



Executive Headteacher: Mrs J Fraser

William Morris Primary School
William Morris Way
Tadpole Garden Village
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN25 2PP

Date: 2nd May 2025

Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you had a happy Easter break. It has been lovely to see the children enjoying the sunshine this week. It's also been exciting to see the year 2 children dressed as rock stars today for their Timestable Rockstars launch!



Staffing news

Mrs Lowe, Miss Bailey—we would like to offer our congratulations to Mrs Lowe and Miss Bailey who are both expecting their second babies! They will be with us until the end of this academic year and then on maternity leave.

Mr Boothroyd & Miss Jenkins—we will be saying goodbye to Mr B and Miss Jenkins who are moving northwards with their families at the end of the academic year. Both have been an integral part of our team and we will miss them. They have asked me to share that they both are very sad to be leaving William Morris after making so many fantastic memories here.

Mrs Campbell-Walker—sadly Mrs Campbell-Walker will be leaving us after half term. She has been with us since the first year we opened & has been an amazing TA & supported many children, families & staff members over her time here. We wish her well in her new role and will miss her.

Miss Hellikarn (previously Miss Karn)—we are pleased to welcome Miss Hellikarn back from maternity leave from July for three days a week.

New Teachers—we have recruited new Teachers for September. They will be in to meet the staff and children later in the term.

Miss Saldanha is an experienced teacher who used to work at Even Swindon and will be joining us from China. She said 'Having grown up & previously taught in Swindon, I am looking forward to returning to the community once again. I will be bringing a wealth of experience & knowledge of different cultures to share with the children. I am excited about working at William Morris as I like the approach to the curriculum & am keen to support children to empower them to take risks & become well-rounded individuals.'

Miss Edds is currently at Goddard Park and shared 'when I walked around William Morris, I loved the vibrant learning space and could see the children were at the heart of everything the staff do. I look forward to motivating the children to do their best learning & working with the dedicated teaching team.'

Mr Paget who is currently our student teacher in Year 4, said 'I like the inspiring curriculum offered to foster curiosity & resilience. The staff and pupils are friendly and I enjoy the sense of community within the school. I am looking forward to working in a collaborative culture and supporting the children with hands on learning and interesting experiences.'

We hope you have a lovely bank holiday weekend and we look forward to seeing you at our Circus Family Fun Day on Monday organised by our fantastic PTA.

Have a happy May Day bank holiday!

Mrs Fraser, Headteacher





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Newsletter

Class Photos

A reminder that all children will be having their whole class photos taken on Friday.

Lighthouse Newsletter

Please see the latest Lighthouse newsletter on the pages below for useful information and tips such as how to help your child with stressful times.

Kelmscott Manor

Please see the flyers on the pages below if you are interested in some family activities which will be taking place at Kelmscott Manor, Lechlade—some of which are focussed on the work of William Morris.

Lost Property

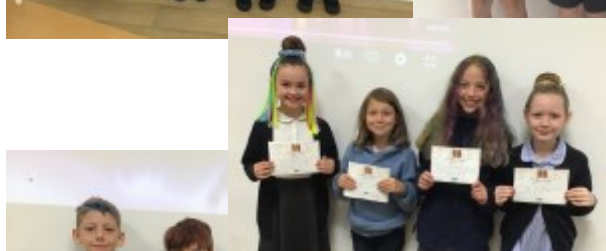
We have a huge quantity of lost property in our box which will be emptied on **Monday 12th May**. Please check the box before then if your child is missing any items. Please do not use this box as a place to make uniform donations. If you have preloved uniform that you would like to donate to the PTA, please use their labelled wheelie bin located near to the bin store. Thank you.

GWA Car Park

We have been contacted by GWA because it has become apparent that parents from our school are using their car park before walking to William Morris to drop off & pick up children. We request that parents do not use their car park as this means that GWA staff are unable to park when arriving to work. This includes exam invigilators meaning that essential exams for their pupils could be impacted. They are now introducing a staff parking permit scheme therefore drivers cannot use their spaces unless a permit is visible. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this request.

