

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

8th September, 2023



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



Welcome back!

A very warm welcome back to all of our families at St Mary's Priory. We hope you all had a very enjoyable break.

On Wednesday we saw the return of our pupils from Years 1-6, and although it was a short week, their enthusiasm for the year ahead was very much apparent. Our pupils are ready to show each of our 4 school values: Respect, Tolerance, Resilience and Ambition this year and follow our two, very clear school rules: Be kind; Work hard.

As mentioned to you in Mrs Ronan's letter, we have moved the start of the day to 8.40am. At 8.40am, the children enter the gates and go straight to their classrooms where they will do a 'soft start' activity (eg. a maths starter) for 10 minutes and then their lessons will begin at 8.50am sharp. The gates will now close at 8.50am also.

Punctuality is very important; children arriving late not only miss out on their own learning, but impact on the learning of others.

Our pupils' attendance will be closely monitored this year by our Attendance Team and by our Education Welfare Officer from Haringey. Unauthorised absences may incur a fine of up to £120 per child, per parent. Good attendance will be rewarded with special treats. Our attendance target this year will stay the same at 97%.

On Friday 15th at 9am, we invite all of our parents from Years 1-6 to our 'meet the teacher event' which will take place in classrooms while the children are at assembly. If you cannot attend (eg you have siblings in other classes), we will hold another session on Monday 18th September at 9am. We will also share the slides on our website under 'classes'.

New website!

You will have noticed that we have a new website up and running. We hope you find it easy to navigate.

Enrichment club sign ups will be opening shortly- they are always very popular so please note the places are given away on a first come, first served basis.

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When:	What:	Who:	Where:	Time:
15th September	Meet the Teacher	Years 1-6 parents	Classrooms	9am
Wb 16th October	Parent teacher Consultations	Years 1-6 parents	Years 1-3 Infant Hall Years 4-6 Junior Hall	3.40-6pm

Reminders/Notices:

- Gates open at 8.40am and close at 8.50am. Lessons begin at 8.50am sharp

St Mary's Priory: Where great lives begin!



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Did you know,
schools can
receive up to
£1455 in extra
funding through
the **Pupil Premium**
for every child who is
eligible for **Free
School Meals?**

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SCHOOL
MEALS**



The funding is used to boost learning outcomes for pupils so every child in Haringey can achieve their full potential.

So, if you're eligible, speak to your school and complete a Free School Meals application today!

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*Please see the list of qualifying benefits on our website.

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Haringey
LONDON

Get valuable funding for your child's school!

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Pupil Premium funding is used to help all children reach their full potential by:

Enhancing education

Enriching the curriculum

Boosting learning outcomes

So, if you're eligible, speak to your school and complete a free school meals application today!

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FREE
SCHOOL
MEALS**



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to learn
more!



www.haringey.gov.uk/FSM

*Please see the list of qualifying benefits on our website.



ST IGNATIUS
COLLEGE



OPEN EVENING

Tuesday 19 September
Join us from 5.30pm
Headteacher's speech at 7pm

READY TO SET
THE WORLD ALIGHT

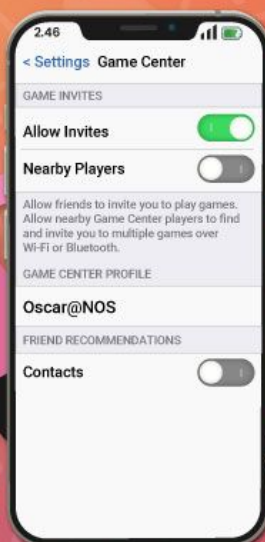
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How to Set up PARENTAL CONTROLS for APPS iPhone

Apple devices come with built-in apps already available: Mail, FaceTime and Safari, for example. However, you can choose which apps and features appear on your child's device and which ones don't. You can also manipulate the features in Game Centre to enhance your child's safety and privacy when playing games, as well as blocking iTunes or App Store purchases if you wish.



