

Date: 15th November 2024

# Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your families had a lovely Autumn half term. We've had a very reflective and thoughtful week this week. On Monday, children in Y2—Y5 observed a minute silence at 11:00am for Remembrance Day and we were very proud of the respectful behaviour they showed to mark this important day.



Children have also been focusing on respect and kindness when learning about anti-bullying week, which started with Odd Sock Day. These discussions continue to take place throughout the year, but the children made the most of having this as a specific focus this week.

Everyone looked very colourful today for Children in Need. Thank you for all of the donations received for this important cause. If you would still like to donate please use this link: <https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Foc/Default.aspx?shopid=15118>

Have a lovely weekend

Mrs Fraser

Headteacher

## Dandelion Group Remembrance Day



This year to celebrate Remembrance Day, the Dandelion group planted some spring bulbs in front of school. We have painted some pebbles to decorate the flower bed.

## **Thank you**

Staff and children who use our Nurture Nest wish to share a big thank you for the Lego sets that have been generously donated. They are very gratefully received and will be an important resource for children to use.



## **Be a Santa to a Senior**

We are pleased to be supporting the Santa to a Senior initiative run by Home Instead. If you would like to provide a gift for a senior, please see further information on the poster below.



## **SEND Working Party**

The next SEND working party will be Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 1.30pm-2.30pm where Mrs Day and parents we will be looking at the behaviour policy together.

## **UKHSA Health Advice**

As children across the country return to their classrooms after the half term break, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) is [reminding parents of the simple steps they can take to reduce the spread of stomach bugs and winter illnesses](#) to ensure they stay healthy this term.

Cases of flu and norovirus are increasing as we head into the winter months, with norovirus activity in the past two weeks more than double the five-season average for the same two-week period and flu steadily increasing over the past few weeks.

The UKHSA has advice on:

- Teaching good hygiene habits
- Knowing when to keep your child at home and when to send them to school
- Stopping the spread of stomach bugs

The UKHSA press release on back to school hygiene can be seen here: <https://ukhsa-newsroom.prgloo.com/news/ukhsa-south-west-issues-health-advice-following-the-half-term-break>

There's also a blog with the advice for parents/carers as well: <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2024/09/04/a-parents-guide-to-keeping-kids-healthy-this-school-year/>

## **Little Strawberries**

Due to low demand, we have decided to pause Little Strawberries toddler group temporarily but we are planning to run the group in the Spring when we hope there may be more demand.



## **Parent Support Advisor Sessions**

The Lighthouse Team from the BKAT are offering 1-1 drop in sessions for parents on the first Thursday of every month at our school. These will run from 8:45—9:45am. Please contact the school office if you want to attend the next upcoming sessions. Further information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

### Disabled Spaces

We have been told that drivers are parking in disabled bays without blue badges being displayed. Please do not use our limited disabled spaces unless you are a blue badge holder to ensure that they are used by those who need them. Thank you.



### Use of Phones

For safety, please do not use your phones while driving—especially in our carpark. Thank you.



### Class Reps Agreement

In order to make our Class Reps meetings a more useful forum, we have slightly altered our agreement, which is attached. The Class Reps group provides an important communication role between parents & carers and the Senior Leadership Team.

As a school we work in partnership with parents & carers and are interested what parents & carers think the school is doing well. The meeting also provides a forum for members to discuss how the school could improve further. Termly topics for discussion will be provided in advance.

### Free Courses For Parents and Carers

Please use this link for more information about some useful courses that are free for parents:

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>

### Newspapers Wanted

Please donate any unwanted newspapers to the school office for arts and crafts clubs and activities that we do in school. Thank you.

### School Councillors

Congratulations to those who have been elected to represent their classes for the school council this year. Mr B looks forward to working with you to discuss your ideas.



## School Grounds Update

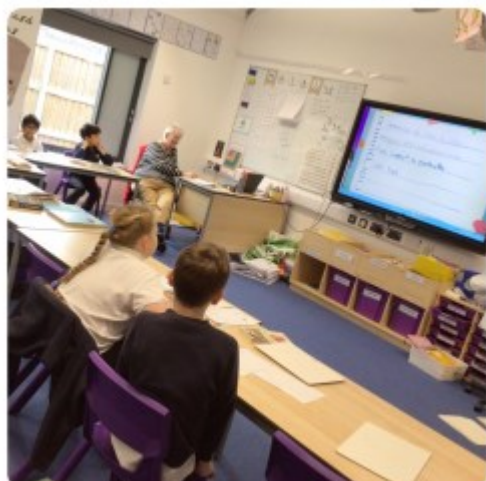
Thank you to the parent and staff who helped fill the sandpit on the school field for lunch time play as part of our OPAL provision. We are looking forward to opening it soon. Please remember to send in wellies and waterproof for you child.