Gold Book

Well done to all of the children who were in the Gold Book — we are very proud of you and your achievements!



Golden Welly: Well done for being awarded the golden welly award for making creative ideas at playtimes this fortnight.



Parents and Friends of William Morris Newsletter

This week's news...

CIRCUS FAMILY FUN DAY



There's still time to get your tickets for

The Circus!

£12pp Under 2s Free

All profits will be going back into the school



Make a day out of the circus event by visiting the fete first!

We will have a variety of food vendors selling, pizza, burgers, hot dogs, toasties, cupcakes, ice-cream and more.

Face painting, glitter and gems.



Be sure to get your tokens for the stalls run by our amazing

volunteers! With a games area, sweet cones, preloved games and books, penalty shootout and fresh lemonade.

The fete runs 11:30 until the raffle is called at 13:15, ready for you to grab your candy floss and popcorn for the pre-show in the Big Top to begin at 13:40. Scan the QR code to get your tickets now!



UPCOMING EVENTS

May 5th School Fete and Circus
June 20th Sponsored Event
June 20th Ice Cream Van
July 22nd Summer Disco

CRAZY HAIR DAY

We Raised £119.50

It was great seeing everyone's crazy hair and we appreciate the support!



As always, thank you so much for your support. All proceeds from our events go straight back to the school to provide equipment and resources.

To purchase circus tickets, please use this link: <https://pta.events/wmpta-circus>

SEND Newsletter

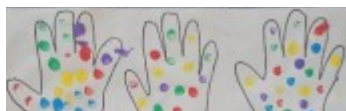
COFFEE & A CATCH-UP



All about SEND!

- I will be on hand for any questions.

Autism Acceptance Week



**Thistle Class's ideas
for supporting our
autistic peers**

- ## autistic people
1. Listening to autistic children and their preferences
 2. Following routines
 3. Giving others time to process information and reply when speaking to them
 4. Including others in our play
 5. Respecting other people's choices
 6. Understanding sensory triggers
 7. Separate room in the school with lots of things they like + toys to help them calm down (sensory room).
 8. Preparing autistic children with changes in the day
 9. Type instead of writing, so it's not too much pressure.
 10. Having patience.
 11. Buddy system: having a friend that will help them with things they find tricky
 12. Fiddle toys to help concentrate.

Our KS2 classes looked at some of the challenges autistic people might face and how as a school we can support any autistic members of our school community.



Book Trust has a reading list.

Deaf Awareness Week

Next week (5th -11th May) is Deaf Awareness week. As part of this, we will be looking at what it means to be Deaf or hearing impaired.

As a school, each week in singing assembly we sign songs using SSE (sign supported English). This is where we use the signs from BSL (British Sign Language) but using the word order from spoken English.

Next week, we will learn a bit more about [BSL](#). In assembly, we will be looking at the order we need to sign words in when saying hello and asking what somebody's name is.

In class assemblies, we will be looking at how important facial expressions, gestures and lip reading also are when using BSL.



If you would like to know more, there are some games and quizzes on the [National Deaf Children's Society website](#).

If you would like to read books at home with deaf characters or a deaf focus in, the [National Deaf Children's Society](#) and [Book Trust](#) have reading lists.

Yours,

Mrs Day (SENDCo)

Early Help Navigators

Here to Help Parents Thrive:
Support and Signposting



Drop In Sessions:

Tuesday 27th May 2025
West Swindon Library: 10am - 12pm
Central Library: 2pm - 4pm

Wednesday 28th May 2025
North Swindon Library: 10am-12pm
Park Library - 2pm-4pm

Mental Health, Finances, Community Groups, Youth Projects SEND, Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse, Food Banks, Prenatal and perinatal support.



