SUMMER TERM NEWSLETTER 2024

The summer term has started with great gusto this year! Trips to the Tower of London, the Theatre Royal and to the Castle have provided some exciting and memorable learning experiences for our children. As always, the summer term has lots of other events to look forward to!

In this newsletter, in addition to sharing the usual key dates, events and celebrations, we have chosen to focus on online safety and cyberbullying. We live in an ever-changing world, where increasingly, digital technology sits at the centre. Whilst this technology has brought about many amazing changes to our daily lives, it also brings with it some challenges and potential harms which we all need to be able to navigate safely.

Cyberbullying

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying online and can take many forms such as sending malicious messages, leaving nasty comments, excluding someone from a group chat, blackmailing or setting up fake profiles and accounts. Cyberbullying can take place across many different platforms. The most common of which are:

Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok.
Text messaging and messaging apps on a mobile or tablet.
Instant messaging, direct messaging and chatting over the internet.
Online forums, chat rooms, message boards.
Email
Online gaming communities.

What should I do if my child is being bullied online?

If your child is being bullied, then try to stay calm and let them know that it is not their fault. It is always useful to keep evidence of any online bullying – take screen shots or pictures of these. Inform the school so that they are aware and can offer their support and guidance. Show your child how to block and/or report any users/content and review their privacy settings to limit what others can see. You may wish to set up parental controls that are available.

Monitoring your children's use of technology and establishing clear rules, boundaries and expectations around this is an important part of ensuring that children remain safe online.

Cyberbullying – Further Information

There is a vast amount of information available online about cyberbullying. The following links provide further information on online bullying, how to support someone who is being bullied and who to contact if you need further support or advice.

https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-bullying/
https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/bullying/
https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it
https://www.nationalbullyinghelpline.co.uk/cyberbullying.html
https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/

Group Chats

Group chats are available on various messaging apps, social media apps and in some games. When your child is part of these groups, they may not know all the other members and it may even include people they have previously blocked.   You child may come across inappropriate content and bullying can take place within these groups.

It is important that you talk with your child to understand who is in these groups and to establish how to speak to people online with kindness and respect. It should be no different to how you talk face-to-face with people.

Talking to Strangers Online

There are many apps/websites where your children may come across strangers contacting them. Some platforms allow you to set who can contact your child as well as switch off communications. Ensure that the appropriate settings are explored and set up.

Speaking with people via SMS or messaging apps that require knowing the other person's mobile phone number, helps to ensure that you know who your child is speaking to.

Some apps, such as Snapchat, are entirely web based and work independently of a mobile phone number. Many of these apps give friend suggestions or allow other people to freely add, friend request or directly message your child.

TikTok

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok.

TikTok is a social media platform for sharing and watching short video clips. Some videos may not be appropriate for your child to view and there is also a risk of strangers contacting your child. If your child is using TikTok, please ensure that the appropriate security and privacy settings are applied.

Account Set Up

As with many social media platforms, it is important that when setting up an account that you use your child's correct date of birth as profiles are tailored by age. Direct messaging functions are often disabled, adverts are age appropriate and by default, accounts for under 16s are set as private. This means that your child must approve follower requests. We always recommend that profiles remain set as private.   We would like to stress that the age requirement for TikTok and many other apps (WhatsApp, Snapchat and Twitter/X) is 13.

Common Sense Media provide guidance and advice for parents and carers around social media apps, YouTube videos, films, TV and more. In many cases their age recommendation for platforms such as TikTok is 16+.

https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

TikTok – Continued

Inappropriate Content/Themes, Challenges and Media Influencers.

Whilst it is against TikTok's usage guidelines, explicit and inappropriate content can be commonly found on this platform, including nudity, sexual content and hate speech. In recent years, we have seen viral challenges being shared via social media platforms – many of which can be dangerous.

We often see trends on social media such as the latest diet, workout program or beauty regime, many of which will lead to children trying to change their lifestyle, diet or purchasing and using different products such as make up. There is little regulation around these videos and therefore these trends may be dangerous or completely age inappropriate.