We also owe a big thank you to MAN Truck & Bus UK who travelled from Worcester to tidy up the beds surrounding the pavements outside the front of the school. Thank you to Evie and Dylan's mum for organising this.



## Anti-Bullying Week

KS2 classes all took part in a live CBBC lesson for anti-bullying week. They all really enjoyed it and engaged so well with helping the characters learn how to respect each other in team work.



## Gold Book

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



# Parents and Friends Of William Morris 2024/2025 Fundraising



We have raised a  
total of **£440** so far!  
This is incredible.

We can not thank you enough  
for the support via, donations,  
buying, and volunteering.

All the money raised helps the  
school buy new equipment, and  
the PTA can put on nice events  
for the children.

← Bake Sale £250

← Cuddly Toy Sale £140

← Preloved School Uniform £30

← Oana's Cakes £20



# Home Instead.

*To us, it's personal*



## SPREAD SOME SPARKLE THIS CHRISTMAS...

## Be a Santa to a Senior 2024!

*Home Instead Swindon are collecting donations of small gifts to bring cheer to an older person who may be lonely this Christmas. These gifts will be distributed by local charities and organisations to show seniors that we care!*

*Donate with your school, church or organisation, with our Amazon wishlist!*

*Scan*  
to buy from  
**amazon**  
wishlist



### Ideal Gifts Include:

*Chocolate oranges (any flavour), chocolates/sweets, 2025 Diary or Calendar, wooly hat, scarf or gloves.*

Donations to be received by Friday 6th December.

For more information call 01793 232585 or  
email [cat.attewell@homeinstead.co.uk](mailto:cat.attewell@homeinstead.co.uk)





Executive Headteacher: Mrs J Fraser

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

# School Diary

## November

Mon 4th Nov First Day of Term 2  
 Mon 11th Nov Anti-Bullying Week  
 Fri 15th Nov Children in Need  
 Mon 18th Nov Road Safety Week  
 22nd PTA Bag2School  
 Thurs 28th November Local Governing Body 6pm

## December

Mon 2nd SEND working party 1:30—2:30  
 Wed 4th Dec PTA Whole School Pantomime in school  
 Fri 6th Dec Class Reps  
 Tues 10th Reception Nativity 9:30am Bellflower parents watch & Wed 11th Dec 9:30am Sunflower parents watch  
 11th PTA Christmas disco  
 Thurs 12th Dec Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas Lunch  
 Fri 13th Dec Open House – 2pm – 3pm  
 Fri 13th 9Nursery Nativity -9:30am Daisy parents watch & 9:30-10am Poppy parents watch  
 13th PTA Glamorose cake van  
 Mon 16th Year 1 & 2 Nativity 9:30am Y2 parents watch  
 Mon 16th KS2 Y3, Y4, & Y5 Christmas Open Air Concert - 6pm & rain off concert day Tuesday 17th Dec 6pm  
 Wed 18th Year 1 & 2 Nativity 9:30am Y1 parents watch  
 19th PTA: All classes visit Xmas Grotto  
 Fri 20th Dec Last Day of Term

## **INSET TD DAYS—school closed to children:**

6th Jan 2025  
 24th Feb 2025  
 23rd May 2025  
 4th July 2025  
 [New dates in red]

## Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes

### What have we been learning in Nursery?



The children have all settled back into classroom routines very well after the half term break. This term our topic is 'Me and My Celebrations'. We started our term off exploring pumpkins and discussing how some children celebrated Halloween over half term. We have begun to talk about our own traditions and think about how we getting ready for different celebrations.

We have also been talking about Bonfire Night. The children have shared their own experiences of what they have seen and heard thinking about using super sentences when talking! We have enjoyed learning some new songs, making firework pictures using a range of mediums and large-scale artwork on foil. We have talked about how to keep ourselves safe when at firework displays and in the dark. The children particularly enjoyed creating some tasty edible sparklers using breadsticks!