Term 4 Open House







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School Diary

May

Mon 5th PTA School fete and circus

Fri 9th Whole class photos

Mon 12th —Y4 & Y5 Bikeability

Fri 16th—Class reps 1:45pm

Tues 20th—Reception vision screening

Wed 21st—Y1 Dinosaur visit

Thurs 22nd - 2:00pm Open House & Y2 Fab Finish

Fri 23rd—TD Day: School closed to pupils

July

Fri 4th TD Day- School closed to pupils

Thurs 10th- Governors meeting 6pm

Fri 11th- Nursery graduation

Fri 11th- Class Reps

Mon 14th- Sports week

Thurs 17th- Sports day, reserve 18th

Mon 21st- Open house 2pm

Tues 22nd- PTA Summer Disco

Fri 25th- end of term

June

Mon 2nd- First day of term 6

Mon 2nd-Year 4 multiplication check (over 2 weeks)

Mon 2nd- Swimming lessons start

Mon 9th- Y1 Phonics screening check week

Fri 20th- PTA sponsored event

Fri 20th- PTA ice cream van

Thurs 26th—Y3 sleepover

INSET TD DAYs—school closed to children:

- 4th July 2025
- 1st September 2025
- 2nd September 2025
- **23rd Feb 2026**

New dates

Don't forget our online **social media accounts:**

Facebook—William Morris Primary School

Instagram—williammorrisprimary

Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes

What have we been learning in Nursery?



We have had a brilliant fortnight back in Nursery! The children settled back into their usual routines quickly and we are so impressed with their learning.

We have been reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and learning lots about caterpillars and how they change into butterflies.

We have been trying especially hard to practise our name writing and the children created beautiful caterpillars with their names on. The art work has been amazing with creative painting, printing and drawing to create a range of caterpillars and butterflies.

In Maths, we have been working on the number eight, looking at the numicon piece and carefully counting the correct number of objects to make collections of 8. The children are trying hard to represent 8 using their fingers.

In PE we have been practising our target skills – aiming bean bags into hoops – the children were very proud with the points they scored. We will keep practising all term as we start to prepare for end of year Sports Day!

The Nursery Team

Reminders -

- **Please label all items of clothing that children bring to school, we have a pile of lost property that is slowly growing due to unlabelled items.**
- **Please apply suncream at home as the weather improves and ensure your child has a sunhat in school.**
- **Please ensure that you only send fruit or vegetables as an afternoon snack.**



Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes



Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes



Reception - Sunflower and Bellflower Classes

What have we been learning in Reception?



Wow! The last two weeks have flown by – we have had so much fun being back in school, reading *The Enormous Turnip*, having a crazy hair day and enjoying the sunshine :)

In Maths we have been consolidating our number skills, subitising and exploring numbers through the part, part whole model. The children have shown great skill in inventing their own maths games and teaching them to their friends during continuous provision time.

In English we are learning the story 'The Enormous Turnip' off by heart and are getting ready to innovate our own versions next week. We have been writing simple sentences about the story and are working hard on letter formation and remembering to use finger spaces.

Our PE focus this term is ball skills, so far we have enjoyed learning how to throw, catch and control a small ball.

Thank you for all your support with returning reading books and reading at home. Please continue to share your child's library book and reading book every day at home.

Next week the children will be learning about growing and will be planting their own lettuce and radish seeds.

The EYFS team

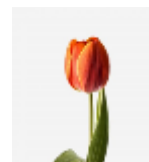


Reception—Bellflower and Sunflower Classes



Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes

What have we been learning in Year 1?



Welcome back to Term 5! We had an 'Egg'cellet start to our topic 'Dinosaurs' where we found 60 eggs in the playground. We wrote about what we thought was inside and how they came to our playground. After, we made a mini nest for each egg. Overnight, they had hatched into mini, bright dinosaurs - it was fantastic! To continue our learning about Dinosaurs we have also been looking at a famous Scientist Mary Anning who discovered many famous dinosaur fossils.

In English, we have been reading the book 'The girl an the dinosaur' This is our 'Talk for writing focus text and this week we have perfected actions to accompany the story and worked in groups to sequence it- Ask us to retell you the story at home.

In Maths, we have been adding and subtracting one and two from odd and even numbers. We have learnt the word commutative and understand that if we know $2+3=5$ we also know addition can be done in any order so $3+2=5$.

In Science, we have begun a new topic called 'animal parts' this project teaches children about animals, including fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and invertebrates. They identify and describe their common structures, diets, and how animals should be cared for.

