



Hunters Hall Primary School

Snippets

Issue: 6
October 2021

Dates for the Diary

Autumn Term 2021

Wednesday 20th October – Parent/Carer Consultation Evening

Thursday 21st October – Coffee Morning 9:00-10:00am

Thursday 21st October – Parent/Carer Consultation Evening

Friday 22nd October – INSET Day (no pupils)

Monday 25th October to Friday 29th October – Half Term Holidays

Monday 1st November – INSET Day (no pupils)

Tuesday 2nd November – All pupils return to school

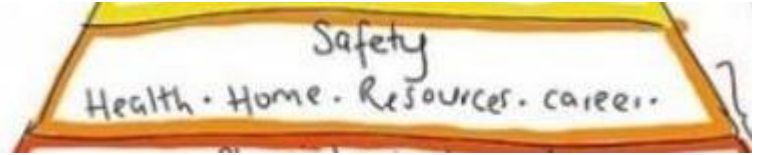
Tuesday 16th November – Flu Immunisation (1st session)

Friday 10th December – Flu Immunisation (2nd session)



Dear Parent/Carer,

During our whole-school assembly this morning, we discussed the second from bottom layer of Maslow's Hierarchy of Need. This section focuses on our need to feel safe.



As we discussed with the children, feeling safe is about knowing you are well looked after and loved and that all your physical and emotional needs will be met.

We went on to focus on feeling upset and unsafe when we are online. So many children are becoming upset in school because of what they are watching on television or on their devices. Many are worried because of what is being written on communications tools on their phones and ipads. Please see the page in this edition of Snippets on "What Parents Need to Know About Discord". There are 7 tips on how to keep your child safe online.

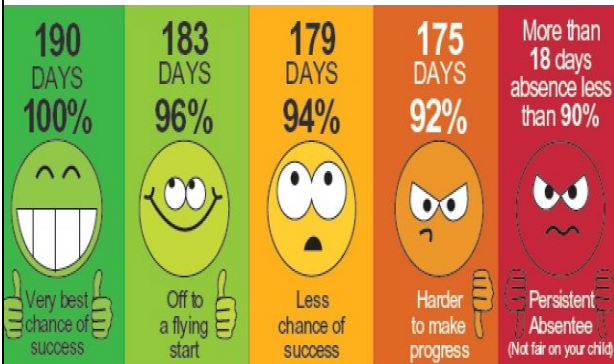
Recently we have seen examples of children writing swear words and using inappropriate language whilst communicating with their friends on WhatsApp, Discord, Snapchat etc. Can you honestly say you know what your child is doing when they are on their phone, ipad or any other device? Are they safe? Please supervise your child's online use closely and set clear boundaries so they feel and are safe.

Wishing you all good mental and physical health.

Stay safe.

Selina Frazer & Michael Kaitell,
Co-Headteachers

Absence Reminder



Parent Hub

We would like all parents/carers to join us on Parent Hub.



Parent Hub is a FREE app that helps keep you up to date with what's going on at school. You'll receive messages, pictures, documents and newsletters, all in one handy place.

1. Download the Parent Hub app from your app store (iPhone or Android).

2. Create yourself an account.

3. Choose "Add a School" and enter:

@HuntersHallIPS

Attendance

Congratulations to 2K in Key Stage 1 who achieved 94.81% this week and to 6L in Key Stage 2 with 97.86%

Class	Attendance %	Class	Attendance %	Class	Attendance %
RB	81.95	2M	92.31	4R	97.78
RH	80.26	2T	89.06	5N	90.46
RR	90.53	3D	95.22	5P	97.71
1H	91.54	3G	97.24	5R	95.44
1L	93.08	3T	93.44	6A	93.15
1R	94.64	4E	94.68	6L	97.86
2K	94.81	4G	94.47	6Y	84.93



School Uniform

School uniform can be purchased online:

www.schooluniformdirect.org.uk/schools/product-category/schools-and-clubs/hunters-hall-primary/

Or

Telephone: 01992 763679

Email: info@schooluniformdirect.org.uk



Donations Wanted



WANTED

**DONATE YOUR OLD
UNIFORMS AND WINTER
COATS AND HELP OTHERS.**

Don't throw out or store away!
Recycling helps the planet as well as
supporting others in our community.



Donations can be dropped off at the
school reception or handed to members
of staff who are on gate duty.

