

NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents and Carers,

Ramadan Kareem to all of Muslim families and staff members. Blessings and goodwill to our Christian families and staff members as you enter the season of lent. We send good wishes to everyone in the Greet community who is entering these periods of fasting, prayer and charity.

We have enjoyed some sunshine and warmer weather over the last week and enjoying the feeling that spring is on its way! We have had an exciting and eventful first two weeks to this new half term with school trips, sporting competitions and experiences and World Book Day celebrations. Please read on to see what has been going on around school!

Year 5 Trip to the Farm

The children in Year 5 spent half a day on their geography field trip to Mount Pleasant School Farm last week as part of their 'Sow Grow and Farm' unit. They learnt about the day-to-day life as a modern British farmer, the different types of farming and how they impact the features of an environment as well as the livestock that lives on a typical farm.



Year 4 Trip to Clent Hills

The children in Year 4 are walking and exploring the Clent Hills this week. This is linked to their geography unit of work 'Misty Mountain, Winding River' in which the children learn about the characteristics and features of rivers and mountain ranges around the world, including a detailed exploration of the ecosystems and processes that shape them and the land around them.

World Book Day - 6th March

The children decorated their classroom doors to help celebrate World Book Day this year. We held a competition in each building and School Council judged to decide the winners. There were some great entries, but the top prizes went to 5RI, 2SK and 1JJ!



We have received lots of gorgeous 'Book in a Jar' examples and will be displaying them around school from later this week.

Year 2 Trip to Weston

The Year 2 children and staff had a wonderful trip to Weston Super Mare in Gloucestershire last week as part of their 'Coastline' geography topic. The weather was glorious, and much fun was had building sandcastles, playing in the park and meeting members of the RNLI at the Lifeboat Station.

Zorbing Experience Day!

Great fun was had on Friday last week as the winning classes for attendance, alongside our World Book Day door competition winners, took part in a celebratory Zorbing experience. Huge thanks to Joshua and Warren from SH Active Sports for running the day.



Year 6 Composer visit for Music

The Year 6 children welcomed a special visitor last week, local composer Gaby Amler. Gaby spoke to the children about job opportunities within music and the arts and shared information about her current role in creating music for films.



Library Redecoration

We have invested heavily in redesigning and redecorating our school library for the children. Classes visit the library each week to change their reading books and have a Beautiful Read session in there with their class teacher. Here are some photo's so you can see what it looks like now. The grand reopening will take place next week!

Parent Consultation Meetings - Y2 to Y6

Our Spring term parent consultation meetings will be taking place after school on **Wednesday 2nd April and Thursday 3rd April**. Communication was sent out last week and the booking system, via MCAS App, opened this morning at 9:00am. These meetings are an important way for you to find out how your child is learning and progressing in school, we encourage all parents to book an appointment.

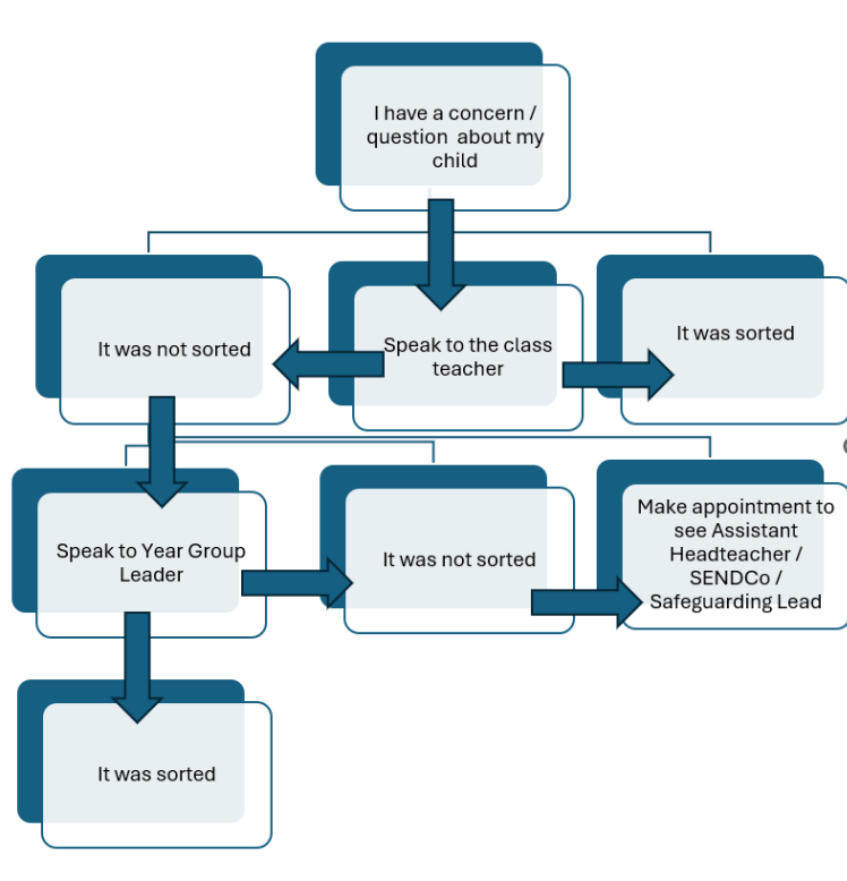
Parent Consultation Meetings - EYFS & Y1

