

# St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

## Newsletter

31.03.23

### A note on worship...

#### Justice



The most important commandment is this:

'The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'

The Second most important commandment is this:

'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'

Mark 12:29-31

Jesus spent his life on earth helping and healing those in need. He taught people about God and how much God cared for them. Jesus welcomed those that no one else liked. Jesus treated those he met fairly and justly. Yet despite this, he was not liked. Eventually Jesus was arrested and crucified. On Good Friday, Christians remember that Jesus was not treated justly, he was not a criminal, but God's son.

Three days later, Christians celebrate the greatest miracle of all – Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his friends to show them that what God had said was true.



## Stars of the Week



**Heidi D., Eira, Lola-Rose, Austin, Faith**

Well done to you all!

## Events for the Week

Beginning 17.4.23

### Monday

Ukulele lessons and Choir after school

### Tuesday

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school multi skills for Y1, 2 and 3 (4.00pm finish)

### Wednesday

Guitar lessons

**No Swimming** for Emerald class

Athletics Club for Y4 & 5 (4.15pm finish)

### Thursday

### Friday

## From the office...

- Please ensure that school dinners are ordered by midnight on Sunday for the following week
- School dinners **increase to £2.60** per meal.
- Check Wisepay for upcoming **school trips** – Amethyst, Emerald and Sapphire classes.
- There is still some outstanding music fees for this term. Please pay as soon as possible. Thank you

Dragonfly: Impact Education

# Thrive 365 #1

## Did you know?

Harvard Medical school research refers to the 90 second emotional rule. This is how long a 'dose' of cortisol lasts. Our stress response and the initial release of the hormone is automatic, we have no control, but after this it becomes a CHOICE – something we can control. Our THOUGHTS determine whether or not we continue to release these hormones. The body always reacts first, but messages from the mind determine whether this response is maintained or not.

## What can you try?

### 1. A 90 second hug (set your timer!).

This releases oxytocin, which works to help reverse the effect of the stress hormones.

### 2. Count backwards from at least ten.

Counting forwards is pretty automatic for most of us but counting backwards means we have to interrupt whatever else our brain is doing at the time.

### 3. Give to others – especially in person so you see their face and make eye contact.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

Mahatma Gandhi

Scientists believe that altruistic behaviour releases endorphins in the brain – the 'helper's high'.

# Internet safety

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

## Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10-15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

#### PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

#### BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as an social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

#### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

#### DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem: it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

#### ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

#### LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

#### TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

#### PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same: you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

#### LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

#### KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

#### BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.



**NOS**  
National  
Online  
Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/the-big-ask-big-answers/>  
<https://www.nos.gov.uk/people/population-and-community/crime-and-justice/bulletins/childrens-online-behaviour-in-england-and-wales-years-ending-march-2020>



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety



@national\_online\_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 29.03.2023

## Weekly class round up!

### Amethyst Class

It's been an assessment week in Amethyst class this week. However, the children have still found time to learn about the story of Easter, recapping tricky words in phonics and capacity in year 1 maths. As part of Autism acceptance week, the children have made rainbow pictures.

### Ruby Class

Ruby class went on a science walk to look at plants in the local environment. They also had an assessment week. As part of Autism Acceptance week, they shared the book 'Red: a Crayons Story' and made rainbows with adjectives to describe their unique selves. In R.E. they learned about the story of Holy Week and Easter.

### Opal Class

Opal class are getting stuck into 'Stig of the Dump' in English, writing character descriptions. In maths they have continued with shape and length work. The Easter story was the focus in R.E. In geography they learned all about different types of mountains and how they are formed. For Autism Acceptance week the children in Opal class wrote colour poems, painted rocks and made paperchains.

### Emerald Class

Assessments have been the main focus for children in Emerald class, however they still found time to go swimming on Wednesday, join in with some Autism acceptance week through taking part in quizzes that are designed to be confusing and producing poems. Their most exciting day of the week was Friday when the children from Marland Hill visited as part of the linking schools project. The children took part in creative activities both in school and in the church.

### Sapphire Class

The children in Sapphire class have written non chronological reports about autism as part of our Autism Acceptance week in English. In maths they have covered nets of shapes, word problems and circles. They have also found the time to make Easter cards and gifts for their families.

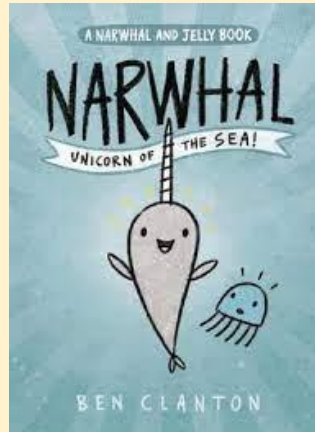
There are lots of photographs on our school Facebook page showing what the children get up to in school.

## Book Recommendations

Each week we are going to be recommending 2 high quality children's books to help you when trying to choose books for your child.

### Key Stage 1

#### 'Narwhal, Unicorn of the Sea' by Ben Clanton



This is the first in a series of books that feature a Narwhal and a Jellyfish as its main characters. This is particularly good for reluctant readers who want to experience 'real books'.

### Key Stage 2

#### 'Ancient Warriors' by Iris Volant



This is a captivating non-fiction graphic novel that charts a chronology of fighters, crusaders and soldiers through the ages.

### Lunchtime Supervisor

We are looking to recruit a lunchtime organiser to work Monday to Fridays 11.30am- 1.30pm.

If you are interested, further details and an application form can be found here-

<https://www.greater.jobs/search-and-apply/job-details/RO-76602/>

### Parent's Association



**A bingo night** is planned for **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April** and there is going to be big twist to the **summer fair** which is planned for **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July!**

Recently the funds raised by the Parent's Association have paid for coaches for school trips, paid for the outdoor lighting and for the new blinds in the school hall and in Sapphire class. The support of the parent's association is invaluable to school and the money raised benefits all of our children now and in the years to come.

