

# St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior Schools' Weekly Newsletter

3rd November, 2023

'Love one another; Always do our best; Take care of ourselves and the world around us'



## ANTI-BULLYING WEEK 2023



### Odd Socks Day - Supporting Anti-Bullying Week - Monday 13th November!

Monday 13th November is Odd Socks Day! 🧦 We invite you and your children to all wear your wackiest, wildest, and most colourful odd socks to school in support of Anti-Bullying Week.

Let's celebrate our uniqueness, spread kindness, and have a fantastic time as we unite to say 'NO' to bullying!

St Mary's Priory has zero tolerance for bullying; our pledge to our children and parents is that: IF YOU TELL US...

IT WILL STOP...

STRAIGHT AWAY...

AND FOR GOOD.

If you are ever have any concerns about this, please see your child's class teacher immediately.

### Attendance reminder:

We do not authorise holidays. A fixed term penalty notice will be issued by Haringey to any families taking their child out of school early (or returning late) this Christmas break.

### Helping our office team:

While our halls are out of use, it is taking a long time for our office staff to deliver forgotten items to the classrooms. Please support us by ensuring your child has everything they need coming into school so you do not need to ask the office to pass on items like snacks, water bottles etc. Thank you for your support!



### Harvest Festival

#### Final week to donate food!

Can we please ask that when you are out shopping this weekend you add a non-perishable item to your basket 🍞🥪 We are calling on our wonderful school community for food donations so we can help those who need it the most!

### Attendance winners!

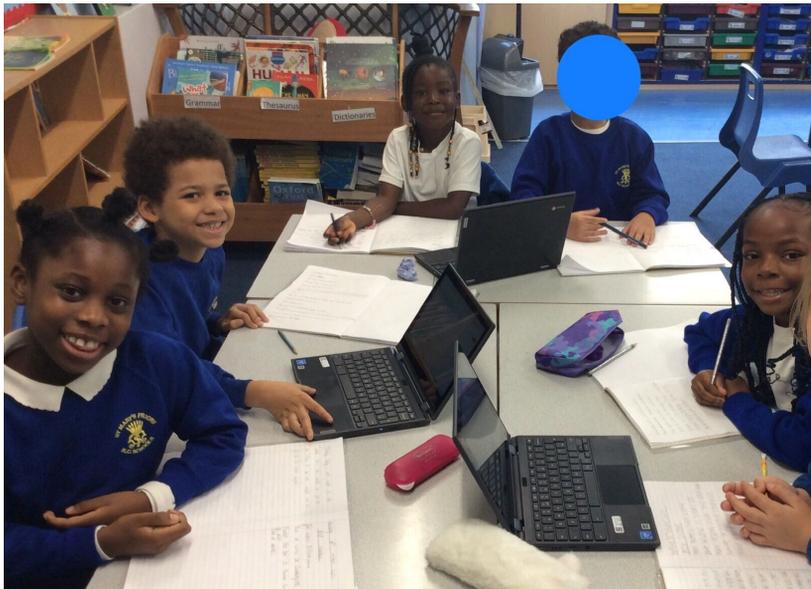
| Infant School: | Junior School: |
|----------------|----------------|
| Robin<br>100%  | 3M<br>98.95%   |

### Punctuality winners!

|                                |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Woodpecker and Dove<br>0 lates | 3C, 4B, 5S<br>1 lates |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|

# Black History Month

Saluting Our Sisters



This October we commemorated Black History Month under the captivating theme of "Saluting Our Sisters."

This theme holds immense significance as it allowed us to shine a spotlight on the invaluable contributions made by black women throughout history and across various cultural domains. Black individuals have been at the forefront of crucial social justice movements, championing change and confronting oppression head-on. However, the extraordinary achievements of black women, despite their numerous contributions to society, have often been overlooked or sadly forgotten.

This celebration also provided us with an opportunity to embrace the rich diversity within our school community. During October, the classes selected a remarkable woman to honour, and each child created a biography highlighting her life and achievements.