Our Spring term parent consultation meetings will be taking place after school on Thursday 3rd April and Wednesday 9th April. Communication was sent out last week and the booking system, via MCAS App, opened this morning at 9:00am. These meetings are an important way for you to find out how your child is learning and progressing in school, we encourage all parents to book an appointment.

Parent Reminders - Communication In School

We have had a few queries in the last few weeks regarding the ways parents and carers can communicate with school. Please see below to clarify for all:

1. Communicating Concerns Process



2. Make an appointment.

We kindly request that parents ring the school office to make an appointment to see the member of staff they need to have a meeting with. This is to avoid parents and carers coming into school during the day and feeling frustrated that they are not able to see a member of staff instantly. We understand that parents are working around their own timetables and work commitments. We are also working around teaching commitments, meetings and other scheduled work so are often not able to meet straight away. If the office team inform you that Leaders are not available please respect this and make an appointment.

3. Communicating with other children.

We request that you do not approach another person's child, either in the playground or outside of school, regarding any concerns or issues they might have had with your own child. This is to safeguard yourself and most importantly the children. If your child is having issues with other children in school please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. See the 'Communicating Concerns Process' above.

Safeguarding Team UPDATES

Since the departure of Mrs Herring, we have made updates to the structure of our Safeguarding Team. Miss Williams is our Lead DSL and has strategic oversight of Safeguarding. The Assistant Head teachers in school are Deputy DSLs and are your first port of call for safeguarding concerns.

Mrs Shahnawaz - Year 4, 5 and 6 (Upper Phase)

Mrs Holder - Year 2 and 3 (Middle Phase)

Mr Haydon - EYFS & Year 1 (Lower Phase)

Mrs O'Donnell is the Deputy DSL for and safeguarding concerns regarding pupils with SEND.

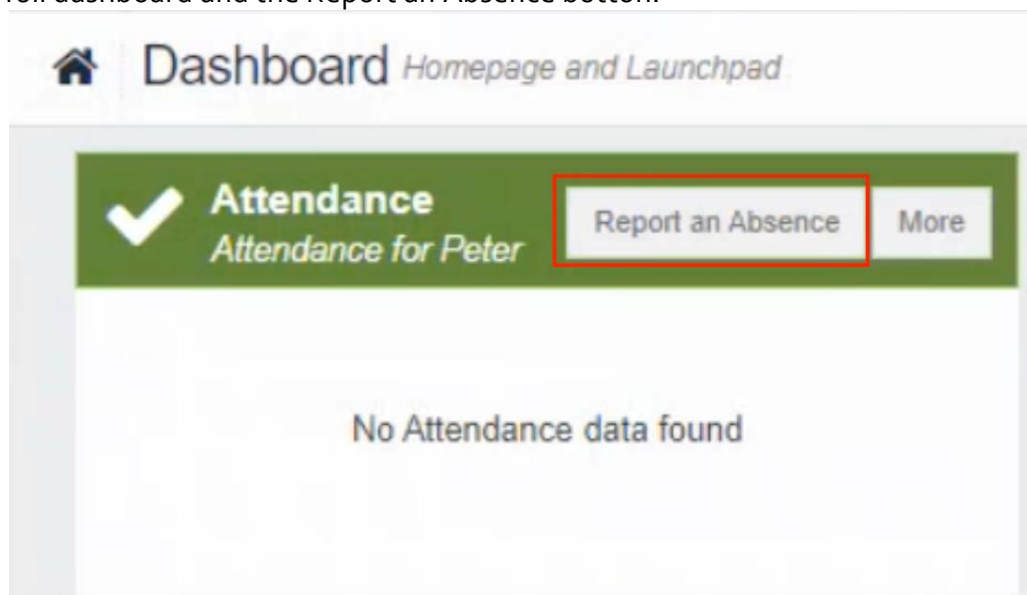
Mrs Farooq has a new role as our school Family Support Worker.