Thank you



Transition to Secondary School 2022

**Please action if you have not
done so already.**

If you have a child in Year 6, please apply on line
before **31st October 2021** at either
www.eadmissions.org.uk or use the link at
www.lbbd.gov.uk/admissions.

Please speak with Mr Bellevue if you require
assistance.



Dear Parents/Carers

Come join me for a coffee/tea and a chat
on Thursday 21st October 2021
from 9:00-10:00 a.m. in our Training Room



Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

Patrick Bellevue
Family Support Worker

Free School Meals Check

Please visit <https://pps.lgfl.org.uk/> to see if your child is eligible for free school meals. If your child is eligible this benefits your child and the school by adding much needed funds that can be used for learning and resources.



**Free School Meals
Eligibility Checker**



RECEPTION TO YEAR 2

To register for this event click [here](https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/Vu78IhNJCUCuMHsL) or copy this url into your web browser
<https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/Vu78IhNJCUCuMHsL>

Band Leader Tommy will cover:

- **Musical Toolkit** - With two mini games we'll become **Beat Detectives** and explore the highs and lows of **pitch**.
- **Vocal Recap** - From 'Boom Chicka Boom' to 'Gigging Granny', we will take a whistle-stop tour of these fun vocal warm-ups.
- **Sing & Sign** - It's time for a full run through of the **lyrics** and **Makaton signs** for 'Best Day of My Life' by **American Authors**, just in time for our final performance next week.
- **At the Movies Performance** - You'll experience chills as the Rocksteady team treat us to a performance of 'Into the Unknown' from one of the decades most popular films, **Frozen**.

YEARS 3 AND 4

To register for this event click [here](https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/7qcWHpWAAhN1MqJr) or copy this url into your web browser
<https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/7qcWHpWAAhN1MqJr>

Band Leader Paul will cover:

- **Rhythm Radar!** - Combining **listening skills** with **reading rhythms**, can the children spot which instrument is playing the rhythm that's written in front of them?
- **The Vocal Zone** - **Vocal harmonies** are a huge part of popular music. We will learn how **harmonies**, **counter melodies** and **unison** are all used for **backing vocals** within a band.
- **Musical Word of the Week** - **Dynamics** is this week's word. We'll explore what **dynamics** are and just how important they are to a piece of music.
- **Spotlight Instrument Performance** - **Brass** takes centre stage for this performance of 'Walking on Sunshine' by **Katrina & The Waves**. The **Brass** family of instruments add an incredible depth and sense of joy to any piece of music, so sit back and enjoy!



YEARS 5 AND 6

To register for this event click [here](https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/c5ZZIPJHGsxjp2sO) or copy this url into your web browser
<https://webinars.rocksteadymusicschool.com/ref/c5ZZIPJHGsxjp2sO>

Band Leaders Tommy, Paul, and friends will cover:

- **The Theory Lab** - As we investigate some of the science behind musical theory, we're going to learn more about how **chord progressions** are built in **popular music**.
- **Vocal Zone** - Rocksteady vocalist, Rachel, will share with us the creative ways voices can be used in **arrangements**. We'll explore the difference between **melody**, **harmony**, **counter melodies**, **unison** and **rounds**.
- **Musical Word of the Week** - Let's talk about **tone**. What is it? How can different instruments create different **tones**? And how does **tone** bring a **musical phrase** to life?
- **Sound Pioneers Performance** - Our **sound pioneer** this week is the master of **tone**, **Eric Clapton**. We explore what made this **guitar hero** stand out from the crowd and celebrate his work in a **mega-medley** of some of his most famous **riffs**.

YOUNGMINDS

THANK YOU FOR HOLDING A **#HelloYellow** DAY AT YOUR SCHOOL

You helped show young people they're not alone with their mental health

We supported YoungMinds by raising

£251.54



Emma Thomas, CEO, YoungMinds

Date:

15th October 2021

Because a little yellow... goes a long way.

YoungMinds, registered Charity in England (1016968) and Scotland (SCO39700).



Black History within our Curriculum

As part of our curriculum focus on the achievements and contributions people of colour have had in the UK and the world around us, Miss Aitouaziz and Miss Adedipe have produced an overview for each year group.

Reception will be reading “Coming to England” by Floella Benjamin and Diane Ewen and imagining what it would feel like to go on a long journey. They will be discussing what items they would take with them.

Year 1 will be watching a Newsround video clip of the Notting Hill Carnival and creating costumes and masks that could be worn at the parade.