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## Enrichment Clubs (sign up via Arbor at the start of the Autumn Term)

### Infant School

- o Dance – Wednesdays – Year 1-2
- o English – Wednesdays – Year 1-2
- o Drama – Thursdays – Reception
- o Multi Sports – Monday – Year 1-6
- o Football – Tuesdays – Year 1-3
- o Football – Thursdays – Year 4 – 6

### Junior School

- o Geography – Mondays – Year 3-4
- o Arts & Crafts – Wednesdays – Year 3-5
- o Boxing – Wednesday – KS2
- o Netballing – Tuesdays – KS2

| When:                  | What:  | Who:                | Where:        | Time:                |
|------------------------|--|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 10th November          | Parent coffee morning to discuss the Christmas Fair  | All parents         |               | 9-10am               |
| 13th November          | Odd Socks Day! To kick off Anti-Bullying week, we would like the children to come in wearing odd socks (children should wear their uniform as usual).  |                     |               |                      |
| 15th and 16th November | Reception parent meeting on EYFSP  | Reception parents   | Infant School | 15th-9am<br>16th-2pm |
| 15th November          | Anti-Bullying Workshop for parents   | All parents         | Lunchhall     | 2.30pm               |
| 17th November          | Children in Need Non-uniform Day. The theme this year is 'spots' so you can try to incorporate spots into your outfit. You can donate to this worthy cause via Arbor as we remain a cashless school. | All children        |               |                      |
| 1st December           | Nasal flu spray being administered- please make sure you complete the permissions if you want your child to receive the spray.   | Reception- Year 6   |               |                      |
| 13th December          | Christmas Dinner   | All children        | Lunch hall    | Lunchtime            |
| 14th December          | The PSA's Christmas Fair! School closed early at 2pm   | St Mary's Community | Hall          | 2pm                  |



# Stars of the Week



|                  |         |             |
|------------------|---------|-------------|
| Owl Class        | Laura   | Jannick     |
| Penguin Class    | Roman   | Aurora      |
| Robin Class      | Arianne | Rodericka   |
| Woodpecker Class | Eldora  | Emiliano    |
| Dove Class       | Andreas | Abrafi      |
| 3C               | Audrey  | Bernadette  |
| 3M               | Shemmy  | Eldana      |
| 4B               | Antos   | Sophie M    |
| 5D               | Mikolaj | Lariyah-Rae |
| 5S               | Csaba   | Shalom      |
| 6B               | Julia   | Valentina   |
| 6J               | Miracle | Yueyan      |

**Congratulations to our Stars of the week!**  
**These pupils have worked exceptionally hard**  
**to stand out amongst their peers. Well done**  
**everyone!**



# Link to our Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/StMarysRCPriory>



## What's been happening at St Mary's this week?

Make sure you check out our school's Twitter account to keep up to date with what our pupils are getting up to!

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October we were very lucky to have the **Highgate International Chamber Music Festival performed for Early years and Year1.**

Teachers and children thoroughly enjoyed such a magical musical experience.

We thought it might be helpful for you to have the opportunity to watch the story with your child:

<https://youtu.be/aTLOD1fQIIQ?feature=shared>

and here is another chance to listen to it . This link is to the solo cello piece you heard by

Natalie Klouda:

<https://youtu.be/NOelNwFwkaw?si=iaWyYDGNv7mmvd8D>

The Highgate International Chamber Music is very near, where cellist Ashok Klouda who performed at our school will be joined by many world-class musicians for live music at St Anne's Church, Highgate West Hill, 23rd-26th November. For all info, please visit

[chambermusicfestival.co.uk](http://chambermusicfestival.co.uk) where you can also

see many free videos of live performances. We

would really appreciate it, if you are able to share details of the festival with the children and their parents. **Please note that we have a Kids**

**Go Free! scheme whereby 2 children aged 16 or**

**under may attend any festival concert when**

**accompanied by a paying adult.**

Thank you to our performers and regards from

Mrs Georgiou Music Lead

More happy customers at our book fair. Join us tomorrow for a browse and a chance to escape the rain ☔☔☔



In Design and Technology lessons 5D created their own Doodlers which used electricity and the power of a motor to move and draw. That was fun!



Reception have been learning how we can look after our world as God asks us to. We created artwork showing plastic pollution and learned how we can help to prevent it.



# Fixed Term Penalties for absence

Section 23 of the Anti Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority officers, Head Teachers (or Deputy and Assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices in cases of:

Unauthorised absence from school

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. There is a very clear correlation between good school attendance and good educational outcomes. This is demonstrated in the Department for Education research document "The Link Between Absence and Attainment"

Haringey Council support young people to thrive in school, and to ensure that they have positive aspirations for the future and access to employment and training opportunities to get there. This is clearly outlined in our Young People at Risk Strategy.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent fails to secure their child's attendance at school and that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under S444 Education Act 1996 or S36 Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate. The Education Welfare Service delivers this Local Authority responsibility.