Miss Richardson is our school Learning Mentor and works to deliver intervention to children with emotional needs.

If you need to speak to a DSL regarding a safeguarding matter please contact the school office who will support making an urgent appointment or return phone call from a DSL.

Reporting your child's absence on MCAS

Please note; you cannot yet report an absence in the MCAS Parent App. This feature will be available in the Parent App in a future release. Instead, please go to www.mychildatschool.com and log in. You will then see the full dashboard and the Report an Absence button.



This button is also visible on the **Attendance** screen.

After clicking on the **Report an Absence** button – you can enter details of the absence (for whole days only) and then press **Send** to notify the school. Please provide full details of the symptoms. Remember for vomiting or diarrhoea we have a 48 hour policy.

After selecting Send, a **Confirmation** popup will appear. Click **Proceed**. A success message will then appear. You will receive a **confirmation email** when the Absence Notification has been sent successfully.

IMPORTANT: Please note, currently if you reply to the confirmation email, these replies will NOT be received by the school.

Assessment Guidance for Parents

The DfE have released leaflets to help parents and carers understand more about the tests and assessments your child will be sitting in primary school. All the leaflets can be found on our website here - <https://www.greet.bham.sch.uk/parents/parent-leaflets-for-assessments>

Free School Meals

Please note that you do not automatically get free school meals if you are receiving benefits – you must apply to check your eligibility. There are specific thresholds that must be met. Please complete a form here <https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/createpartnership> or pick up a paper form from the school office so we can check on your behalf. If you do not apply, you will continue to be charged for school dinners for children in years 3 to 6. Free School Meals aren't backdated – so any dinner money owed before we are notified that you are eligible will still need to be paid. If in doubt, complete a form asap. Thank you for your co-operation.

Asda Cashpot for Schools

Please support Greet when you shop. For more info please go to <https://www.asda.com/cashpotforschools>

Events

12th and 13th March - Villa Vision Eye Tests for Year 6

21st March – Red Nose Day

28th March - Mother's Day breakfast

2nd and 3rd April – Parent Consultation Meetings

4th April - Birmingham Royal Ballet workshops for Y1

School Trips

10/11th March – Year 4 Clent Hills

26 and 27th March - Y1 Eco Park

Parent Workshops UPDATE

In respect of our families fasting for Ramadan or those observing lent we will not be holding any parent workshops this half term. Workshops will resume after the Easter break - keep an eye out for dates in future Newsletters.

School term dates

Spring Term 2025 (06/01/25-11/04/25)

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Monday 31st March**

Term ends: **Friday 11th April**

Summer Term 2025 (28/04/25-21/07/25)

Term Starts: **Monday 28th April**

Half-term: **Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May**

BANK HOLIDAY (School closed for children): **Monday 5th May 2024**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 6th June**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 4th July**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Monday 21st July**

Term ends: **Monday 21st July**

RAMADAN FUNDRAISING CALENDAR

Please help us to raise as much money as we can for the children of Gaza, Palestine and Syria during the holy month of Ramadan. All money raised will be donated to charities that are currently running projects in Gaza, Syria and Palestine such as Islamic Relief or Ummah Welfare.]

There will be a competition encouraging the children to express their artistic talents and create models or design Islamic Art. The entries will be judged the winners will receive a mystery prize!