How to Restrict Built-in Apps/Features

- 1 Open Settings
- 2 Tap Screen Time
- 3 Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
- 4 Tap Allowed Apps (you may need to toggle this to 'on' at the top)
- 5 Enable or disable the apps you wish to appear (or disappear) on your child's device

How to Restrict Game Centre

- 1 Open Settings
- 2 Tap Screen Time
- 3 Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
- 4 Tap Content Restrictions (you may need to switch the toggle at the top to the 'on' position)
- 5 Scroll down to Game Centre
- 6 Choose between Allow, Don't Allow, or Allow with Friends Only in the settings for each feature

How to Restrict iTunes & App Store Purchases

- 1 Open Settings
- 2 Tap Screen Time
- 3 Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions
- 4 Tap iTunes & App Store Purchases
- 5 Select Allow or Don't Allow for each feature (you can also lock these settings with a password)

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence – particularly in terms of how it generates natural language – has seen significant development over the last six months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat, for example). One form of AI to become especially popular has been the ‘AI friend’ or chatbot, as children eagerly experiment with these new-found computer-generated companions. There are now numerous apps available with this ‘virtual friend’ functionality, with the likelihood of it being added to other successful platforms soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always be able to recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. So there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could very likely hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour (as many originate from the USA or the UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview). This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, creativity and ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts are warning that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties, for instance).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If your child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with your child and perhaps do your own research to ensure you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit with your young one and begin exploring AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If your child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space at home, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside your child to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children are still getting plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps your child can download and use. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to your child. In particular, emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something that isn't entirely impartial or accurate.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about INFLUENCERS

In today's digital age, social media influencers play an increasingly significant role in shaping the opinions, interests and behaviours of our children. While many of these individuals can have a positive effect, influencer culture can also present certain risks – such as encouraging consumerism, affecting self-esteem and blurring trustworthiness. To help ensure a safe online environment for young people, it's vital to maintain open communication, set sensible boundaries, promote a healthy self-image and teach digital media literacy. Our guide delves deeper into all of these.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

HEIGHTENED CONSUMERISM

A major way that influencers make money is through brand partnerships and sponsored content. As a result, children who follow them may be exposed to a steady stream of advertising; this can lead to materialistic attitudes, unrealistic expectations and an increased desire to have the latest products. Many influencers have built huge brand empires around their large, impressionable following.

THE SOFT SELL

Some influencers aren't always transparent about the motivations behind their posts, blurring the lines between genuine recommendations and paid-for promotions – and young people sometimes find it difficult to distinguish authentic content from advertising. Many major social platforms have taken steps to make sponsored content and ads easier to identify, but it remains an area of concern.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Inspired by their favourite influencers, children may start sharing more of their own lives online – which could reveal personal information or details about their daily routine. This openness can put them at risk of cyberbullying or even predatory behaviour. This is exacerbated by live streaming, which gives young people no time to consider the potential consequences of saying too much.

UNDERMINING SELF-ESTEEM

Many influencers share images and videos of themselves and their activities, which are often painstakingly curated and edited to present an idealised version of their life. Children who follow these influencers may develop distorted expectations about body image and the concept of beauty, which can potentially lead to negative self-esteem and even mental health issues.

Advice for Parents & Carers

KEEP TALKING

Chat to your child about the content they consume on social media and the influencers that they like. Encourage them to think critically about what they see and hear online, and listen to any concerns they might have. Maintaining this line of open, honest communication can help your child to make informed decisions about which individuals they follow and what content they engage with.

SET SOME BOUNDARIES

Agree age-appropriate boundaries for your child's social media use, including time limits and privacy settings (the two major operating systems on mobile devices, Android and iOS, have these controls baked in). Try to keep an eye on your child's online activity and discuss it regularly with them – including reminding them of the potential risks that can arise from following influencers.

SUPPORT A HEALTHY SELF-IMAGE

Reinforce your child's awareness that real life isn't usually as picture perfect as it may appear on social media – and how some content (particularly that of influencers) is often curated, staged or edited to look more glamorous. If possible, highlight examples of other influencers who share authentic, relatable material which acknowledges their imperfections and struggles as well.

PROMOTE MEDIA LITERACY

Talk to your child about the concepts of sponsored content, advertising and potential influencer bias. Teach them to critically evaluate the information they're presented with online and to consider the possible reasons behind content creation. This can help young people develop the skills to make healthier decisions about the influencers they choose to follow and the content they consume.