It would be fantastic if you could talk to your child about a celebration or special tradition you have at home so that they can then share with us at Nursery. Your child could share this with us through bringing in a photograph, a picture they have drawn or by uploading your discussion/photos onto the ILD.

- Please ensure your child has a warm, water-proof coat in school every day and that all items are clearly named (even tights and socks as they do get mixed up!)
- As the weather gets colder, please send your child with a hat and pair of gloves. These can be left at school in their drawer or brought to school on a daily basis.
- Please ensure your child has adequate sets of spare clothing, we are running very low on our Nursery supplies. If your child is sent home in school spare clothing, please wash and return as soon as possible.
- If your child stays all day, school will provide morning snack, please send your child with a piece of fruit for the afternoon, grapes must be cut up.
- Some children in Daisy class have not brought their waterproofs back since half term, please bring them in!



The Nursery Team :)

### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

In March, we will have a mobile farm visiting us in school. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £7 per child.



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**Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes**



Nursery - Poppy and Daisy Classes



## Reception - Sunflower and Bellflower Classes

### What have we been learning in Reception?

#### Welcome Back to Term 2!

We are thrilled to see all the children back, settling in brilliantly, and diving into their learning with so much enthusiasm. This term, we have started an exciting new topic inspired by Julia Donaldson's books, we started with a special focus on *Room on the Broom*,

#### Last Week:

To kick off our *Room on the Broom* adventure, the children discovered a mysterious broomstick waiting at our classroom door! This led them along a magical trail of clues, where they found a wand, yellow bow, cauldron, and witch's hat. They eagerly used these hints to guess the story—*Room on the Broom*—and were so proud to get it right!

After introducing the characters and setting, we discussed each character's unique qualities and the enchanting world of the story. The children had a wonderful time imagining themselves soaring through the sky on a broomstick. We even took them to the field to make our own broomsticks, "flying" around as we retold the story together!

#### This Week:

This week in English the children created **CVC word potions**! The children made their own magic potions by reading simple CVC words (like "cat," "pot," and "bat") from a special spell book. This activity has been fantastic for building their phonics skills, as they practiced blending sounds into words. They also put their imaginations to work in their writing, creating amazing CVC word potions of their own.

#### In Maths:

In maths, we've been focusing on **dice patterns and numbers**, and the children have enjoyed matching Numberblocks to the corresponding numbers on a dice. We've spent time exploring the number 6, creating a number collection to show all the ways 6 can be represented. This week, the children were introduced to a tens frame, using counters to represent the number 6 in different ways.

**We're so proud of the amazing learning and creativity your children have shown already this term.**

Thank you for your continued support

Reception Team :)

### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

In March, we will have a mobile farm visiting us in school. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £7 per child.

In Term 4, we plan to go on a trip. The location will be confirmed nearer the time but to fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £15.00 per child.

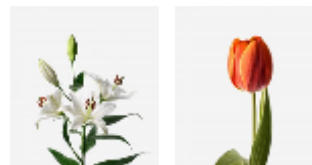


## Reception—Bellflower and Sunflower Classes



## Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes

### **What have we been learning in Year 1?**



Welcome back to Term 2. We are super excited in Year 1 as our topic is Bright Lights and Big City. We have started our week with our new book called 'The Queens Hat'. We found lots of different hats lying around in our playground and did not know whose they were. We are looking forward to reading the story and finding out more.

In Maths we have been learning about tens and ones. We have been putting numbers on a number line that were missing. These were numbers from 20-40! The children were fantastic at then drawing tens and ones to represent these teen numbers and using the correct mathematical vocabulary.

As our topic is Bright Lights and Big City we have started exploring the country we live in, looking at landmarks and the different features around us. We answered a few questions about the landmarks like, who built it? What is its purpose? Has the landmark changed since it had been built? The children really enjoyed exploring Swindon on Google maps and talked about the landmarks and places that are familiar to them.

In Science this term we are exploring materials and their properties. We walked around our school to identify different materials and talked about their properties and what they are made of and what we use them for. We then started to explore human made materials and natural materials.

At the end of last term we had an exciting visit from Amanda from the 'David Sheperd Foundation' where we heard stories and saw footage of tigers in the Wild. We learnt about where tigers live, what they eat and their body parts and what they use them for. We also all made fabulous tiger puppets!