<p>10.3.25</p>	<p>Launch Islamic Art competition. Start collecting for the Iftar boxes – any non-perishable items. Fundraising activities: Beat the Goalie with Mr Ali & Mr Ketch on Thursday and Friday lunchtimes for Y4-6. 50p per go or £1 for 3 tries.</p>
<p>17.3.25</p>	<p>Continue collecting donations for the Iftar boxes. Fundraising activities: Beat the Goalie with Mr Ali & Mr Ketch on Thursday and Friday lunchtimes for Y4-6. 50p per go or £1 for 3 tries. Sponsorship forms for fun run being sent out.</p>
<p>24.3.25</p>	<p>Eid card making & henna tattoos in school. Deliver Iftar boxes to our vulnerable families. Deadline for the Islamic Art competition. Fundraising activities: Beat the Goalie with Mr Ali & Mr Ketch on Thursday and Friday lunchtimes for Y4-6. 50p per go or £1 for 3 tries. Sponsored fun run for N- Y3 with Ms Barton & Mr Ali on Friday 28th March morning.</p>
<p>Friday 4th April</p>	<p>Non uniform day: contribution of £1 per child or £3 per family. Charity cake sale at the end of the day. Announcement of winners of the Islamic art competition.</p>

Islamic Art competition ideas:



Please come along to Baby Talk – we are still taking on new parents.



BABY TALK

Early language development

Starting Monday 3rd February 2025

WEEKLY 45 MINUTE

GREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

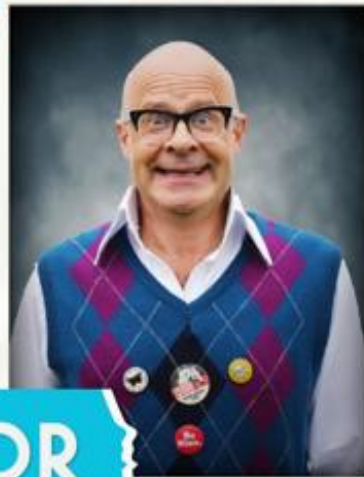
Join us for Baby Talk, a delightful stay and play event designed to support early language development for babies. This 45-minute weekly session, running for 36 weeks at Greet Primary, is perfect for both current and expecting parents! Connect with other parents, share experiences, and learn from one another in a relaxed and friendly environment. Enjoy interactive play sessions for children, informative discussions on early language development, and a variety of engaging activities aimed at nurturing your child's growth.

If your child is under 6 months, please come and register your interest.

For more information or to sign up, please contact us at Mrs Jabeen or Mrs Farooq, or drop into the main school office.

Phone: 0121 464 3360

We look forward to seeing you there!



JUNIOR BAKE OFF



JOIN THE CLASS OF 2025!

JUNIOR BAKE OFF

**... IS LOOKING FOR BRILLIANT BAKERS, AGES
9-15 FOR THE NEXT NEW AND EXCITING
SERIES!**

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE
SUNDAY 23RD MARCH**

APPLYFORJUNIORBAKEOFF.CO.UK





SUPER SATURDAY SCHOOL



Is your child interested in music, acting, singing or dancing? At the BOA Super Saturday School, as part of the #wewill social action projects, children between the year groups of Reception - Year 11 will have the chance to hone these passions into a real-life skill. This 8 week workshop will culminate in a final performance during the Festival of Sharing.



Dates:

15th & 22nd February
1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th March
5th April
Festival of Sharing in the BOA Theatre on the 12th April 2025

Cost:

