



Brookfields Parent Newsletter

Message from Head of School:

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am delighted to be writing to you as the new Head of School at Brookfields. I have worked at Brookfields for over 15 years and know our wonderful community very well. It is a real privilege to take on this role and to serve such an amazing school community. Brookfields holds a very special place in my heart, and I want to reassure you that while there has been a change in leadership, my commitment remains the same. I am here to work closely with our whole school community and to continue building on the many successes that already make Brookfields such a special place.

During my time at Brookfields, I have had the pleasure of teaching across all year groups, from Early Years through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. I have also led many different areas across the school, including Reading, Writing, Maths and Safeguarding, to name just a few.

In addition, I have spent a number of years working in senior leadership roles as both Assistant Head and Deputy Head, supporting whole-school development and improvement.

These experiences have given me a strong understanding of our school, our children and what makes Brookfields thrive.

We have had a very exciting start to the week with Rock Kidz in school, reminding our amazing pupils about the importance of respect and how to be a great friend. The children were absolutely fantastic, and our visitors commented on just how wonderful our pupils are – something we already know and are incredibly proud of! We also welcomed Chris, our CEO, into school on Tuesday. Chris will be with us each week from Tuesday to Thursday during the Summer Term, and he shared that he has had the most amazing week at Brookfields, saying it has been his best week in ages.

*I am really looking forward to the coming term and am excited about all that lies ahead.
Thank you for your continued support. I wish you all a wonderful week.*

Miss Bernadette O'Rourke

Head of School

Message from Deputy Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am delighted to be writing to you as I begin my role as Interim Deputy Headteacher at Brookfields this term. Since joining the school in January as Assistant Headteacher, I have already felt incredibly welcomed by both the children and the wider school community.

Brookfields is a special place, and I am really looking forward to building on this in my new role. Over the coming months, I will be focusing on developing our lunchtime provision and creating even more opportunities for enrichment, so that every child can enjoy a positive, engaging and well-rounded school experience.

It has been a pleasure getting to know the pupils and seeing their enthusiasm for school life, and I am excited to continue working closely with staff and families as we move through the term together. Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to meeting more of you in the weeks ahead.

Mr Davey Henson

Interim Deputy Headteacher

Timetables Champions



*Mr Dyson met with pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 this week to introduce his exciting **Super Timetables Challenge**. He will be looking for a **timetable champion from each class**, who will then compete against one another.*

*The first challenge will take place in **two weeks' time**. Year 1 and Year 2 will be focusing on the **2× table**, while Year 3 to Year 6 will be focusing on the **3× table**.*

These timetables will be our starting point for the competition, so it's time to get practising!

RockKidzUK



RockKidzUK brought fantastic energy to Brookfields this week, kicking off our term with a focus on kindness. The children took part in engaging workshops where they explored what it means to be kind, both in their words and their actions, and enjoyed learning songs that reinforced these important messages.

It was a wonderful way to start the term, giving everyone the opportunity to reflect on how we treat one another and the positive impact kindness can have within our school community.

The children shared their learning by reflecting on the importance of kindness and performing a song that celebrates caring, respect, and friendship. We are very proud of how thoughtfully they have embraced this message and look forward to seeing it continue throughout the term.

Kindness (Live it Loud)

Three things we hope you carry home

Kindness start with you

Nobody gets left out

Small acts hit different





Safeguarding Updates - Road Safety



We would like to thank all parents for your continued support and for the many kind and positive comments you have shared about how we are working together to ensure everyone's safety outside of school. We are grateful for the way parents have embraced the support measures in place. Safety remains our first priority, and we have been working closely with the Police and local PCSOs to strengthen our approach. We have also been in contact with local MPs, who have confirmed that they will be making referrals to

Birmingham City Council regarding additional safety signage. We will continue to do the very best we can each day and thank you, as always, for working in partnership with us.

Online Safety

App stores offer millions of apps, but not all are suitable or safe for children. Risks such as malware, copycat apps, in-app purchases, and inappropriate content can sometimes be easy to miss.