PE- in PE we are beginning the topics striking and fielding and net and wall. We will be mastering basic movements including, throwing and catching. Participating in team games, developing tactics for attacking and defending.

In Computing we have been really excited to get the chance to programme BeeBots. We made a dinosaur cover for them last week which was so much fun. This week we are beginning to learn how to programme them to move across a movement mat.

Thank you to those who have made a contribution on parent pay so far for our Dinosaur visit on the 21st May. The link is still available to make a contribution on your parent pay account.

The Y1 team :)

Reminders:

- Please make sure your child has a sun hat every day.
- Our exciting dinosaur visit is on Wednesday 21st May.

Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes



PE - DEFENDING



PIC•COLLAGE



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Year 2 - Clover and Willow Classes

What have we been learning in Year 2?



This term, we've begun an exciting new topic called 'Movers and Shakers', where we're learning about significant, influential figures who changed the world. From inspiring activists and brilliant scientists to daring explorers and creative artists, we have loved discovering what makes someone truly remarkable.

In Science, we're building on our knowledge of habitats by exploring how animals survive in different environments. We've been learning about adaptations, food sources, and how animals stay safe in the wild.

In PE, we're developing our skills in net and wall games, focusing on ball control and tennis techniques like the ready position and moving from side to side. We have also enjoyed trying out coaching roles in groups!

In Maths, we've been working on finding three quarters of amounts and have now started learning to tell the time using 'quarter to' and 'quarter past'. We have started looking at five-minute intervals of time on a clock face too.

In English, we've been studying biographies, learning all about the features needed to create one. We especially enjoyed researching Isambard Kingdom Brunel and are now planning to write our own mini biographies.

At Forest School, we have been learning some brilliant new outdoor skills. We tried whittling and have practised cutting pieces of wood safely using peelers and other tools! There has been so much great focus, care, and excitement while learning this new hands-on skill.

For PSHE, as we previously discussed racism we would like to ask parents to reinforce the message that we are all unique and we should not talk about the way someone looks, even if we do not mean to be unkind, as it might be hurtful to them.

A big thank you to everyone who joined us for Times Table Rock Stars Day! Everyone looked fantastic and impressed us all with their times table knowledge and rock star energy. We're so proud of their progress and confidence.

We're looking forward to more exciting learning ahead!

Have a lovely weekend, Miss Presdee and Miss Morgan

Year 2 - Clover and Willow Classes



Year 2 - Clover and Willow Classes



Year 3 - Honeysuckle and Rose Classes

What have we been learning in Year 3?



Welcome back to our new term and new topic Scrumdiddlyumptious! This term we be focusing on all things scrummy! We launched our topic by looking at food journeys of bananas and chocolate and locating the places where they are grown and pass through on their way to the shops in the UK. This was tricky and involved the children looking at a number of different maps which has really developed their skills in Geography. We also started our new class novel: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Roald Dahl—the children have really enjoyed it so far.

In English we have been looking at newspaper reports and different interpretations of 'The Three Little Pigs'. We have been exploring the possible reasons for the wolf being anywhere near the houses when the fell down and also the reasons why the little pigs may have wanted to frame the wolf. The children will be taking on the role of neutral reporters and giving a balanced account of the facts we know so far. We will be focusing on paragraphing this term, particularly when writing our introduction and using the 5 W's to make sure our readers have the information they need in a succinct way. We will also be recapping speech when writing quotes from eye witnesses.

In Maths, we have recapped fractions and fractions of amounts which has meant we've needed to recall all of our times table knowledge to help us when dividing as well as multiplying. We are now moving on to time, so please do ask the children to tell what the time is when you have a chance, as this a skill which takes a lot practice to develop. We have been recapping what they learnt in Year 2 in our Maths Meetings and so far it has gone very well. We will move to being able to tell the time to the minute and also know the difference and converting between analogue and digital time.

Please can you ensure that the children do bring in water bottles and sun hats every day and make sure their PE kits are in school. We will most likely be completing our PE sessions outside both days this term as the weather is so nice and there is much more space on the playground. Our PE topics this term are Tennis and OAA (outdoor adventurous activities), which involves lots of team games and map skill games such as orienteering.