£10 per Saturday OR Free to those in receipt of FSM/Pupil Premium

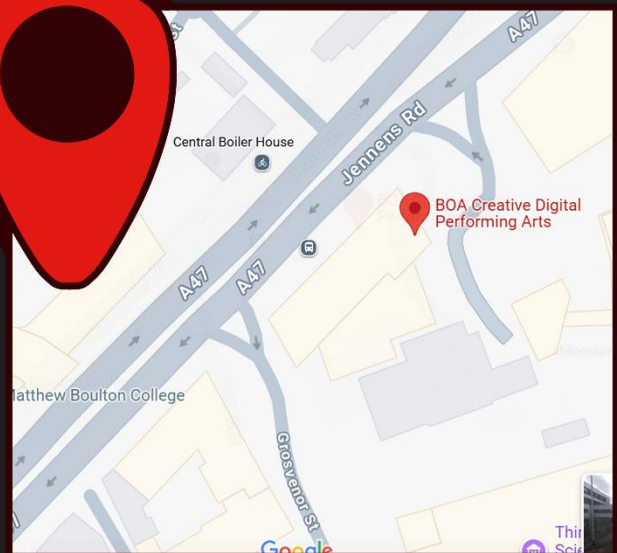
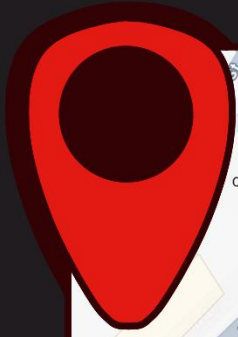
Contact:

Email: mary.savva@boa-academy.co.uk
Telephone: 0121 3599300



Running since 2021, the #wewill project has engaged over 3,600 children in the arts, giving them a voice and the ability to access arts education.

The workshops are run by student mentors and various pathway staff, creating an enriching learning environment for everyone.



Address:

1 Grosvenor St. B4 7QD; is close to Millenium Point & Eastside Park.

Travel & Parking:

BOA is easily accessible by both Birmingham New Street & Birmingham Moor Street stations, with a 10-15 minute walk for both. It is also close to the Queensway bus corridor, with a bus stop just outside the School. Furthermore, Millenium Point car park is a 3 minute walk from the school.

BOA SUPER SATURDAY SCHOOL
2025



If you are interested in this opportunity, this QR code leads to an 8 minute form which will allow us to contact you to confirm your child's place.

EARLY HELP SEND SUPPORT SESSION

FREE



Greet Primary School
Tuesday 29th April - 9am till 11am

Our SEND Support Sessions covers topics ranging from:

ASD assessment processes – What to Expect

Diet and Nutrition

Sensory Processing

What is DLA? How can I use it?


Typical behaviours

EHCP's – What do they mean and how they can help?

What support is local and available to families?

Q&A with Early Help



☎ 07570 953519    @hallgreenfamilies
 www.hallgreencommunities.org.uk
 hallgreen.families@greensquareaccord.co.uk



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MARVEL RIVALS

AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI
12

ESRB advise nobody under the age of 13 should play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Marvel Rivals launched in December 2024 and amassed a player count of nearly 150,000 in mere weeks. This player versus player (PvP) shooter packs in a host of recognisable comic-book characters, pitting two teams of six against each other. Despite the game's cartoonish nature, there are several potential risks for parents and educators to be aware of.

IN-GAME CHAT

Voice chat allows players to speak to teammates and opponents within the game, but in a competitive environment, some conversations can become unpleasant. Text chat is equally prominent among those playing on PC and will be shown on the side of the screen. Moderation on chats is relatively lax, so it's important to recognise that potentially inappropriate messages could arrive at any time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

While Marvel Rivals is free, there is an in-game store, selling character skins from recognisable movies and comic-book titles. Each season also includes a £10 Battle Pass (much like those seen in Fortnite and Call of Duty), offering a series of exclusive cosmetic items. These passes don't expire – but they can't be purchased once the next season rolls around, creating a fear of missing out.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With such a huge player base, it's impossible to predict whom your child will be teaming up with or playing against. They're virtually certain to run into strangers through voice and text chat, for starters. Most of these people will just be ordinary gamers enjoying the action, but there is the risk of some users behaving inappropriately with younger players – either intentionally, or because they don't realise that they're speaking to a child.

VIOLENT CONTENT

There's no gore in Marvel Rivals, and the violence depicted is comparatively cartoonish – but the playable characters available vary between more traditional superheroes and supervillains, and figures like Black Widow and The Punisher, who use more realistic firearms. Given the game's nature as a shooter, this may make some parents and carers uncomfortable as some players will be firing these weapons at each other.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The game includes some innuendos and mature themes in the dialogue, which could expose youngsters to content unsuitable for their age, detracting from a safe and family-friendly gaming experience. As we mentioned previously, the content of the in-game chat could also be age-inappropriate, ranging from swearing to mature themes to potentially harmful content.

FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The inclusion of iconic characters might make Marvel Rivals appear more approachable than other games in the genre, with recognisable heroes and villains like Spider-Man and Venom. This could lead to more interest from younger players, increasing the likelihood of children playing the game without properly understanding the risks.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOLLOW ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating for Marvel Rivals says the game shouldn't be played by anyone under 13. Most children of that age will be able to appreciate the moral compass of the roster of characters (people can play as Hela, the Goddess of Death, for example), while also ensuring that the violence, however cartoonish, won't overwhelm them.



FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

The game's inclusion of fan-favourite characters like Iron Man and the Hulk, plus its increasing popularity, means that younger Marvel fans will likely be eager to see what the fuss is about. Since it's free, consider playing Marvel Rivals yourself to gauge how you feel about a child playing it. Alternatively, you could let them play against the game's AI in Practice Mode, until they're old enough to compete online.

MONITOR OR TURN OFF CHAT

Voice and text chat can both be adjusted within the in-game settings. If you're particularly concerned about exposing children and young people to them, however, you can disable both forms of chat in the game's settings. If a child wants to play alongside friends, remind them that they can use their console's party chat feature or host a call on a third-party service like Discord.



DISCONNECT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents should ensure that no payment options – such as debit cards – are linked to the game, to prevent unauthorised purchases and charges. Children can be tempted by enticing in-game offers without fully understanding the costs. Removing payment methods avoids impulsive in-game spending and instils a sense of financial awareness, teaching young people to be careful with their money.



Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor at the Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, he has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar and plenty more.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, 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. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

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 they want to message. Therefore, if a 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 the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow 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.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen 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 protection of privacy.

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 is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user'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 & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution; get them to consider whether it 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 a child's WhatsApp settings 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 a 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.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children 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 that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

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.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/whatsapp-2025>

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about HEALTH & FITNESS APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Physical wellbeing apps are useful tools for monitoring and improving our health. They allow us to balance nutrition, set goals, track our activities and sleep patterns, and motivate us to exercise. Nonetheless, there have been some reported drawbacks; this guide outlines some of these concerns and explains how to use fitness apps safely.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Many apps take a one-size-fits-all approach, failing to account for the varying ages and abilities of children: a 16-year-old, for example, will have different physical needs to a child of 10. This can create unrealistic expectations and set exercises which may be too advanced for younger children or too simple for older ones.

NOT DEVELOPED BY EXPERTS

Some fitness and wellbeing apps are developed by experts in the field – but a concerning number of them aren't. As such, these platforms may contain inaccurate information. They may present safety concerns by giving incorrect advice regarding physical activities or might include age-inappropriate content which would clearly cause more harm than good.

REDUCED INTERACTION WITH OTHERS

Physical wellbeing apps can remove the social and interactive elements which physical exercise can offer – for instance, meeting people at fitness classes, at the gym or during any other such activities. Research has found that young people generally dislike this aspect of fitness apps, suggesting that they would rather exercise in the company of friends or other like-minded individuals.

DATA AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

Fitness and wellbeing apps tend to collect a lot of personal information from their users, including name, location, date of birth, details of their physical health and more. It's worth keeping in mind that some of these apps may sell this data to third parties. We'd advise that any apps young people download should have the correct legislation in place to protect their safety and privacy while using the service.

ADDITIONAL COSTS

While many fitness apps are free to download, the initial content is quite basic. Users will only receive more helpful content (such as new workouts, nutrition advice or a personalised plan) by signing up to a subscription or paying for extra features. This can incentivise users to spend money on the service – a cost which can quickly mount up.

DEPENDENCY ON THE APP

While physical wellbeing apps can help motivate young users to manage their fitness, there's a possibility that – without being sent frequent rewards and reminders – children could start to lose their natural drive to be active. Young people may also become obsessed with tracking their exercise, health and eating habits: this can have negative effects on their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EXERCISE AND SOCIALISE

Highlight the importance of children enjoying fitness activities with family and friends, rather than always exercising alone. Emphasise the fun they can have by interacting with others rather than solely relying on an app to maintain their regime. Remind them of the importance of staying active, as well as the benefits of doing so with company.