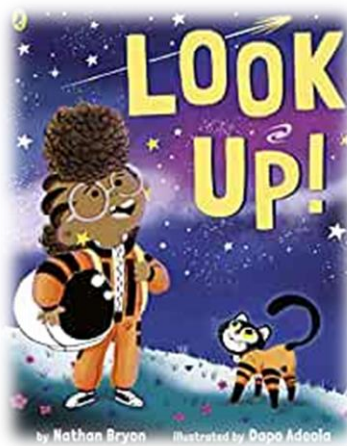
Year 2 will use Disney’s “The Princess and the Frog” as a stimulus and be discussing stereotypes and characters’ actions.

Year 3 will be studying “Look Up” written by Nathan Bryon and illustrated by Dapo Adeola. They will be pondering about what they see, think and wonder.

Year 4 will learn more about Walter Tull, a World War One hero and footballer.

Year 5 will be adding to their Tudor knowledge by researching the black trumpeter John Blanke.

Year 6 will be focusing on diversity and its advantage to us. They will be creating a buffet poster, looking at different African food that has been incorporated into the British diet.



Heathway Activities Programme Autumn Half Term 2021



Activity Description	Dates	Times/Pick Up	Venue	Costs	Age	Spaces Available
<p>Play and Learn</p> <p>A group that encourages children with their siblings, Mum, Dads and Carers to develop socialisation skills through structured and creative play. After play, we will join together for singing and circle time. This group can support learning and help parents, carers and children to make new friends.</p>	<p>26th October</p> <p>29th October</p>	<p>1:30-3:30</p> <p>10:00-12:00</p>	<p>The Vibe, 195-211 Becontree Avenue, Dagenham, RM8 2UT</p>	<p>£1 per child and 50p per sibling</p>	<p>0-17</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>Martial Arts</p> <p>This session will go through some basic principles of martial arts, teach you about patience, coordination, discipline and having fun whilst trying it out! This is a physical activity, so wearing loose sports clothing is recommended. Parent/carers must remain with children. Delivered by a professional accredited instructor.</p>	<p>27th October</p>	<p>11:00-12:00</p>	<p>The Vibe, 195-211 Becontree Avenue, Dagenham, RM8 2UT</p>	<p>£1 per child and 50p per sibling</p>	<p>6-17</p>	<p>15</p>

Booking Rules

All bookings are subject to change in line with government Covid 19 restrictions. Details will be used for NHS Track and Trace. Please ensure when booking that we have up-to-date contact details for you in case of any changes.

Siblings are very welcome to come along to all of our activities. Please advise when booking how many siblings will be attending with your child.

Bookings will be taken from **9:30am on Monday 18th October 2021**. You cannot book before this time. You can phone or email to book – 0208 227 5500 or theheathwaycentre@lbbd.gov.uk.

Payments can **only be made in cash**, please bring money to the session. There is no need to pay in advance.

In line with government guidance we are asking that all parents attending with children complete regular lateral flow testing before attending activities. Testing kits can be ordered from <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-test> If you prefer, tests can also be done in the borough – sites on the link below <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/get-a-coronavirus-test>

If you have any difficulty accessing or ordering tests, please call the Heathway centre on 0208 227 5500.

Unless exempt, we continue to ask that adults wear a mask when attending activities with children as we will be in an enclosed space.

TOKYO ROADSHOW

£10 PER PERSON

Technical Masterclass with
CHRIS SKELLEY
PARALYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST
TOKYO 2020 PARALYMPICS

All Saints Judo Academy
Wednesday 20th October

Open to all: 18:00 - 20:00

All Saints Catholic School
Terling Road
Wood Lane
Dagenham
RMB 1JT



**BRITISH
JUDO**

BOOKING IN ADVANCE ONLY: 07875692871



Barking and Dagenham Race and Social Justice Charter

We are proud that Barking and Dagenham is one of London's most diverse boroughs. We are determined that all our young people, particularly the most disadvantaged, should have the best possible start in life.