We hope you all had a lovely Easter break and are enjoying the lovely weather at the moment!

Year 3 Team

Year 3 - Honeysuckle and Rose Classes





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Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes

What have we been learning in Year 4?



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to Term 5! We've had a fun and sunny start to the term, and the children have jumped straight back into learning with enthusiasm and curiosity. This term is already shaping up to be packed with creativity, hands-on experiences and new skills.

Our new topic this term is 'Playlist', which links closely to our science unit on Sound. We've been investigating how sounds are made, how they travel, and how we can change pitch and volume through different materials and vibrations.

To inspire us further, we watched a performance by an orchestra playing music from *How to Train Your Dragon*, which ties in beautifully with our new class novel. The children listened carefully to how different instruments contribute to mood and atmosphere. They also began their journey into learning the recorder this week—an exciting start to developing musical skills and an understanding of sound in action!

We also began the term with a flavour-filled start in Design and Technology, designing and making our own sauces. The children worked brilliantly to plan, prepare, make and evaluate their recipes. We hope you enjoyed sampling them at home—we thought they were delicious!

In English, we have been comparing narratives in which characters show bravery in the face of challenges. We've explored the characters through drama, role-play and discussion, helping us understand their thoughts and motivations. The children have now planned their own bravery-themed stories, which they will be writing next week—full of exciting characters and powerful messages.

In maths, we've focused on decimal numbers—ordering and comparing them, and applying our place value knowledge to understand how numbers change when we divide by 10 and 100. The children have been practising their reasoning and problem-solving skills, and are building confidence in using decimals in different contexts.

This term, our P.E. sessions take place on Monday – *Rounders* and Friday – *Athletics*. However, please ensure your child has their full P.E. kit in school every day.

As we are loving this weather, we kindly remind you to please ensure your child has a hat and water bottle in school every day. They are also able to bring their own sunscreen in to apply on themselves.

We hope you have a wonderful bank holiday,

The Year 4 team

Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes



Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes

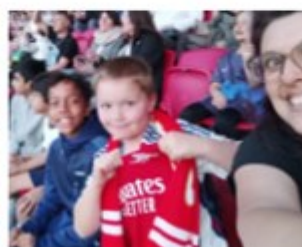
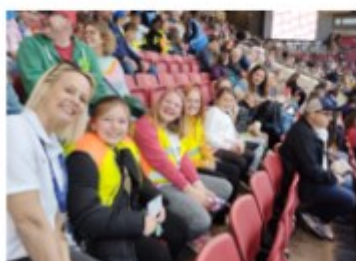


Year 5 - Thistle and Acorn Classes



Our Football Trip to Ashton Gate Stadium!

We had an unforgettable trip to Ashton Gate Stadium on the last day of term to watch the England Lionesses take on Belgium! The team delivered an impressive 5-0 victory, and the atmosphere was electric—from the rhythmic beat of the drums to the whole crowd joining in on the Mexican waves. The evening kicked off with a dazzling light show and spectacular fireworks, making it a truly memorable experience for everyone.



Year 5 - Thistle and Acorn Classes



Sow, Grow and Farm!

On our first day back, we kicked off this term's topic by learning all about the food chain within an allotment! We learnt what producers, primary, secondary and tertiary consumers are and what apex predators are! We were then able to produce a food chain any way that we wanted to be working in our table groups!



Year 5 Thistle and Acorn Classes

Science:

This term, Year 5 have started our Science topic '*Properties and Changes of Materials*' with great enthusiasm and curiosity. Working together in mixed-class groups, they explored a wide range of everyday materials, testing properties such as hardness, flexibility, conductivity, and waterproofness. These engaging, hands-on investigations not only made learning fun, but also helped pupils strengthen their observation and reasoning skills. Along the way, they developed a deeper understanding of how different materials respond under various conditions—and why they're chosen for specific purposes.