Meet Our Expert

A former director of digital learning and currently a deputy headmaster and DSL, Brendan O'Keefe's experience and expertise gives him a clear insight into how modern digital systems impact the experience of children, staff and parents – and which strategies help to ensure that this online world remains a useful educational tool rather than a minefield of risks.



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SEND

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR LOCAL OFFER?

The Local Offer is information for parents and carers of children and young people (aged 0-25) with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It explains the support we offer in Haringey for those children and young people.

- **Community groups** – Parent Carer Forum, Markfield community centre, SENDIASS and more
- **Travel assistance** – School transport service, Travel buddying, Independent Travel Training, Personal Travel Budget and paid mileage
- **Health services** – Speech and Language Therapy, Nursing Services, Physiotherapy Service, Mental Health services and more
- **Preparing young people for adulthood** – Advice on getting a job, where to live, getting the right benefits, managing your health, transition and more



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local-offer](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-offer)



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St Mary's Online Safety Tips

Here at St Mary's we consider online safety a priority, we acknowledge that the world our children are preparing for is becoming increasingly online. Therefore, we have compiled the following tips in order to support you in guiding your child through digital experiences.

☐ Set Up Parental Controls

Home internet providers can offer parental controls for your family. There are 2 ways of achieving this:

- Use a filter from your internet provider to control the content that you and your family see. Some providers allow different settings for each user.
- Set up any device connected to your home broadband. How you do this depends on your provider and you'll need to access your home router. You can ask your internet provider for help setting this up.



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

Settings icons usually look like a gear like this:

On some devices you can control the following:

- Turn off chat functions to stop your child from talking to people they don't know
- Restrict games based on age
- Turn off in-game purchases, or set a limit.

An example is shown on the popular game Roblox:

My Settings

2 Step Verification
Improve your account security. A code will be required when you login to Roblox.

Email codes when logging in from a new device.
A verified email is required.

What are Account Controls?
You can setup account restrictions on this account to restrict access to a curated content.

Account PIN
Account PIN is currently disabled.
When this setting is enabled, the PIN must be provided before changing settings.

Account Restrictions
Account Restrictions are enabled.
This account can only access our curated content on the platform. Additionally, contact settings (under the Privacy page) will be set to Off.

My Settings

Privacy Settings

Contact Settings

Custom

Who can message me?
Friends

Who can chat with me in app?
Friends

Who can chat with me?
No one

If you go to settings, then select security you can set a pin, this will control when your child will be able to access the game. You can also enable the account restrictions; this means your child will access content that is more filtered. If you go to privacy settings, disable the chat.

☐ Have devices in a supervised area

Remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes, unsuitable content can get past them, so don't rely on them alone to protect your child.

The best way to ensure your child is safe is to monitor their behaviours online. It is not reasonable to expect young children to regulate their own behaviours online, just as we would not expect it to be reasonable for a child to arrange what they have for dinner each night, we as adults must guide the children in their choices.

Avoid headphones or headsets, unfortunately there is plenty of content that appears to be aimed at children but have inappropriate themes. Remember, just because something is a 'cartoon' doesn't mean it's for children.

☐ Open a Discussion

- Talk to your child and ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour with your child.
- Always ensure your child knows how to block or report people online who send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply.
- Make sure your child knows to tell an adult they trust if they see something online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable. This will only begin with
- Children love talking about games! If you ask them what their mission is, what the game is about or even play a short game with them, you can learn a wealth of knowledge about what your child enjoys online. This will allow you to look it up in your own time to scan whether it is appropriate or safe for your child.
- Discuss the SMART rules listed below for guidance, the children would have been taught these guidelines to follow when online. Support them in understanding them and realising their application.

☐ Learn the SMART rules

S

Safe: Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.

M

Meet: Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.

A

Accepting: Accepting emails, messages, or opening files, images or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems — they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R

Reliable: Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information you see or hear from the internet or social media.

T

Tell: Tell a parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone, or something, makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-5224995>
<https://prisonersociety.org/2014/03/140301a.shtml>

NOS National Online Safety®
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School uniform



PE uniform



Details of our school uniform can be found on our website under 'parents', or by clicking the link below.

<https://www.stmaryspriory.co.uk/school-uniform/>