PROMOTE POSITIVE BODY IMAGE

While we want children to be active and healthy, we must also ensure they don't become fixated on how they look and begin take things too far. During childhood and adolescence, the body is still growing and changing. It's vitally important for young people's wellbeing that we promote a positive body image and a healthy relationship with food, empowering them to make informed decisions about their diet and lifestyle.

REVIEW THE APP FIRST

Before allowing someone under 18 to install a fitness and wellbeing app, check its age rating, read its reviews and scroll through its data policy, to ensure its suitability for younger users. You could also try it yourself, to see if it's appropriate for the child's particular needs and decide if you're comfortable with them using it. Ensure that any privacy-compromising features – such as location tracking – are disabled.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all apps, it's important for parents to familiarise themselves with any controls on the app and to use these on a child's account. The specific settings vary between platforms but – most commonly – these will relate to screen-time limits, disabling or capping in-app purchases, and managing social aspects or features which aren't age appropriate. By utilising these controls, you can help to ensure a child is getting a safe experience.

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.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/wellbeing-fitness-apps>

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

SKewed PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

VERIFICATION STAMPS

Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

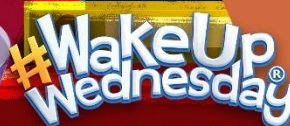
Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE (www.raiseducation.org.uk) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/online-relationships-dating-apps>



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCAMS AND FAKE NEWS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

"Fake news" refers to falsified or misleading material presented as a legitimate account of events. It's often used by malicious actors online to push an agenda, or even by criminals as a way of making scams more persuasive. Scammers can trick us into handing over personal information, security details and even our hard-earned cash.

"CLICKBAIT" PHISHING SCAMS

A message arrives saying "Have you seen this video of yourself?" or you might be sent an attention-grabbing headline about a celebrity that's been shared on social media. This kind of "bait" is produced by scammers to drive us to click on an unsafe link, where malware could be downloaded to our devices. These scams rely on our curiosity and our "need-to-know" instinct.

SALES, DEALS & DISCOUNTS

Some scams appear as adverts, offering a chance to buy something – such as designer products, expensive gadgets or tickets to a popular show – at a reduced price. Such plays often include a time limit or countdown, urging us to hurry so we don't miss out on the deal. This pressure encourages us to input personal details or payment information before pausing to check if it's legitimate.

YOU'RE A WINNER!

This kind of scam involves fake giveaways, opportunities or freebies. It could be a message saying we've won a prize draw or competition. Or it could be a gift, free trial, bonus credit, and suchlike. It might claim that a package or refund is waiting. All these techniques are used to prompt us to share our personal information, thinking that there's something to be gained by doing so.

FALSE FRIENDSHIPS

Scammers often pretend to be someone they're not to gain their victims' trust. They might attempt to convince any children they connect with that they're a child of similar age with shared interests. Warning signs include a high volume of messages (often with an intense tone), secrecy, inappropriate levels of intimacy, guilt tripping, emotional manipulation, threats or blackmail.

PANIC MODE

To trigger a sense of panic, scammers may claim that a child's account has been hacked, or a virus has been installed on their device, or any number of other scary scenarios. They may claim to be able to fix the problem or offer a solution – if the child hands over control of the device or sensitive information. Similar scams involve impersonating a friend or relative, claiming that they're in trouble and need help.

FAKE CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Impersonating influential people online is a common tactic for scammers, who can use technology to create fake photos, audio and even videos that look authentic. These can be used to convince us, for example, to buy products, sign up for so-called "business opportunities" or invest in cryptocurrency schemes – all of which are fake or otherwise malicious. Many scams also involve the impersonation of popular companies' social media accounts, as well as those of individuals.

Advice for Parents & Educators

STAY INFORMED

Stay up to date with the latest information and best practice on cyber-security. See what scam stories are reported in the news and make note of what tactics were used. Keep up with young people's digital lives: talk about what they're doing online and use properly endorsed resources to learn what risks certain sites and apps pose to their younger users.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY SCEPTICISM

Most scams rely on emotional or psychological manipulation, tapping into our human instincts – whether that's to keep ourselves safe, help others, find answers, make friends, avoid losing out or to secure something we really want. Encourage children to recognise that pressure to act and to always consult with an adult – especially if what's on offer sounds too good to be true.

