explains the support we offer in Haringey for those children and young people.

- **Community groups** – Parent Carer Forum, Markfield community centre, SENDIASS and more
- **Travel assistance** – School transport service, Travel buddying, Independent Travel Training, Personal Travel Budget and paid mileage
- **Health services** – Speech and Language Therapy, Nursing Services, Physiotherapy Service, Mental Health services and more
- **Preparing young people for adulthood** – Advice on getting a job, where to live, getting the right benefits, managing your health, transition and more

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AND SIGN UP TO OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

www.haringey.gov.uk/local-offer

Haringey

St Mary's Online Safety Tips

Here at St Mary's we consider online safety a priority, we acknowledge that the world our children are preparing for is becoming increasingly online. Therefore, we have compiled the following tips in order to support you in guiding your child through digital experiences.

☐ Set Up Parental Controls

Home internet providers can offer parental controls for your family. There are 2 ways of achieving this:

- Use a filter from your internet provider to control the content that you and your family see. Some providers allow different settings for each user.

- Set up any device connected to your home broadband. How you do this depends on your provider and you'll need to access your home router. You can ask your internet provider for help setting this up.

I'd like to set up parental controls...

Check the settings on any games or device that your child is on.

Settings icons usually look like a gear like this: ⚙

On some devices you can control the following:

- Turn off chat functions to stop your child from talking to people they don't know
- Restrict games based on age
- Turn off in-game purchases, or set a limit.

An example is shown on the popular game Roblox:
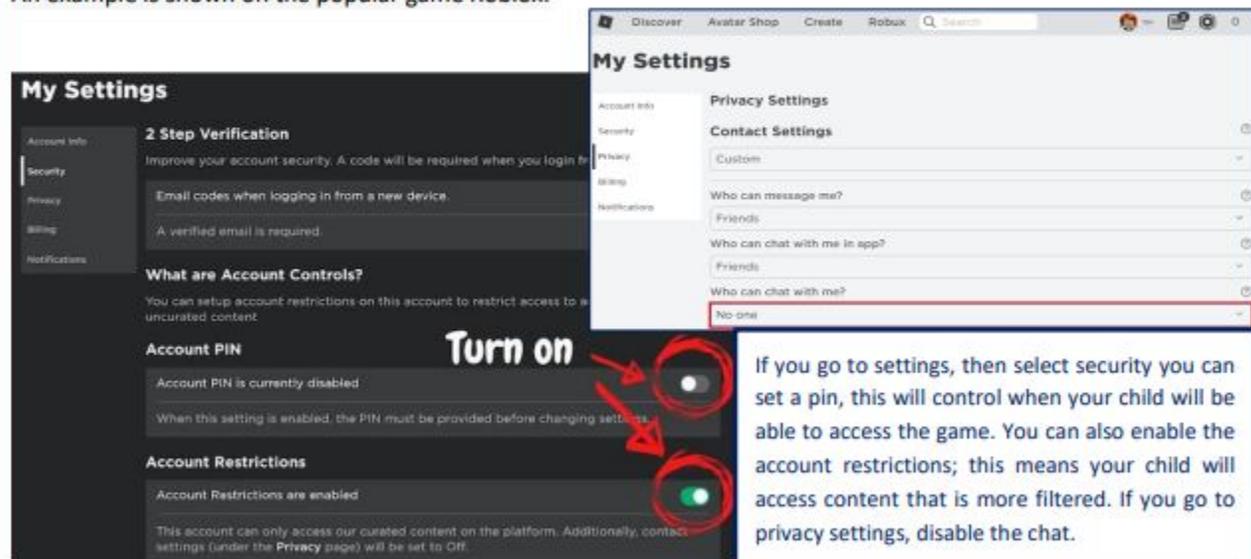
Turn on

If you go to settings, then select security you can set a pin, this will control when your child will be able to access the game. You can also enable the account restrictions; this means your child will access content that is more filtered. If you go to privacy settings, disable the chat.

☐ Have devices in a supervised area

Remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes, unsuitable content can get past them, so don't rely on them alone to protect your child.

The best way to ensure your child is safe is to monitor their behaviours online. It is not reasonable to expect young children to regulate their own behaviours online, just as we would not expect it to be reasonable for a child to arrange what they have for dinner each night, we as adults must guide the children in their choices.

Avoid headphones or headsets, unfortunately there is plenty of content that appears to be aimed at children but have inappropriate themes. Remember, just because something is a 'cartoon' doesn't mean it's for children.

☐ Open a Discussion

- Talk to your child and ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour with your child.

- Always ensure your child knows how to block or report people online who send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply.

- Make sure your child knows to tell an adult they trust if they see something online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable. This will only begin with

- Children love talking about games! If you ask them what their mission is, what the game is about or even play a short game with them, you can learn a wealth of knowledge about what your child enjoys online. This will allow you to look it up in your own time to scan whether it is appropriate or safe for your child.

- Discuss the SMART rules listed below for guidance, the children would have been taught these guidelines to follow when online. Support them in understanding them and realising their application.

☐ Learn the SMART rules

S **Safe:** Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.

M **Meet:** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.

A **Accepting:** Accepting emails, messages, or opening files, images or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems — they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R **Reliable:** Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information you see or hear from the internet or social media.

T **Tell:** Tell a parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone, or something, makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

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 enthrals 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-Azim 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.

National Online Safety
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

School uniform

PE uniform

Details of our school uniform can be found on our website under 'parents', or by clicking the link below.

https://www.stmaryspriory.co.uk/school-uniform/