We believe that:

- Students' experience of school, educational outcomes and life chances must not be adversely impacted by ethnic background or racial group
- The staff and leadership of our schools and borough must fully reflect our diversity
- Schools' curriculum must reflect and celebrate the diversity of our borough

Our school embraces our role in making these beliefs a reality. We have:

1. **A named lead facilitator for race and social justice** - co-ordinating work in our school and between schools
2. **A lead governor for race and social justice** - who ensures our governing body consistently considers how the school is addressing issues of race and social justice
3. **Used the Barking and Dagenham race and social justice self-evaluation tool** to identify priority areas we need to address **in our school improvement plan**
4. **A curriculum intent** which is explicit in representing the diversity of our borough
5. **Recruitment and progression** practices which create equal pathways for all candidates and employees, ensuring we reflect the communities we serve
6. **A commitment to staff development** - ensuring all our people have the skills and confidence to address issues of race and are knowledgeable about the communities we serve
7. **A clear commitment to working with pupil voice**, ensuring that the views of young people inform our approach
8. **Established links with our community** and engaged families in development of the school's approach to race and social justice



Year 3 Freshwater Theatre

On Monday 11th October, Year 3 were visited by explorers from Ancient Egypt... The children were able to consolidate key facts that they have been learning about in their classrooms.



This is what children thought about the day...

"The theatre group was funny. The funny bit is the curse when the adventurer heard the Egyptian music she would dance. The annoying bit was when people kept talking". Khalisah (3G)

"On Monday it was the Theatre Group Day. It was so much fun and the funny lady that was an explorer would dance every time she put on an Egyptian song". Joel (3G)

TfL Tube Map

TfL have produced a commemorative tube map in honour of Black History.

Can you research the achievements that some of the named people have made to the UK and the world?

Which famous person is representing Dagenham East station?



Black History Tube Map

Created with Black Cultural Archives, the home of Black British history
For further information visit tfl.gov.uk/black-history-map

MAYOR OF LONDON

© Transport for London
This diagram is an evolution of the original design conceived in 1933 by Harry Beck.
Black History Tube Map September 2020



Breathing techniques for children

Use your finger to slowly draw a star in the air. Every time you go out to a point, breathe out, every time you come back into the centre, breathe in.



Imagine that you are an octopus. Every time you slowly breathe in, count a leg. Repeat until you have counted all 8 of your legs.

Imagine there is a big balloon upside down in your chest. Breathe in to make it as big as you can. Breathe out as slowly as you can to shrink it.

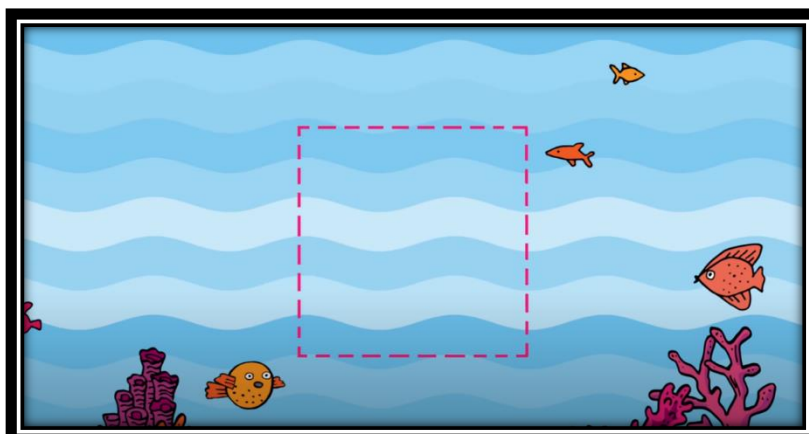
Imagine a flower in front of you, slowly smell that flower as you breathe in. Then imagine there is a candle in front of you and you must push the air hard to blow it out.



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The children have been learning lots of breathing techniques in school and thought it would be nice to share with parents for them to try too.

Click the image below or visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFdZXwE6fRE> for a demonstration of how to “square” breathe.



At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



With over 14 million daily users, Discord is one of the most popular communication tools for gamers. It allows you to create or join what are known as 'servers', where different users can talk in groups via text message or voice call. There is also the option to send direct messages and make video calls.