Please remember to check your emails, as we will be continuing to send home 'Little Wandle Phonic Sheets' every week.

Please continue to read with your child at home and write in their reading records. They will get a certificate each time they have read an amount at home and are celebrated in Assembly.

**PE Kits-** Please ensure your child's PE kit is in school and is complete. Please also make sure everything is named.

Thank you for the continued support and we are looking forward to a really fun term and start getting Christ-massy.

Year 1 Team

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### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

In Term 5, we will have a 'Dinosaur Experience' in school. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £13 per child.



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## Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes

### Reading in Year 1

At William Morris, we believe that Reading is the passport to learning and we use the Little Wandle scheme of work to guide how we teach phonics and reading across Reception and Key Stage 1.

In Year 1 each week, the children have at least 5 phonics lessons which focus on learning, practising and remembering phonetic sounds and using these to learn how to read.

We also have separate guided reading lessons every morning. The children are in groups for these lessons and adults rotate who they read with each day. Throughout the week, we endeavour to read with each group 3 times.

These 3 lessons are structured as follows:

Lesson 1: Decoding – Applying phonics to read the words in the book

Lesson 2: Prosody – Reading fluently and with accuracy

Lesson 3: Comprehension – answering questions about the book

Following these sessions, the book will then be sent home so you can enjoy reading it with your child and they can have further practice. It is done this way so that we will have done the hard work, so you don't have to! You will then be able to enjoy reading a book at home that is familiar to your child, and they are confident reading it.

In their reading record, we aim to let you know how many times they have read with an adult each week in guided reading. We aim to change reading books on a Thursday, however this may need to change on occasions so it is important that reading books and reading records are in their book bags every day. We also try to fit in individual reading with children where we can, so having their book in school helps us to do this. We aim to change reading for pleasure books from our school library in a Tuesday wherever possible.

If you have any questions about your child's reading, we are always happy to discuss this with you so do not hesitate to ask.

Mrs Graham, Mr Knight, Miss Bailey and Mrs Low



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Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes



Year 1 - Lily and Tulip Classes



## Year 2 - Clover and Willow Classes

### What have we been learning in Year 2?



We have had a great start to Term 2 in Year 2. We have been doing lots of loud, but exciting, activities to start our topic of 'Beat, Band, Boogie.' Both the children and the adults have had lots of fun and we are looking forward to the rest of the term.

Here is what we have been learning:

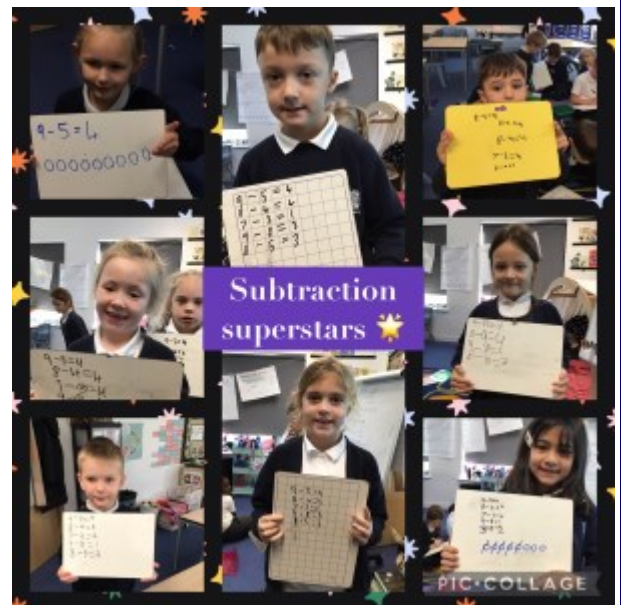
English- We began the term with a rat infestation in our classrooms! This reminded us of the story 'The Pied Piper', which is our model text. We have learnt the story through Talk for Writing and have identified the features which makes our model text so good. This week has been a 'skills week' where we have learnt about; -ly openers, commas in a list, conjunctions and expanded noun phrases. We are going to be using these skills when we write our innovated versions of the story in a couple of weeks!

Maths- We have now finished our topic of addition. The children have demonstrated great progress and showed off their skills in recent assessments. We've now begun exploring Subtraction, where the children will continue to build their number sense and fluency.