*Please see the **#WakeUpWednesday** guide below, which explains these risks in more detail and offers helpful advice to support families in keeping children safe online.*

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about APP & PLAY STORES

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Since the introduction of Apple's App Store and Google's Play Store, an estimated two million apps have been made available on each. Ofcom's 2025 media use and attitudes report states that more than half of children aged between 3 and 7 use apps or sites to communicate with each other, and, by the ages of 10 to 12, 45% of children are playing games on their mobile phones. This guide will help you ensure that children use the app stores and their content safely.

MALICIOUS APPS WITH MALWARE

Although Google and Apple must approve the apps on their official stores, inappropriate content sometimes slips through the net. For example, in 2025, the security company Kaspersky found that multiple iOS and Android apps contained screen-reading software, primed to look for passwords and stealing crypto-wallet recovery phrases captured in screenshots.

UNOFFICIAL COPYCAT APPS

Both official app stores contain copycat apps – often games – designed to look like popular rivals, mimicking their branding, layout and logos. While these will usually just offer a poor experience packed with ads as a quick money-making exercise, they're also more likely to be vessels for malware than the products they're counterfeiting.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

As the App Store and Play Store are for all ages, there's a lot of content available that's inappropriate for children. Examples include apps that have references to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence or gambling. In general, these are sensibly age-rated, but social media sites such as YouTube and TikTok, which both have an App Store age rating of 12+, can be gateways to adult material.

PREDATORY IN-APP PURCHASES

App-making is a business, and most creators have found that 'freemium' software is the way to make money. That means the app will be free initially but will either require the user to watch ads or rely on them making in-app purchases. Some 'free' apps can be predatory, and there are plenty of examples reported where parents have racked up huge bills on behalf of their children's app activity.

ADDICTIVE BY DESIGN

Phone addiction is fast becoming recognised as a real concern, and apps are a big part of this. Freemium apps have a real incentive to keep children checking in every day in order to generate more ad views or secure extra in-app purchases. This can interfere with schoolwork and other offline hobbies.

SIDeloADED BANNED APPS

'Sideloading' – the more complicated practice of installing applications on a device from sources other than the official app stores – bypasses Google's and Apple's security procedures; however, it is possible for tech-savvy users. This opens up huge risks – not just apps that would be forbidden by Apple and Google, but pirate ones packed with malware too.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR APPS

Both Google and Apple have apps that can give adults greater control over children's phone activity. 'Screen Time' (iPhone) and 'Family Link' (Android) have a range of features, such as letting you set age-related restrictions on the app stores, require permission to download an app, set daily time limits on specific apps, and control real-world spending.

DO YOUR RESEARCH

If children ask permission to download an app, do your due diligence and research it. Read the app summary and search the Internet for reviews and discussions to establish its legitimacy, safety and appropriateness – if it doesn't seem to be appropriate, look for safer alternatives instead.

LOOK BEYOND THE REVIEWS

App store reviews are helpful, but they are easily gamed, and some unscrupulous developers will pay for quick reviews to give their work perceived legitimacy. Take more than a cursory glance at listings by digging out the one- and two-star reviews and looking closely at the developer – for example, if they've published a lot of unrelated apps, that's a red flag.

TALK TO YOUR CHILD

Talk to children and make sure they're aware that apps can be risky. As part of a wider talk about internet literacy, ensure they don't download apps outside of the official channels, nor grant apps permission to access their camera, microphone, or photos without a good reason. Make sure they understand that in-game currency costs real-world money.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, Tech Radar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



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Attendance and Punctuality

Supported by



Department for Education

Celebrating Our Success at Brookfields:

*Brookfields Primary School is extremely proud to be both a **Behaviour and Attendance Hub** and a **RISE school**, supported by the Department for Education (DfE). As part of this important work, we are fortunate to collaborate with other schools, sharing ideas and strategies to strengthen behaviour, attendance and the wider culture of school life.*