What parents need to know about

DISCORD



<p>INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT</p> <p>Your child can access almost any chat server on Discord. This means they can easily be exposed to content and conversations that are inappropriate, upsetting or potentially harmful.</p> 	<p>SEXUAL IMAGERY</p> <p>Despite there being guidelines in place to prevent it, users are able to circulate adult content. This can include sexualised images, pornographic videos and provocative discussions. It's important to stay alert and know the risks that your child could be exposed to.</p> 	<p>RISK OF CYBERBULLYING</p> <p>Interactions on the platform are largely unregulated. This means other users can easily say and show things to your child that might be offensive and upsetting. The competitive nature of gaming can lead users to make abusive and harmful remarks about your child.</p> 	<p>HIDDEN CHARGES</p> <p>Though the basic platform is free, your child will be encouraged to sign up to premium subscriptions, which give extra perks, such as animated emojis and free games. The two options are known as 'Nitro Classic' (which costs \$4.99 a month) and Nitro (which costs \$9.99 a month). Prices are only converted to pound sterling during the payment process.</p> 	<p>RISK OF CYBERCRIME</p> <p>Cybercriminal groups have been linked to the platform due to reports of hackers sharing stolen data. It's also possible that your child may be encouraged to share the data of their friends, either through peer pressure, or 'for fun', without realising the consequences.</p> 	<p>STRANGER DANGER</p> <p>To create an account, you only need to display a username and profile image. This makes it easy for someone to hide his or her real identity. Predators from anywhere in the world can join a chat server, message your child and quickly leave to avoid detection. Forbes reports groomers have been targeting children susceptible to online coercion on the platform.</p> 
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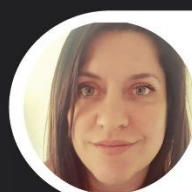
Top Tips to Protect Your Child



<p>1 BEWARE OF WHAT'S SHARED</p> <p>Whatever your child says or shares on the platform can be seen, heard and shared with a much larger audience. Be careful to make sure your child understands this and does not say or share anything that could be deemed offensive, harmful or put themselves or others at risk.</p> <p>You can find Discord's own guide for parents here: https://blog.discordapp.com/parents-guide-to-discord-c77d91793e9c</p> 	<p>2 IMPROVE SECURITY SETTINGS</p> <p>To help protect your child, make sure they set strong passwords. You should consider using the 'two-factor authentication' function for extra protection. It's also important to remind your child to never to share their personal information, or the details of another user.</p> 	<p>3 CHECK THEIR FRIEND LIST</p> <p>You can restrict who is able to make 'friend requests' to your child in the 'Friends' tab. It's a good idea to deselect the default option that allows anyone to connect. Of course, you should also talk to your child about why it's a risk to allow strangers to connect with them through such platforms.</p> 	<p>4 REPORT & BLOCK SUSPICIOUS USERS</p> <p>Make sure your child knows how to report and block abusive or suspicious users. If you do find your child suffering repeated abuse, contact the platform directly using the email: abuse@discordapp.com. It's a good idea to teach your child how to screenshot any negative interactions too.</p> 	<p>5 BEWARE OF NSFW CONTENT</p> <p>Public forums on the platform are a potential venue for inappropriate content that you should be wary of. There is a Discord mascot known as 'Wumpus', which is supposed to represent anyone under 18. Anyone who posts content unsuitable for under-18s, should mark it NSFW (Not Suitable For Wumpus).</p> 	<p>6 SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS</p> <p>It's important you actively teach your child to treat other users with respect and behave online the same way as they would offline.</p> <p>Take the time to read through Discord's Community Guidelines with your child. Find them at: www.discordapp.com/guidelines</p> 
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7 TURN ON SAFE MESSAGING

You should encourage your child to activate the 'Safe Direct Messaging' option. This will scan and delete any direct messages sent to your child containing explicit content.

Meet our expert

Claire Woffenden has been a technology journalist since 1998 with a specialism in consumer technology (apps, websites, home computing and digital devices). As a Mum of two young children - aged 8 and 6 - Claire is passionate about helping to keep children safe online.

SOURCES: <https://support.discordapp.com/hc/en-us>, <https://www.gizmodo.com.au/2017/03/discord-has-a-child-porn-problem/>, <http://www.daily-mail.co.uk/science/article-4559008/Half-yearsters-experience-bullying-online-games.html>, <https://www.pcgamesinsider.biz/news/67503/discord-drops-partnership-status-from-servers-hosting-porn/>, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2019/01/29/discord-the-2-billion-gamers-paradise-coming-to-terms-with-data-thieves-child-groomers-and-fbi-investigators/#4ba3dd3f741>



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

Age Rating
13+

SNAPCHAT

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivaling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.



Connecting with Strangers

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow strangers to gain their trust for sinister purposes.



Compulsion and Excessive Use

Many users spend vast amounts of time trying to become a Snap Star. Snapchat is offering a share of \$1 million, and the chance of online fame, to users who create and share the best videos. Children are therefore becoming obsessed with producing appealing content. The Spotlight feature's endless scroll of videos makes it easy for children to pass hours watching content, slowly getting addicted to the app.