RE-We are taking time to reflect on Diwali, learning about its significance and how it's celebrated, alongside exploring its cultural importance. The children have really enjoyed engaging with the story and traditions behind the festival.

Over the last 2 weeks, we've also celebrated Remembrance Day, Odd Sock Day, and Children in Need. The children participated in activities that helped them appreciate these important events and show their support for causes close to our hearts.

Have a lovely weekend, Miss Morgan and Miss Presdee



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### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

In February we will be going to The Living Rainforest. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £17 per child.

In Term 6, we will be going to Weston Super-Mare. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £18 per child.

Year 2 - Clover and Willow Classes

Please can children bring in an empty cereal box or cardboard box of a similar size. We are looking forwards to a wildlife workshop on Tuesday.



Body Drumming



PIC-COLLAGE



Trying a



Variety of methods



PIC-COLLAGE



DIWALI LAMPS



CHILDREN IN NEED!



PIC-COLLAGE

## Year 3 - Honeysuckle and Rose Classes

### **What have we been learning in Year 3?**



It's been a great start to our new term and we've been very busy!

We launched our new topic, Rocks, Relics and Rumbles! It started with a real bang where we set off a model volcano whilst learning about the different parts and components of a volcano.

We have been learning in class assembly about mindfulness and how events make us feel and started our weekly check in activity where we will talk about something in the past 7 days that we're proud of, something we found tricky, something we still need help with and something we are looking forward to.

In maths, we have been learning our 3,4 and 8 multiplication and division facts. Please encourage the children to engage with Times Table Rockstars at home using the 'Garage' game on the solo play menu as this will test them on their 3,4 and 8s.

In writing, we have been planning and writing shape poems about Volcanos and will move next week to explanation texts. We will be learning a model text explaining how plants grow and then writing our own explaining how and why volcanoes erupt.

We've had a very creative week again, making our own volcano models and painting them. We are looking forward to setting them off in the next few weeks. We also designed and made our Christmas cards, so please take a look at the order forms as the school receives a small donation for each pack sold.

Due to some staffing changes and role changes, our PE days have now moved to a Monday and Tuesday but the children are still allowed to keep their PE kits in school all term as before. We have noticed that this has been much better recently resulting in more children being able to participate in Tag Rugby and Gymnastics safely. Thank you for your continued support.

Many thanks,

Year 3 Team



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### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

In January, we will have the 'Explorer Dome' visit in school. To fund this we expect voluntary contributions to be around £6.50 per child.

## Year 3 - Honeysuckle and Rose Classes



PIC•COLLAGE



PIC•COLLAGE

## Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes

### What have we been learning in Year 4?



Welcome back!

We started this term with an excellent treasure hunt, collecting the puzzle pieces to give us a clue as to what our topic for the term is. We loved cracking the riddles to find the puzzle piece and next clue, engaging in fieldwork around the school grounds. We then put the pieces together to find our new geography topic, Misty Mountain Sierra!

During our topic hook days, we also looked at satellite images, photos and videos to discuss the different features and landscapes of mountains around the world. Then, using our knowledge of continents and our map skills, we located different mountains and plotted them on a world map. Furthermore, we learn about how the height of land is represented on a map using shading and keys or contour lines. We enjoyed making our own contour islands, looking at how each contour line represents a height above sea level in metres.

In English, we have been exploring non-chronological reports and identifying features of this text type. We have looked at using formal language as opposed to informal, and how subheadings support the reader to find the information they are looking for. Linking this to our topic, we have researched a chosen mountain and practised note-taking in order to gather information and plan for our own non-chronological reports next week.

Our first maths unit this term is multiplication and division. We have focussed on recapping the 3 and 4 times tables before learning our 6, 9 and 7 times tables and matching division facts. We recognise that division is the inverse operation to multiplication and can use our times tables facts to help us with division calculations.

In honour of Remembrance Day, we studied different texts during guided reading. We thought carefully and discussed why people volunteer to support the Royal British Legion. All of the children were very respectful whilst doing so, as they were during our minutes silence on Monday at 11am. We followed this up by creating some beautiful chalk pastel and silhouette artwork.

This term, our inside P.E. will be on a Monday and is our fitness unit. Our outdoor P.E. unit, Netball, will change to a Friday afternoon. Please make sure your child has their full P.E. kit in school every day. A reminder we will still do our outside P.E. as the weather changes.