*During the last half term, we were delighted to welcome over **40 schools from across Birmingham** to Brookfields as part of our open mornings. These sessions were led by Miss O'Rourke, with valued support from Mrs Kacem, Mrs Hooper and Mrs Downs. It was a pleasure to open our doors, share our journey, and celebrate the successes we have achieved together as a school community.*

*We were also pleased to welcome visitors from the Department for Education, alongside our CEO, **Chris Dyson**, who attended and delivered a presentation during the visit. Their positive feedback was incredibly affirming and something we are very proud of.*

We would not have achieved this success without the ongoing commitment and hard work of our parents and carers. Your continued support plays a vital role in everything we do, and we would like to thank you sincerely for working alongside us and supporting the Brookfields community so positively.

We are immensely proud of the work taking place at Brookfields and were delighted to share our experiences, values and successes with other schools.

Parent Workshops: Teenagers, Puberty and Relationships

The CAT team (Communication and Autism Team) are pleased to offer a series of online workshops for parent carers on **"Teenagers, puberty and relationships."**

These sessions are mainly aimed at families with secondary-aged children, though all interested parent carers are welcome.

Dates (via Microsoft Teams):

- Tuesday 21st April 2026
- Wednesday 22nd April 2026
- Tuesday 28th April 2026 (evening session)

Booking:

Places are limited and booking will close once sessions are full. Please visit your local offer website and search:

“CAT – Parent Carer Workshop: Teenagers, puberty and relationships.”

<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/product/cat-parent-carer-workshop-teenagers-puberty-and-relationships-via-microsoft-teams-tuesday-april-21st-2026/>



Communication and Autism Team

Parent Carer Workshop - Teenagers, puberty and relationships

Summer Term 2026

We would like to invite you to a CAT Parent carer workshop for parent carers who would like to increase their understanding of growth and change during puberty and ways to support their child.

To support parent carers of children with a diagnosis of autism, or who are on the Neurodevelopmental Pathway for autism assessment.

All Birmingham parent carers are welcome

Date: Tuesday April 21st 2026 9.15-10.45am
Book via the following link:
<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/product/cat-parent-carer-workshop-teenagers-puberty-and-relationships-via-microsoft-teams-tuesday-april-21st-2026/>

Sessions will take place via Microsoft Teams - a link be sent to you prior to the session.

We look forward to seeing you there - Lisa Walmsley and Wendy Bantock



Communication and Autism Team

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Date: Tuesday 28th April 2026 6.00pm -7.30pm
Book via the following link:
<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/product/cat-parent-carer-workshop-teenagers-puberty-and-relationships-via-microsoft-teams-tuesday-april-28th-2026/>

Sessions will take place via Microsoft Teams - a link be sent to you prior to the session.

We look forward to seeing you there - Dawn Fisher and Jo Clifford

Atom Learning



We work in partnership with Atom Learning, the leading online Key Stage 2 learning and 11+ preparation platform, to provide children in **Years 3-6 who are eligible for Pupil Premium with free Atom Home accounts**. Atom Home is normally £575.90 per year. Atom Home provides Key Stage 2 learning resources, helping children build exam technique, subject mastery and academic confidence. If your child is aged between 7 - 11 and has been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years (please check with the school office if you are not sure), please fill in the form by clicking the button below. [Access free 11+ preparation and KS2 learning](#)

For other families, there is a five-day free trial of Atom available:
<https://atomlearning.com/11-plus>

(Please press the Ctrl key and click to access the links)

Key Dates:



Tuesday 21st April 2026: Parents' Evening Day 1 (4pm - 6pm)

Wednesday 22nd April 2026: Parents' Evening Day 2 (4pm - 5:30pm)

Fridays 24th April 2026: Celebration Assembly

Monday 11th May - Thursday 14th May 2026: Y6 SATs week

Monday 1st June 2026: Year 4 MTC begins

Monday 8th June 2026: Y1 Phonics Check Begins