Inappropriate Content

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to organise content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's Discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.



Sexting

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse. While these pictures do disappear - and the sender is notified if it has been screenshot first - users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.



Damage to Confidence

Snapchat's signature filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' filters on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Continually comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.



Advice for Parents & Carers

Turn off Quick Add

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



Choose Good Connections

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This Friend Check up encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with to maintain their online safety and privacy.



Talk about Sexting

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending, receiving or sharing explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that your child should never feel pressured into sexting - and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.



Keep Profiles Private

Profiles are private by default, but children may want to make them public to gain more followers. You may wish to customise the settings so that your child's Stories can only be viewed by people they know well in real life. In SnapMaps, enabling 'Ghost Mode' (again via settings) prevents your child's location being seen; it also nullifies SnapMap 'status', which visibly displays a user's exact location for as long as they stay there.



Be Ready to Block and Report

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



Chat about Content

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school uniform). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up, and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a #challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.



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.



Sources: State of Mind Social media and young people's mental health | UK - UK - Children's Commissioners Report (<https://support.snapchat.com/en-US/https://realitynet.snapchat.com/review/>) | ITCOM | Independent.co.uk (<https://mail.bids.com/bids/snapchat-status-snap-map/>) | European Stability Commission (2017) Young People and Sexting - All About Us Research and Insight from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia



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/NationalOnlineSafety



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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 14. 04. 2021



What Parents & Carers Need to Know About

16+
in UK & EU;
12+ rest of world.

WHATSAPP

WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, and making voice and video calls. The app offers end-to-end encryption, meaning messages can only be read by the sender and the recipient(s). Not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 reportedly caused millions of users to leave the app. But the new policy was widely misinterpreted: it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

'Prize' Scams

WhatsApp users occasionally receive messages from unauthorised third parties or fraudsters pretending to offer prizes – encouraging recipients to click a link to win. A common scam involves a warning that someone's WhatsApp subscription has run out: aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details. Other scams include instructions to forward a message to earn a gift or reward.

Enabling Fake News

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India, some outbreaks of mob violence were reported to have been sparked by false allegations shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Connections with Strangers

To start a WhatsApp chat, you need the mobile number of the person you want to message (they also need to have the app). WhatsApp can also access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts use WhatsApp. If your child has given their mobile number to somebody they don't know, that person could then use it to get in touch via WhatsApp.

Disappearing Messages

With 'disappearing messages', users can send messages that vanish from WhatsApp after seven days. A new feature also erases photos and videos from chats after they've been viewed. These files can't be saved or forwarded on, making monitoring what children are discussing problematic – and if someone sent your child an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove. Content can be reported to WhatsApp, however: ensure your child knows how to do this.

'Only Admins' and Cyberbullying

Group chats and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

Live Location Sharing

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." Indeed, it is a useful method for a child to let loved ones know they are safe. But if your child is in a chat with people they don't know, it means they will be exposing their location to them, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers

Report Potential Scams

Advise your child not to engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they will be given the option to report that number as spam. They can also report a contact or a group as spam by tapping on the contact or group name to open their profile and scrolling down to 'report spam'.

Create a Safe Profile

Even though someone would need your child's phone number to add them as a contact, as an extra precaution it's worth altering your young one's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody'. Choosing one of the latter two ensures their profile is protected.

Use Location Features Sparingly

If your child needs to use 'live location' to show you or their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives 'live location' options of 15 minutes, one hour or eight hours. However, your child can manually choose to stop sharing their position at any time.

Fact-Check Messages

You can now fact-check messages that have been forwarded at least five times in WhatsApp, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was accurate or not. It's a good way to encourage young people to question things they see online.

Explain about Blocking

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – they would also need to be deleted from the device's address book. The option to block someone is on their contact info screen.

Leave a Group

If your child is part of a group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they no longer want to be part of, show them how to use the group's settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

Delete Accidental Messages

If your child has posted a message in the wrong chat or sent a message that they immediately regret, they can delete it. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone'. WhatsApp allows seven minutes to delete a message after it's sent – but it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



SOURCES: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/260816/number-of-monthly-active-whatsapp-users/>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/technology/whatsapp-updates-what-to-expect-from-the-new-privacy-policy-11811111.html>



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