We look forward to a very exciting term ahead!

The Year 4 team

## Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes



## Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes



PIC-COLLAGE

### Trip/ Visitor Costs for This Year

Our residential trip is the main trip for Year 4, parents already have the cost information are children are signed up.

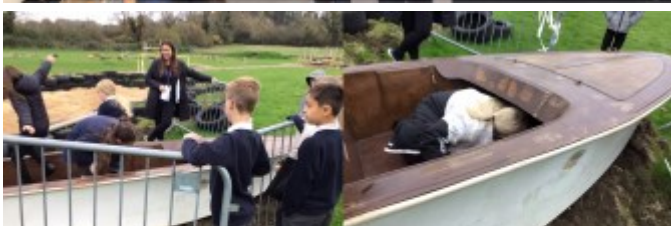
We are hoping to offer another 1 day trip during the summer, estimated £18.



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Year 4 - Apple and Blackberry Classes



## Year 5 - Thistle and Acorn Classes

### What have we been learning in Year 5?



#### Digital Portfolios!

As part of our Gallery Rebels topic this term, Acorn and Thistle class have immersed themselves in the world of art history, researching a range of genres that have each played a role in reshaping the art landscape.

From the bold strokes of abstract expressionism to the eye-catching flair of pop art, they studied how artists from different movements challenged conventions and paved the way for new forms of creative expression. Drawing inspiration from these iconic styles, year 5 have crafted a digital collage that brings together elements from each genre. This digital creation captures the rebellious spirit of artists who dared to break boundaries, celebrating their legacy in a vibrant, modern format!



#### Homework

We have been blown away by the fantastic amount of homework completed and returned to us during term 1! Now we are in term 2, homework is now compulsory for year 5, if homework is not handed in on a Thursday, children will be expected to complete it during homework club at breaktime on the following Friday.

### Year 5 Thistle and Acorn Classes



#### Our Artist Visitor

At the end of week one, we had a special visitor who came in to teach us all about the vibrant and impactful work of Keith Haring. Inspired by Haring's iconic style—characterised by bold lines, vivid colours, and energetic, dancing figures—we worked in groups to create life-size pieces of artwork that allowed us to express ourselves in his unique style. Inspired by his vision, our artworks capture his spirit of inclusivity, activism, and creativity.

#### Trips:

This academic year, we have some exciting trips planned for our class! We'll be hosting a visiting science dome at school, exploring history on a trip to the Ashmolean Museum, and attending an exciting sporting event. These experiences aim to enrich our curriculum and inspire learning beyond the classroom!

Science Dome: £6.30 per child

Ashmolean Museum: £15 per child

Sports event: TBC.

Have a good weekend

Year 5 Team :)

# Neurodiversity Parent 101:

## Why is getting ready for school so stressful?

Do-IT >

### Why are mornings so stressful?

It's a funny thing that time in the morning always seems to go faster than the evening when we are getting kids sorted, packing bags and running in different directions!

- If you are feeling stressed, then often your children will feel this too.
- Your child may be feeling anxious because they are feeling unprepared for the day, or uncertain about what is going to happen and when.
- You find out your child needs something for school as you are walking out the door.



### What can you do to make it better?

- ✓ Start preparing for the next day the night before.
- ✓ Pack school bags and place them by the back door.
- ✓ Lay out clothes for school the night before.
- ✓ Talk to your child about what is happening the evening before and check if there is anything that needs to be prepared.
- ✓ Get breakfast ready (bowls out etc.) so you are not rushing around- even creating a few extra minutes can make a difference to reduce morning stress
- ✓ Have a timetable in your child's room and in kitchen to remind you both of key activities such as sport etc.



## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# FORTNITE



### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Fortnite was launched back in 2017, but it remains massively popular – with more than 650 million active players. That's partially due to the competitive nature of its player-vs-player combat, its pop culture crossovers and its constantly shifting map. Significant updates are rolled out with each new version of the game – known as 'chapters' – and within these sit shorter 'seasons'.

### ALWAYS ONLINE

There's no single-player offline mode in Fortnite: it can only be played online. Internet access can sometimes be an issue when you're out and about (both in terms of connectivity and using up data), so you may find that dedicated young Fortnite players are often less enthusiastic about trips away – such as days out and holidays – than you might expect.