Year 5 Thistle and Acorn Classes

Cooking:

This term, we've been developing our life skills by learning to cook – and what better way than by making our own mini quiches! Year 5 worked hard to prepare the pastry from scratch, carefully measuring, mixing, and rolling it out. They then added and combined the ingredients for the filling before baking their delicious creations. It was a fantastic opportunity to practise teamwork, follow a recipe, and enjoy the rewards of their efforts!





Lighthouse Newsletter



Who are Lighthouse?

We are an Early Intervention service supporting children and their families within the Blue Kite Academy Trust schools. We are made up of Family Workers, Inclusion Workers, an Educational Psychologist, Educational Welfare Officer and a Trainee Play Therapist. We work in many different ways- sometimes directly with children, sometimes with parents and carers. We also offer regular workshops, courses and 1:1 drop-in sessions for one off advice – please speak to your child's school for more information or if you feel you, or your child, may benefit from Lighthouse support.

Random Fact of the Month

Research done by the National Institute of Health has found a very strong link between being able to cross the midline and being able to read. Crossing the midline is doing anything where you use both sides of your body together. If your child struggles to tap their left knee with their right hand and vice versa they are also likely to struggle with the ability to track left to right across the page- an important skill to allow reading development. Doing midline-crossing activities every day (e.g. paint a pretend giant rainbow in the air, toe touches with opposite hands, self hugs,) has been shown to increase reading ability!

April 2025



Welcome to our second newsletter of the new year! We will send a new one each long term- so keep an eye out. We will be sharing the events and courses we are running, top tips and more! See below for more information on who we are and what we do.

Helping your child manage stressful times



We know that SATs are coming up and, although many children aren't phased by them, some children can find them tricky or stressful. We know that things such as getting enough sleep and eating well are always helpful but here are some ideas you may want to try as well:

- **Write down any worries**- This could be into a worry box or in a journal- it doesn't have to just be worries related to whatever the upcoming event is, it can be about anything. The more they share their worries the less they will be on their mind when trying to focus.
- **Teach them Micro-Mindfulness**- Learning super quick and easy regulation techniques is really helpful. SATs children can do them the night before, or, whilst waiting for or after finishing a paper to calm their minds. This could be Star Breathing (using a finger to trace up and down the fingers on your other hand slowly, breathing in when going up a finger and down when going out- they can do this under the table at school. Or try grounding- look for 5 things that are green, or, made of metal, or, are round for example. Try tensing all muscles and releasing either one body part at a time or altogether.
- **Create a Confidence Wall**- Stick post-it notes with all the things they are good at- not just academic things- to remind them of all their strengths and boost their confidence!

These tips can be used for any child who is feeling stressed or worried. Learning to manage stress is a skill for life and the younger we begin to learn to do it the stronger we become at doing so!



Our Favourite Catchphrases

If you have ever joined us for a workshop or course you will know very well that in the Lighthouse team, we love a catchphrase! Here are some of our favourites with explanations:

- **What we Pay Attention to is What we Get More Of**- It can be an easy trap to fall into as a parent to only notice when your child starts to break rules or push boundaries. But if we get into too much of a pattern with this then our children can begin to learn that this is an easy way to get time and attention. If we try and flip it so that we pay more attention to the times they are playing well, putting their shoes on the rack, sharing with their sibling then this begins to be what we get more of instead. *Catch them being good!* (another of our phrases!!)
- **Love or a Solution**- Often when our child tells us something that has made them cross or upset our first reaction is to fix it for them. Think of a time you were annoyed and ranted to a friend or partner- did you want them to say, 'Well what you should have done is... Have you thought about doing...' or, did you want them to just listen and give an empathetic response such as, 'Oh that sounds tricky!' or 'Sorry your day has been so difficult!' To combat giving the wrong response than your child is looking for you can ask them- would you like love, for me to just listen, or would you like help in finding a solution?
- **Say What You Mean and Mean What You Say**- Don't put in threats of consequences that you know you definitely won't follow through with (such as 'We will cancel your party!', or, 'You won't come on holiday!') as this quickly teaches your child that you won't follow through with the consequences you give them. It's also about following through with any promises so they trust that you mean what you say. If you say you will do an extra story if they tidy up then you need to follow through with this (if you ever do need to break a promise then have a discussion about why this is happening). This also relates to not 'giving in' if your child is nagging, for screen time for example. Think of it like a slot machine that will always eventually give the prize- if they have to ask 10 times and then on the 11th time you give in they remember this and will then continue to nag the next time even more times, knowing you are likely to give in if they persist in asking. If you have gotten into this habit then it can be a hard one to fix but its worth it in the long term. Have a sentence in mind to repeat instead such as, 'I know you aren't happy with my answer but I am not changing my mind.'