The penalty notice is £120, but a 50% discount is applied if the penalty notice is paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. If paid within 21 days of issue, the amount payable is therefore £60. The penalty rises to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the penalty notice. Payment must be in full; we will not accept part payments or payments over time.

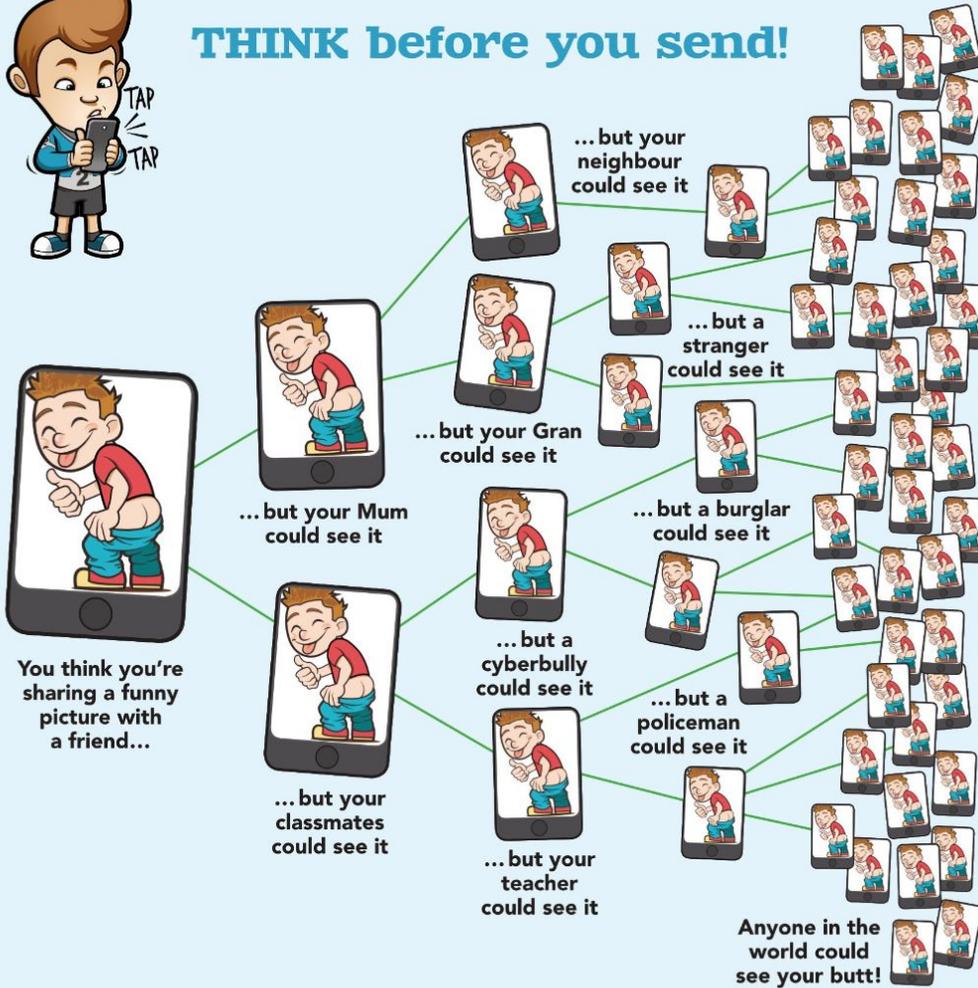


We do not grant holidays during term time at St Mary's Priory. These will be unauthorised absences and will incur the fine from Haringey. Thank you for supporting the school in its quest to improve the attendance of our pupils so that they can get the best education possible.

### Parent Guides to Online Safety



**THINK before you send!**



### If you share it, you are involved

**If you have, or forward an indecent image of someone under 18, it is a criminal offence. It can affect your future.**

**Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.**

**Parents** please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

**Skips Educational** Email: info@skipsed.com Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# X

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

## A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote denial and hatred.

## LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

## AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

## VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

## BLUE TICK SALE

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

### DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

### STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

### ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow: this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

### BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

## Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday



**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](mailto:admin@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk)**

**Phone: 020 8800 9305**

**Hermitage Road, London N15 5RE**



**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](mailto:admin@stmarysrcpriory.haringey.sch.uk)**

**Phone: 020 8800 9305**

**Hermitage Road, London N15 5RE**

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as The Traitors, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

### VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

### CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

### GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

### IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

### CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

### DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

### AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

### STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and experts site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



#WakeUpWednesday



# 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)



**Skinner's**  
academy

Find us at: Woodberry Grove, London, N4 1SY

[www.skimmersacademy.org.uk](http://www.skimmersacademy.org.uk) | [enquiries@skimmersacademy.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@skimmersacademy.org.uk)

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**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.