### IN-GAME COSTS

Fortnite is free to download and play, but it does offer various additional purchases – cosmetic 'skins', music tracks and LEGO items – which don't really impact on gameplay but can cost a significant amount. These items are bought with in-game currency, V-Bucks – earned through completing the Battle Pass (which also costs V-Bucks) and can also be purchased from the game's store for real money.

### POP CULTURE REFERENCES

Part of Fortnite's appeal is its ongoing crossovers with other popular franchises, ranging from movies and TV shows like Family Guy and Avatar: The Last Airbender to comic book characters including Batman to other games such as Street Fighter. This means you could have children asking questions about the monster from Alien or Geralt from The Witcher a little sooner than you otherwise might have.

### CROSSPLAY AND PARTY CHAT

Fortnite is popular with many gamers of various ages. 'Crossplay' lets friends play with each other, regardless of whether they're on an Xbox, Playstation, Nintendo Switch or PC – while the 'party chat' feature allows them to talk to each other during the game. This can, however, put youngsters at risk of hearing inappropriate language from older players in the heat of virtual combat.

### VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

At its core, there's no avoiding that Fortnite is about shooting other players to eliminate them from the contest. That said, there's no blood or gore. The violence is rendered in a cartoonish style, and there are frequent comical touches to lighten the mood, such as fishing mini-games and dancing emotes. Machine guns, shotguns and other weapons often look and behave realistically, however, so discretion is advised.

### FREQUENT UPDATES

The game's developers release content in 'seasons' that usually run for around ten weeks. Each fresh update sees items added to the in-game store, changes to the environment's map and a different over-arching theme (such as 'medieval', 'pirates' or 'party'). These regular renewals help to hold players' interest – but also give young gamers plenty of reasons to keep coming back.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### MATCH GAMING TIMES

Younger players tend to play Fortnite with their friends. With that in mind, it could be worth speaking to the parents and carers of a child's social group and coordinating their gaming around certain times of day. Safety in numbers is obviously a factor here, but it will also help children feel that they're getting adequate opportunities to socialise with their friends online.

### SET SPENDING LIMITS

Fortnite's rotating store is a not-so-subtle mechanism for coaxing players into buying sought-after items before they disappear for weeks or months. This could lead to surprise transactions on bank cards if children are tempted into an impulsive purchase. Parents could consider getting a prepaid card for the child or ensuring that purchases require adult authorisation. This can be done through parental settings on a console or account settings in the Epic Games app on PC.

### USE UPDATES AS REWARDS

Fortnite's seasonal updates are free, but each also brings the option of a 'battle pass', unlocking exclusive rewards for playing the game and completing set challenges. The passes cost around £8 and are also available as part of larger bundles. The purchase of passes can be an effective reward to young Fortnite fans for good behaviour or academic performance, or as an incentive for completing chores like tidying their room.

### BE WARY OF SCAMS

The immense popularity of Fortnite with younger audiences – that are generally more trusting – means there's no shortage of scammers looking to fraudulently obtain passwords and other personal data through techniques like phishing. As the developers point out on many of Fortnite's loading screens, they never ask for a player's account password outside of the game, make sure any young player knows this.

### ENJOY FORTNITE TOGETHER

Fortnite also offers split-screen gameplay, meaning that two people can play simultaneously on the same console or computer. This can be a good option for siblings or for when a child's friends visit, but it also offers an opportunity for parents and carers to do something fun with their child, while also making sure they're playing the game safely. Who knows? You might even teach them a thing or two!

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A long-time gamer, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and Techradar.



The National College

## LIGHTHOUSE DROP IN

Lighthouse is the Early Intervention Team working within all Blue Kite Academy Trust schools. Lighthouse holds drop-in sessions at our school once a month - you will meet one of the team to have a short, informal, 1-1 chat about anything causing worry or stress in your home. This could be around behaviour, sleep, struggling to manage emotions/anxiety or concerns around finance, cost of living or similar. Drop in sessions give you the chance to get some advice from the experienced team. They can support you to take those next steps or signpost you to services who can also help. Lighthouse are a friendly team with lots of knowledge to share so please book in to see them if you feel they could help.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any further questions. Book in via the school office. You can also follow us on Instagram @Lighthouse\_bluekitetrust

