

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

Newsletter

26.04.24

A note on worship...

Respect



'The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it'

Genesis 2:15

At the beginning of the week we celebrated Earth Day by watching a video about our beautiful planet and talking about the small things that we can do to look after it.

This week was also St George's day. Reverend Janet came in to lead our worship and she brought a red dragon with her!

On Wednesday we learned about the Jewish festival of Passover which is being celebrated at the moment and we share the story of the Exodus from Egypt, led by Moses.



Stars of the Week



**Joey-Cole, Rex, Hugo H., Alex, Eden, Pippa, Isla, Keegan,
Matilda, Theo A. and Faith.**

Well done to you all!

Events for the Week

Beginning

29.04.24

Monday

Guitar Lessons

Ukulele lessons

After school Multi Games for years 3, 4, 5 and 6

After School Choir

After school Golf for selected year 5 children
(rearranged from last week)

Tuesday

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school rounders for years 4, 5 and 6

Wednesday

Brass Lessons

Swimming lessons

After school multi-skills for years 1 and 2

After school cricket for years 5 & 6

Thursday

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

Friday

Sapphire class whole class brass lessons

From the office...

- Please order schools dinners by midnight on Sunday.

Academy Conversion Meeting

This meeting did not take place as intended. Mrs Bramwell, the CEO, had a last-minute situation that didn't allow her to take part.

This has now been rescheduled to Thursday 9th May at 6.30pm. Karen Bramwell will be attending in person and not be on video call. All are welcome – please let the office know in advance if you are attending. Thank you.

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 for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence – particularly in terms of how it generates natural language – has seen significant development over the last six months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat, for example). One form of AI to become especially popular has been the 'AI friend' or chatbot, as children eagerly experiment with these new-found computer-generated companions. There are now numerous apps available with this 'virtual friend' functionality, with the likelihood of it being added to other successful platforms soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always be able to recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. So there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could very likely hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour (as many originate from the USA or the UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview). This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, creativity and ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts are warning that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties, for instance).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If your child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with your child and perhaps do your own research to ensure you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit with your young one and begin exploring AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If your child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space at home, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside your child to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children are still getting plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps your child can download and use. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to your child. In particular, emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something that isn't entirely impartial or accurate.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



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#WakeUpWednesday

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Wellbeing

7 STEPS TO MOTIVATE YOUR CHILD

- 1 # HELP YOUR CHILD DISCOVER THEIR PASSIONS**
Invite your child to create a dream board where they can post images and text that remind them of what they want.
- 2 # HELP THEM SET GOALS**
Help them connect the dots between their vision of the future (their dream board) and the goals that will get them there.
- 3 # ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENT THINKING**
Let them choose their dreams and goals without intervening. Let them decide on how they're going to reach their goals.
- 4 # COLLABORATE**
Join your child in the creation of a dream board or goal ladders. You can also invite their siblings and/or friends to join.
- 5 # DO NOT HOVER**
Instead of micromanaging, let them work independently, and be available for help and feedback when they ask for it.
- 6 # MAKE THEM THE TEACHERS**
Encourage them to teach a younger sibling or a friend how to make a dream board or a goal ladder.
- 7 # HOLD THE REWARDS, INSTEAD REFLECT BACK**
When they reach a goal instead of giving a reward, encourage them to reflect on how the accomplishment of a that goal has helped them grow as a person.



Our School's Got Talent

The Semi-finalists will be announced on Monday during our Worship.

We had a variety of acts this year from children in all year groups. It takes a lot of courage for the children to audition and the vast majority who signed up for auditions, did so.

A huge well done to all those that took part.

Dates for the Diary...

Monday 6th May – School closed for Bank Holiday

Thursday 9th May – Water Polo session for year 4 and 5 children (limited)

Thursday 9th May – Music festival for the school choir

Thursday 9th May – Cricket at Old Trafford cricket (limited children)

Thursday 9th May – Academy Conversion meeting at 6.30pm

Monday 13th – Thursday 16th May – Year 6 SATs week

Friday 17th May – Our School's Got Talent semi-final (in school)

Friday 17th May – Bingo Night

Monday 20th May – Sapphire class visit to the Imperial War Museum North

Tuesday 21st May- Friday 24th May – Bikeability for year 6 children

Tuesday 22nd May – Rounders tournament for year 5/6 children (after school)

Thursday 23rd May – Ruby class to the music festival