

# NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents and Carers,

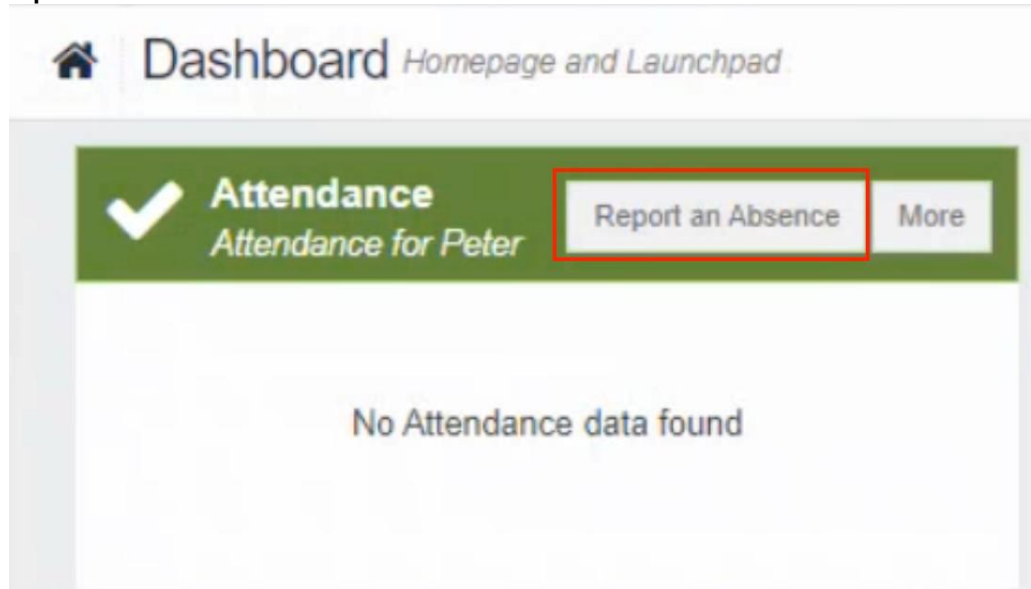
Welcome to the first newsletter of 2025.

## Reporting your child's absence on MCAS

You can now report your child's sickness absence via MyChildAtSchool (MCAS).

Parents please go to **MyChildAtSchool > Dashboard > Attendance**.

Click on 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.

## Parking and the school community

A reminder for all parents, carers and relatives to please park legally and respectfully at drop off and home-time. We have had complaints from local residents of cars blocking their drives. Please allow residents to pull onto their drives. If you park across a dropped kerb, that is illegal. If you park on double yellow lines, that is illegal. More information can be found [here](#).

Please help us to teach children not to throw rubbish on the street, and encourage them to take all litter home with them to help keep the school community clean. Thank you for your co-operation.

## 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>

## Marvellous Me for Android

We were made aware that some android users were having issues downloading Marvellous Me. We are pleased to be able to report that they have released a new version of the ParentApp that should resolve the issues that have been experienced by some Android users. Please download the newest version of the MarvellousMe ParentApp, that is now available in Google Play Store.

## Asda Cashpot for Schools

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

## Events

30<sup>th</sup> Jan – Year 5 Stargazing Night after school

Year 3 - swimming on Wednesdays (please ask the Class Teacher if you have any questions).

12th Feb - Reception Eye Tests (3 classes)

## School Trips

27 Jan - Living eggs delivered to school for Y2

28 Jan - Y4 trip to Mandir - 4DH and 4SP

29 Jan Y4 trip to Mandir - 4TH and 4NT

4 Feb - Y3 Now Press Play in school visit

## Assemblies

4 February - Lunar New Year class assembly 3AA, 9am

7 February Lunar New Year class assembly 3AA, 2.45pm

## Parent Workshops

5th February - Yr 1 Maths

6th February -Y2 Maths Workshop

7th February - Y3 Maths workshop - 3SH and 3AA 8.45 - 9.15am / 3SC and 3RB 2.45 - 3.15pm

## School term dates

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

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 14th February**

Half-term: **Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February**

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**



# New Family Support Worker at Greet

Greet Primary are pleased to introduce Mrs. Farooq, our new Family Support Worker. Mrs Farooq can help you with;

- Support for children and families
- Signposting to agencies
- Help accessing funding / grants
- Help completing applications
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Families in crisis
- New to school help
- Help with attendance issues
- Information on supporting your child at home
- Parent workshops



Please make an appointment at the office or call us  
on 0121 464 3360



## **BABY TALK**

Early language development

Starting Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025

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### **WEEKLY 45 MINUTE**

GREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

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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!

