

BULLETIN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May, 2022



Nurturing inclusive learning communities

Summer Term!

Welcome to the summer term! We are looking forward to spending even more time outdoors as the weather improves and cannot wait to invite parents and carers in to school for this terms' events and theme days. We will be holding a coffee afternoon in each class where you will be able to discuss progress with the class teachers and look at the work that pupils have been completing.



Here are a few of the exciting things that we took part in last term...

World Book Day where we dressed as our favourite book characters and focused on reading together.

Programme and Build Day where we built robots and used our coding skills to make them move.

Chinese New Year theme day where we enjoyed tasting food and learning about the celebration.

We are delighted to announce that we have achieved the gold SMSC Quality Mark from Young Citizens in recognition of our hard work in embedding shared values, nurturing provision and compassionate relationships.



Dolphins Class

Coming up this half term....

This half term we are learning all about animals! We will learn how to sort and classify animals based on what they eat and what their characteristics. In our outdoor area we will have a vets and even a wild zoo! In DT, we will explore puppets before making our own!



Wonderful Writing

Dolphins have been working hard on their writing skills. We're building up our confidence in writing for different purposes such as menus, invitations and fact files. We're focusing on correct letter formation and improving our spelling this half term too!



Nurture

As part of our provision, we have weekly nurture sessions. These sessions are about enjoying hands on experiences together and building up relationships with our peers and adults. We love the pamper sessions and the playdough making sessions!



Penguins Class

Coming up this half term...

Our topic this half term is Living Things. We will be exploring the forest area and learning about plants before dissecting a plant to look at all the parts and laying them out to display. In art, we are looking at sculptures, where we are researching different artists and designing and creating our own sculptures. Our English is focusing on the story of The Great Kapok Tree and fables which the pupils are going to write their own of. Finally in mathematics, the pupils are learning about decimals (let's see how much they know about money already!). We will have lots of baking and cooking with a healthy theme this term making things like salads and smoothies, there will be a continuation of boxing at the Training Cave and more fun in PE and the forest school.



Learning in class-

In Penguins we have learnt a lot about the various countries in Europe. With this, we trialled different European foods, (cured meats being a favourite) and learnt a little bit about the language and culture of France, Greece, Spain, Italy and Germany. Did you know Italy is home to the only 3 active volcanos in Europe and has over 1500 lakes. The pupils really enjoyed this topic.

Within English, the novel How to Train Your Dragon by Cressida Cowell inspired many pieces of writing which included writing a letter, expressing thoughts and feelings as a character and writing from the point of view of a different character. Please ask to look in the children's books when you come to visit.

The children are always excited to get out of class in the afternoon and PE by Mr Davis is very popular learning different skills as well as adventuring in the forest area with Mr Henry in the forest school. The children are also trialling boxing at the Training Cave.

Whales Class



This term in Whales, we have focused on nurture with pupils having lots of time to enjoy one-on-one or small group interaction with their key worker. This has helped develop relationships between staff and pupils which means we can better support their needs. We have also been working in pairs and small groups to support each other and create a positive environment.

Pupils and staff enjoyed taking part in the Eid celebrations by tasting South Asian food and making a diverse range of food within their cooking lessons encouraging pupils to learn about diversity within other cultures and ethnicities in a constructive way.

This half term..

In science, we have been learning about living things. The children have developed a strong interest in the subject of plants and can now name and identify the different parts. We have also enjoyed taking part in different experiments linked to plants.

Alongside this, children have been learning about rainforests and creating art projects linked to trees and plants.



We are really pleased to say that Whales have been trying hard to work more independently and as you can see from the photo they are all really engaged in their learning.

Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Both pupils and adults have continued to develop their physical and mental health through the spring term and into the summer term. The pupils across school are accessing up to 3 opportunities a day to part-take in physical activity during play time and golden time sessions. Staff facilitate structured games including many tag variations, handball, dodgeball, football, touch rugby and many more. Providing maximum opportunities has allowed the children to develop their physical literacy and their personal skills linked with team work and communication. Alongside the play time games pupils completed a 6 week scheme of work on dodgeball during the last half term. Pupils focused on their sending, receiving and dodging and all pupils across the school showed progress towards their own PE targets.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

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WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert: potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

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Advice for Parents & Carers

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CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat. Instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

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.



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