

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

Newsletter

03.11.23

A note on worship...

Compassion



When Jesus saw the crowd his heart was filled with compassion, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things?

Mark 6:34

This half term we are focussing on compassion, putting the needs of other before ourselves.

We celebrated All Saints Day on Wednesday by exploring what a saint was and how saints are depicted in art. We then spent some time comparing saints with a particular focus on St. Francis of Assisi who wrote the hymn that we have song this week – 'Make me a Channel of Your Peace'.



Stars of the Week



**Jax, Freddie N., Charlotte, Scarlett F., Hugo H., Anastasia,
Darcy, Penelope and Chester**

Events for the Week

Beginning

6.11.23

British Parliament Week

Monday

Ukulele lessons

Brass Lessons

Whole class Ukulele lessons for Emerald class

After school Rugby for years 3, 4, 5 and 6

Parents' Evening at 3.30pm

Tuesday

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school football for years 4, 5 and 6

Parents' Evening at 6.00pm

Wednesday

Guitar lessons

After school multi-skills for years 1 and 2

Year 3 and 4 athletics event

Thursday

After school netball/basketball for years 3, 4, 5 and 6

Friday

Remembrance Service in church at 10.30am

From the office...

- Please ensure that **school dinners** are ordered by midnight on **Sunday** for the following week. If you are asked for an organisation code, please use **78487851**
- **Wisepay** details have been sent out to all parents. If Wisepay doesn't work for you, please contact the school office.
- Children taking part in **after school sports** need to bring a **PE kit to school** to change into if it is not their usual PE day.

Ten Pin Bowling



Well done to **Bodie, Woden, Taron, Willow and Effie** who did an excellent job at representing our school at a ten pin bowling competition on Monday

The team did an amazing job and finished in third place behind St. Vincent's and St. Andrew's. Altogether there were 11 schools taking part. A special mention needs to go to **Taron**, who narrowly missed out on joining the 100 club as he finished on a score of 99!

Up coming events

Wednesday 22nd November – Emerald class visiting M6 Theatre

Tuesday 28th Novemeber – RNLI to visit school

Friday 1st Decemeber – Carols and Cake P.T.A. event after school

Wednesday 6th December – Year 5 Recycling project

Thursday 7th December – Dress Rehearsal

Friday 8th December – Hamper donation day and Whole school trip to the Pantomime at Middleton Arena

Monday 11th December – Cyber safety with Lofi (Year 5 and 6)

Tuesday 12th December – Christams Concerts

Wednesday 13th December – Christmas Concerts

Friday 15th December – Share our work afternoon

Monday 18th December – Emerald Class Ukulele Concert at 10.50am

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 apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe - with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends - but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score), Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse - so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations - creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely - but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

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

CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.

CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up - and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which became popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.

KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life - especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.

BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

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

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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Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/0255858356832-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work> | <https://www.snap.com/en-GB/privacy/permissions-for-teens-and-how-safety-enforcements-https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/0255858356832-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/0255858356832-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/0255858356832-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work>

Managing Stress

Stress is an uncomfortable experience of pressure or worry caused by problems in your life. Stress can cause many different symptoms and may affect how we feel physically, mentally, how we behave and make choices. It is not always easy to recognise when stress is the reason you are feeling or acting differently.

This guide will give you some top tips so that you can take action to reduce the symptoms of stress in your life.



1. WARNING SIGNS, PART 1

Warning signs of stress include emotional symptoms such as anxiety, fear or loss of confidence and cognitive symptoms such as poor concentration, poor memory or repetitive thoughts.



2. WARNING SIGNS, PART 2

Warning signs also include physical symptoms such as excessive sweating, racing heart rate, headaches and muscle tension. Behavioural symptoms might include, poor sleep, irritability, drinking excessive amounts of coffee or alcohol or losing your temper.



3. UNDERSTAND YOUR TRIGGERS

Take time to reflect on situations which may be causing stress. Once you know what they are, you can begin to reduce your exposure to the stressors and/or manage the causes.



10. PRIORITISE WELLBEING

As a way of preventing stress, you should prioritise your wellbeing and be consistent about it. A one-off activity will have some impact, but it won't help you manage stress or maintain wellbeing in the long term.

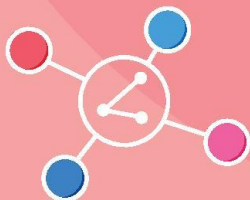
9. MANAGE YOUR TIME

Prioritising tasks, including emails and wellbeing activities, will be a crucial first step to change and taking control. Get someone to help you to keep on track with the change.



8. CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Amend your thinking and expectations of what is possible or doable. Reduce the pressure on yourself by reframing the problem or accepting that not everything will be finished or perfect. Most of the time, good enough is ok.