Follow us on Instagram
@Lighthouse_BlueKiteTrust
for regular tips, ideas and
information on upcoming events!

Neurodiversity Parent 101:

Getting into good sleep habits

What is sleep regulation?

- Children and adults with ADHD can often complain of having sleep disturbance such as difficulty getting off to sleep, waking in the night, and feeling tired despite sleep.
- Some adults describe having a 'busy brain' and find it hard to settle their thoughts down.

What can you do?

- ✓ Bedtime routines – make sure the room is dark room, have a warm bath or shower before going to bed
- ✓ Avoid caffeinated drinks such as cola, and tea and coffee from afternoon onwards.
- ✓ Stop screen time (especially playing computer games) an hour or two before bed
- ✓ Exercise during the day.
- ✓ Avoid naps during the day.
- ✓ Try to use the bedroom only for sleep and not as a playroom/study as well if possible.



- ✓ Relaxation approaches such as listening to an audio book help some children to settle down.
- ✓ If you or your child wake in the night create a routine to get back to sleep, make sure they have a drink. They could listen to some music.
- ✓ Some people find a fan, or a radio turned down low allows you or your child to focus thoughts on other things and allows them to settle.



If these strategies don't work, then speak to your G.P. for more

guidance. In some cases, medication may be provided.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

Advice for Parents & Educators

TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.

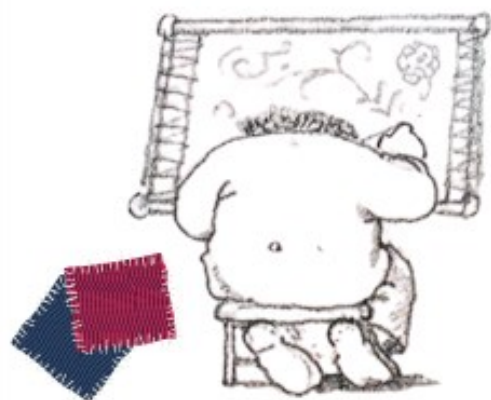


#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



Make and Mend May at Kelmscott Manor



Join us for a month of activities exploring themes of creativity, sustainability, and repairability as part of a new project to conserve the Manor's historic tapestries.



SATURDAY 3RD MAY
Drop in workshop:

Rag Rugging



SATURDAY 10TH MAY
Drop in workshop:

Natural Dyeing
with
Kate Turnbull



SATURDAY 17TH MAY

William Morris Day.

Celebrate the day William
Morris first visited
Kelmscott



SATURDAY 24TH MAY

Maker in Residence
Demonstration:
Skeined Willow
Weaving



THURSDAY 29TH MAY

Drop in workshop:
Weaving



SATURDAY 31ST MAY

Repair Café with
The Lechlade Repair
Café



Free to take part all ages and abilities welcome, no booking required
For more details visit kelmscottmanor.org.uk



CELEBRATE WILLIAM MORRIS'S DISCOVERY OF KELMSCOTT MANOR



10.30AM-5PM

- Put your pin in our map and compare your journey to the one William Morris took.
- Join our volunteers and make your very own nature journal then why not go and explore the Manor for yourself and fill your journal with the things you discover.
- Mini Morris is on the loose on in the house again- see if you can find them all.
- Follow our 'Where's William' trail in the grounds.
- Be inspired by our collection and decorate your own 'Mini Manor'
- Visit the learning barn and find what other activities are taking place on the day!



All ages and abilities welcome, no booking required

For more details visit kelmscottmanor.org.uk

KELMSCOTT, LECHLADE, GLOS GL7 3HJ