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION  
**16+**

In UK and Europe;  
rest of the world 13+

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.

...MSG ME...

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### 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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Source: <https://blog.whatsapp.com/an-open-letter> | <https://faq.whatsapp.com/107709839582332> | [https://faq.whatsapp.com/38005898189245/helpref-hc\\_inov](https://faq.whatsapp.com/38005898189245/helpref-hc_inov) | <https://www.whatsapp.com/security> | <https://blog.whatsapp.com/chat-lock-making-your-most-intimate-conversations-even-more-private> | <https://www.aura.com/learn/whatsapp-scams>

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

### WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be **disposable** (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or **rechargeable** (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

### LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction: that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

### POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain 'heavy' metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury - all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

### UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 - and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

### ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media - which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 1.3 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components - a lithium battery and a chemical liquid - pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

### WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria - resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

### UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked - presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

### SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging - with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

### VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term 'natural and artificial flavourings'. Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

## Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

The National College

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-65809924>



[www.thenationalcollege.co.uk](http://www.thenationalcollege.co.uk)



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# 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.

18

CENSORED

## 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>

## 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.

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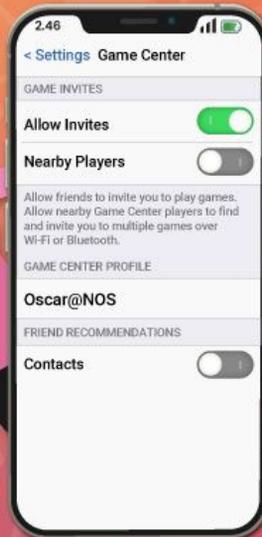
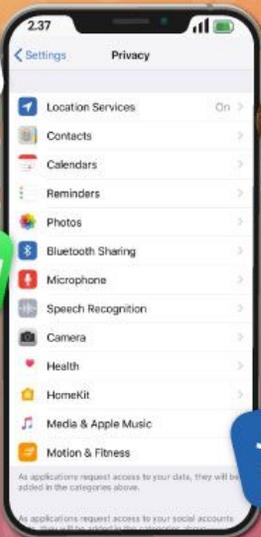


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# How to Set up PARENTAL CONTROLS for APPS iPhone

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)





# SEND

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



## 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 buddies, 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



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# 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.



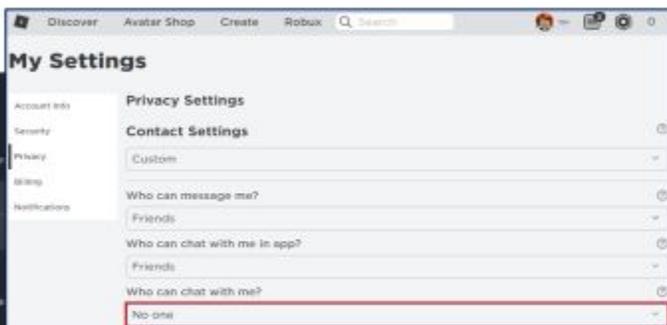
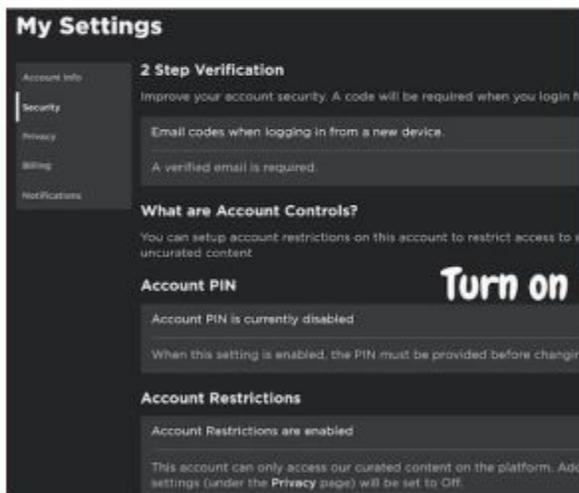
Check the settings on any games or device that your child is on.

Settings icons usually look like a gear like this: 

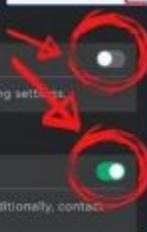
On some devices you can control the following:

- 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



**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.



**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.



**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!



**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.



**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 enthral 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.



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