TALK TOGETHER

Chat often and openly with young people about fake news, online scams and how they both work. Encourage them to talk to you about anything they're unsure of or worried about online. If a child claims to have been scammed, don't pass judgement. Blaming the victim may deter young people from asking you for help. Remember: adults are scammed just as often, if not more.

BE PROACTIVE

Children increasingly use digital devices for education, socialising, shopping and play. Don't wait for a problem to arise before you discuss the risk of scams, false information and fake news. Highlight what to look out for and clearly communicate under what circumstances the child ought to speak to an adult. Finally, ensure that they're aware of the support services that are available to them (such as Childline).

Meet Our Expert

Dr Holly Powell-Jones is the founder of Online Media Law UK and a leading expert in digital safety, media law and young people. Her PhD investigates children's understandings of risk online. She works with schools, businesses, and universities to provide award-winning education on the criminal, legal and ethical considerations for the digital age. Visit OnlineMediaLaw.co.uk for more.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/fake-news-and-scams>

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The National College

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Emotional literacy refers to the ability to recognise, understand and express our feelings effectively. It plays a crucial role in strengthening a child's wellbeing by enhancing their relationships and resilience. However, emotional literacy is not necessarily an innate talent, and its development may present challenges. This guide gives parents and educators practical tips on supporting children to cultivate this essential skill.

1 NAME THE EMOTION

Encourage children to identify and name their emotions. This helps them understand what they're feeling and why. Use simple language and relatable examples to make it easier for them to share their emotions. This builds a foundation for emotional understanding and open communication.



2 MODEL EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Demonstrate healthy emotional expression by sharing your feelings visibly. When children see adults properly displaying how they're doing and what they're thinking, they learn to do the same. Discuss how you handle emotions in different circumstances, providing a real-life framework for young ones to follow.



3 MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Teach children mindfulness practices to help them stay present and manage their emotions during more challenging moments. Activities like deep breathing, meditation or yoga can reduce stress and enhance emotional regulation. Regular practice can improve focus and emotional stability, which can significantly help children both as they're growing up and throughout their adult life.



4 USE STORYTELLING

Incorporate storytelling to help children understand emotions. Stories can offer relevant scenarios illustrating how the characters experience and manage their feelings. Discuss the emotions depicted in stories and ask children how they might feel in similar situations.



5 PRACTISE EMPATHY

Teach children to consider others' views and emotions – and to explore why they might think or feel this way. Role-playing and discussing various scenarios can enhance their ability to empathise. Understanding others' emotions helps children to develop compassion and improves their social interactions.



6 ENCOURAGE JOURNALING

Suggest keeping a journal to make note of thoughts and emotions, as writing can provide an outlet for self-reflection and emotional processing. Encourage children to write about their daily experiences and feelings, helping them gain insight into their emotional world. Do this alongside them, so they can see and experience how to do it effectively.



7 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING

Do what you can to help children develop problem-solving skills to assist in managing emotional challenges. Discuss potential solutions to emotional conflicts and encourage them to think critically about what they (and others) can do to process their feelings in a healthy way. This empowers children to handle emotions positively and build resilience.



8 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Establish an environment where children feel safe to display their emotions without judgement. Encourage open exchanges and reassure them that all feelings are valid. This supportive atmosphere promotes trust and encourages children to express themselves with confidence.



9 USE VISUAL AIDS

Take advantage of visual aids like emotion charts or mood meters to help children identify and express their feelings. Use these tools regularly in your interactions. They provide a visual representation of emotions, making it easier for children to communicate their emotional state.



10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Acknowledge and celebrate progress in emotional literacy, and praise children for expressing their emotions and handling them effectively. Positive reinforcement is a useful tool that will encourage continued growth and reinforces the importance of emotional literacy – encouraging young people to maintain the good habits and healthy behaviours that you've taught them.



Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, an organisation that supports schools in improving their mental health provision.



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