7. USE YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

Plan opportunities for fun and enjoyment with people you care about and who care about you. This could be sharing a new experience or an activity you enjoy doing together. Share and talk about your feelings too, sometimes that is all that is needed to cope.

5. MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES

Plan regular, healthy activities which will reduce stress symptoms. These will be a non-negotiable part of your week and a regular antidote to stress.

6. INDUCE CALM

Activities known to help induce calm range from deep breathing, meditation and mindfulness to walking, outdoor exercise or gardening.



4. TAKE CONTROL

Often stress symptoms are caused by feeling out of control. Not doing anything about the stress triggers or symptoms will make things worse, so start by understanding what you can and what you can't control.

The National College

This guide is part of **The National College staffroom poster series**
A collection of information posters for your school staffroom.



Meet the Expert: Anna Bateman
Anna Bateman, subject matter expert on mental health & wellbeing and school improvement adviser

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Weekly Round up

It has been a very busy week as everyone settles into their first week of following our curriculum. All of our curriculum plans can be found on our website. By looking at the plans, you will have a good understanding of what we teach and why we teach it.

Help with phonics and more information can be found at

<https://www.songofsounds.co.uk/page/?title=Learning+at+Home&pid=8>

Photographs of our work can be found on our Facebook page.

Amethyst Class

Amethyst class and the year 1 children in Ruby class had a great time at Chester Zoo on Wednesday.

In phonics the reception children have moved onto ck, e, u and r, whilst the **year 1 children in both classes** have been working on oo, ew, and u_e.

For maths this week, the **year 1 children** have ventured into the realm of subtraction, whilst all of the children in amethyst class have read 'Surprising Sharks in English and written labels. They have also been busy learning the songs for the Christmas Concerts alongside Ruby class.

Ruby Class

The **year two children** have been adding and subtracting across the 10s boundary in their maths lessons. In English they are writing postcards from Manchester, which ties in with work across the curriculum. They have spent some time learning about bonfire safety in time for bonfire night, learning the Christmas concert songs and in PSHE they have been valuing difference – what makes us who we are.

Opal Class

The children began a new theme in RE this week. They have moved onto learning about David and the Psalms. They began this week by looking at the qualities God is looking for in the people he calls to do his work.

In English the children have finished Traction Man and moved onto Diary of a Killer Cat, putting together a timeline of events. In maths the **year 3 children** have been using column addition to add 2 and 3 digit numbers together. In history they have continued to explore the Stone Age, looking at daily life and food. Whilst in music they have ventured onto using the glockenspiels.

Emerald Class

Emerald class children have been busy writing journal entries as part of their work in English. The **year 4 children** have focused on word problems in maths, whilst the **year 5 children** have moved onto multiples and factors. The children have continued their work on electricity – this week looking at electrical safety. Their history work is still based on the Romans and this week they focused on Hadrian's Wall.

Sapphire Class

The **year 6 children** have been working on percentages and equivalent fractions. In English, they have begun working on poems in addition to simple tenses and the past progressive tense. The children have begun studying the solar system in science and dance in P.E.

Mrs Robinson's Art and DT lessons

Ruby class have started a design technology unit on wheels and axels. Opal class are looking at family life in art. Emerald class are beginning a unit of work on the Art Deco period and Sapphire class are looking at gears and pulleys.

Share My Work Afternoons

On the last afternoon of each half term (or the previous day, if we are in church), we will be hosting a 'share my work' afternoon. Parents will be invited to come into school from 2.00pm to sit with their child and share with their child the work that has been completed that half term.

The plan is to make this a 'drop-in' style event and parents can come in at any time between 2.00pm and 2.45pm and then join us for our final assembly of the term at 2.50pm if they wish to. This will give those who have children in different classes the opportunity to visit them all.

Parent's Evening

Due to the lettings that now take place in school of an evening we are unable to offer a child care facility in the hall, whilst you attend parent's evenings.

As we now offer 'Share Our Work' afternoons, and the limited space we have, we will be changing what we do at parent's evening.

Parents of children in Amethyst and Ruby classes will need to use the door straight into the KS1 corridor and wait in the corridor. Miss Wardle and Mrs Stewardson will meet with you in their classrooms.

Parents of children in Opal, Emerald and Sapphire classes will use the main front door and go straight to their child's classroom. Miss Hobbs will meet with parents in the library, Mr Northcott will meet with parents in the Head's office and Miss Lockley will meet with parents in the staffroom.

Appointments are limited to 10 minutes each.

Mrs Williams will be available on Tuesday night to speak to parents in admin office.

P.E. Days

Amethyst – Tuesday and Thursday

Ruby – Tuesday and Wednesday

Opal - Tuesday and Thursday

Emerald – Monday and Wednesday

Sapphire – Monday and Friday

All children wear their PE kit for school on PE days.