Our children may not have developed the skills and ability to critically analyse all situations yet and so it is important to talk to your child about hoaxes and challenges that may appear on the internet. There are of course many challenges that are fun and provide no risk, however there will be challenges that are risky/dangerous. Just recently, a child sadly died after participating in an online challenge. More information can be found here: https://ineqe.com/2024/03/19/dangerous-challenge-safeguarding-risks/

If your child becomes aware of an online challenge then we encourage you to initiate a conversation about the possible harms that may come from it – even if they've not seen anyone being harmed as a result online. Having an open dialogue with your children helps to build trusting and healthy online behaviours. We advise that if your child has not heard about a specific challenge or trend online, then do not draw their attention to it, instead talk more generally about online safety and thinking critically about what you may come across online.

#Wake Up Wednesdays

'Wake Up Wednesdays' is an initiative from the National College to produce high-quality resources that empower adults and help to protect children in the digital space – encouraging schools, parents, carers and children to 'wake up' to the extent of the potential hazards facing young people online.

Each week, new guidance is published on a different area of the digital world (new apps, games, YouTube videos, online trends or challenges). The digital world is constantly shifting changing, and these resources provide an opportunity to keep up with the latest developments.

As a school, we will be publishing these resources on a weekly basis via Class Dojo. We have a commitment to ensuring that our children able to safely navigate the digital world and whilst this forms a significant part of our Computing and PSHE curriculum, support at home it essential.

Poppy Playtime

Whilst the name of this game and the characters (Huggy Wuggy and Kissy Wissy) sound harmless enough, it is important to recognise that this is a survival horror game with graphics and images that may not be suitable for your child. We encourage you to view this game before allowing your child to play.

Skibidy Toilet

We have seen an increase in the number of children talking about 'Skibidi Toilet' at school. This is a short animation series that is readily found on YouTube and other media platforms. IMDB gives a clear synopsis of the episodes contained within this series, highlighting repeated scenes of sex and nudity, violence and gore, profanity, alcohol, drugs and smoking, frightening and intense scenes and racial/prejudiced language.

Key Dates for the Summer Term

Monday 13th – Thursday 16th May - SATs

Tuesday 21st May – RSHE Parent Consultation

Wednesday 22nd May – School Discos

Monday 3rd June – School Photos

Friday 7th June – Sports Day

Friday 14th June – Day of Welcome

Friday 28th June – PTA Summer BBQ

Monday 1st July – Summer Concert

Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th July – Star Warts the Musical – Year 3/4 Performances

Thursday 11th and Friday 12th – Transition Days

Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th July – Shrek the Musical – Year 5/6 Performances

Thursday 18th July – Year 6 Leavers Assembly

Friday 19th July – Last day of term

Changes to Going Home Arrangements

As both the mornings and evenings are becoming lighter, we recognise that many parents and carers will begin to give their children the opportunity to walk home by themselves. This is a great opportunity for children to develop independence and show maturity, however we ask that your children are well prepared to walk home, knowing the appropriate routes and how to cross the road safely. Any changes to going home arrangements must be communicated to the school office and class teacher in a timely manner. If we ever have any doubt over a child's going home arrangement, we will always call to clarify this before allowing your child to leave the school site.

We also know that many children, often independently, will visit Heigham Park after school. Please speak with your children to ensure that they understand the expectations around behaviour as well as what to do if they were to be upset, injured or uncomfortable at the park.

A Good News Story

Before the Easter holidays our Year 6 football team, representing Norwich City, took part in a regional football final hosted at the Southampton FC training base. Fresh off the back of the Year 6 residential, the team showed a fantastic spirit, playing against teams from Ipswich, Watford, Southampton, Plymouth, and many others. They comfortably qualified from the group stage of the competition, however lost narrowly to Southampton (the eventual winners) in the semi-finals. The team beat Ipswich in the 3rd place playoff in an exhilarating match which finished on penalties.

The team played fantastic football and were an absolute credit to the school and their parents/carers – many of whom made the long trip down south with the boys! We must also mention Milo, who was influential throughout the season, but was unfortunately poorly on the day of the tournament - despite travelling with the squad.