Sparkbrook

# Children's Zone



Follow us for NHS  
approved health  
messages:



## Free appointments every week

We accept bookings from the following GP Practice's:

- Dr Walji, Dr Raghavan & First Care at Balsall Heath Health Centre
- Spark Medical Group (Brook Surgery & St George's)
- Highgate Medical Practice
- The Hill General Practice
- Fernley Medical Centre
- Springfield Medical Practice (Dr Rajput)

Ask your GP Practice to book an appointment

### Monday mornings at Balsall Heath Health Centre

43 Edward Road, Birmingham, B12 9LP

### Wednesday evenings at Highgate Medical Centre

Frank Street, Highgate, Birmingham, B12 0YA

### Thursday afternoons at Sparkbrook Community & Health Centre

34 Grantham Road, Birmingham, B11 1LU

### Thursday evenings at Fernley Medical Centre

560 Stratford Road, Birmingham, B11 4AN

### Our Partners



Birmingham and Solihull  
Integrated Care System  
Caring about healthier lives





## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**  
(Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app *could* potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

### BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

### IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

### CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

### MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

### ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app: that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

### DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

### BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

### READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



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

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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

JusTalk Kids is a child's version of the JusTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JusTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

### SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a call; exclusive stickers; a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber; and exclusive ringtones and themes.

### RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or from their own adult JusTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

### KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact: this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

### POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

### CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

### TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 25% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of limiting their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

### DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

### 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.



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

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# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO ROUTINE

Most of us look forward to the school holidays as an opportunity to slow down and relax, stay up later, sleep in and generally approach life in a more leisurely fashion. However, this does mean that returning to normal school-day routines can feel like an uphill battle. Here are some practical tips to ease that transition, reduce stress and set children up for success.

### 1 START SMALL AND EARLY

Begin reintroducing elements of the school routine at least a few days before term starts. Gradually adjust bedtime, wake-up times and mealtimes to be more in line with school-day rhythms. Small changes can make a big difference in avoiding last-minute panic and helping children to readjust smoothly.

### 2 REVISIT THE SCHEDULE

Involve your child in mapping out their daily routine so they understand what's going to change. Visual tools like charts or calendars can help keeping to that schedule feel more engaging. When children understand and anticipate their personal timetable, they feel more secure and in control.

### 3 CREATE A SLEEP PLAN

Sleep can present one of the biggest challenges, as children can sometimes become night owls, prone to staying up late during the holidays. Limit screen time before bed and encourage winding-down activities like reading or listening to calming music. A restful night's sleep improves focus, mood and overall wellbeing, making mornings much smoother.

### 4 ENCOURAGE FRIENDSHIPS

Help your child to reconnect with school friends by organising playdates, catch-ups or arranging to go to after-school clubs. Re-establishing social bonds can make the return to school more exciting and less intimidating, allowing youngsters to focus on the positive aspects of the new term.

### 5 GRANT RESPONSIBILITY

Give children control over some aspects of the morning routine. Maybe they could be in charge of waking everyone up, serving breakfast or choosing the radio station that everyone listens to while getting ready. Something that gives them a sense of ownership over their morning schedule can help them view the task as one they've chosen to do, rather than being told to do it.

### 6 FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Make sure children are receiving balanced meals (with regular healthy snacks to boost energy and concentration), putting them in the best possible state to return to education. A nutritious breakfast is particularly crucial for a positive start to the day. Involve children in meal planning to make it enjoyable and collaborative.

### 7 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Talk with your child about how they're feeling about returning to school: whether they're excited, anxious or a mix of both. Validating their emotions helps them feel supported and understood. Try asking them about the things they're looking forward to at school, such as seeing their friends again. Focusing on the positives can be useful for children struggling with change.

### 8 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

Ease children back into a learning mindset by incorporating fun, educational activities into their home life. Reading a favourite book, playing games that involve maths or discussing an interesting topic can gently reawaken their focus and prime their minds to learn, which can have helpful impacts on their academic performance.

### 9 PREP TOGETHER

Turn preparation into a shared activity, to shoulder the responsibility together and provide support where needed. Pack school bags, lay out uniforms and plan lunch the night before. This not only reduces early morning stress but also gives children a sense of ownership over being ready for school.

### 10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

Transitions take time, and every child adjusts differently: so, it's important to stay calm and supportive, especially if they're reacting adversely to the change in their daily life. Be ready to tweak routines as needed, and work with the child to make the return to education as easy as possible for them. Patience can go a long way to setting a positive tone for the new school year.

## Meet Our Expert

Becky Dawson is an education expert with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Passionate about empowering adults who spend time with and care for young people, Becky specialises in creating practical strategies that promote wellbeing and resilience in children during life's transitions.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/supporting-children-to-return-to-routine>

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