

# St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School

## Newsletter

17.05.24

A note on worship...

Respect



**A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another**

**John 13:34**

This week in worship, we listened to a 'Barney and Bella' story. They helped us to understand that we can have friends who are different to us and we should respect the fact that we are all different – we all look different, have different needs and have different likes and dislikes.



# Stars of the Week



**George, Zack T, Rex, Marnie, Keegan, Neave, Renaiya, Toby, Eden, Taron, Lola, Darcy, Theo and all of the Year 6's**

**Well done to you all!**

## Events for the Week

### Beginning

20.5.24

#### Monday

Sapphire class trip to IWM North

Girls Swimming Finals

#### Tuesday

Bikeability for year 6 children

Ruby Class to music festival

Keyboard, strings and woodwind lessons

After school rounders for years 4, 5 and 6

#### Wednesday

Bikeability for year 6 children

Brass Lessons

After school multi-skills for years 1 and 2

After school cricket for years 5 & 6

#### Thursday

Bikeability for year 6 children

Choir to the music festival

Cake sale for Mediquip4kids

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

#### Friday

Bikeability for year 6 children

Team Point Reward morning

Sapphire class whole class brass lessons

Share our Work Afternoon

School closes for half term

## From the office...

- Please order schools dinners by midnight on Sunday.

# Keeping Children Safe Online

There have been some issues in school this week involving Snapchat – please ensure that your children are safe online.

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](http://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 'beautify' 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 the case. 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 become 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.

**NOS National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/32057803682-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-to-use-it> | <https://www.snaps.com/en-Gb/health-safety-learnings-for-teens-and-how-safety-enforcements>  
<https://nons.com/2022/04/snapchat-ive-located-sharing-challenge/> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/32004766544>

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## Well-being tips for parents with teenagers at home during the Covid-19 outbreak



**DON'T PUT TOO MUCH PRESSURE ON YOURSELF -** You don't have to take on the teacher's role and enforce a rigid timetable. Encourage some structure and agree on this. You are there to help and support them with the work set by their teachers.



**TRY NOT TO WORRY -** about things you cannot control or change. Rather, focus on what you CAN do. Look to the future and set some goals together.



**DON'T BE TOO HARD ON THEM -** It is normal for your teenagers to feel upset, angry and unmotivated at this time. Try to be understanding of this encourage them to focus on the positives.



**GIVE THEM A PURPOSE -** Use this time to learn to live together as adults and prepare your teenager for the next stage of their life. Teach them a recipe and challenge them to cook for the family. Encourage them to get creative and stay active.



**BE HONEST & HAVE FUN -** You don't have all the answers. Face things together as a family. Stay up-to-date with what is happening but don't let it take over your thoughts. Make time for family fun!

### Our School's Got Talent



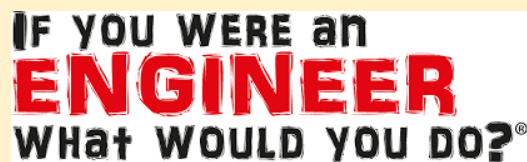
The semi-finals were held on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May. The children did a fabulous job of keeping the school entertained. The whole school watched and voted for their finalists.

I am pleased to announce that the finalists are:

**Isabella, Renaiya and Elsie, Erin, Gosia and Josephine, Theo, and Chester.**

**Well done!**

### Primary Engineer Competition



In March all of put children sent off their entries for the primary engineer competition.

I am pleased to announce that **Grayson** has been awarded 'highly commended' and has been invited to an awards ceremony at Manchester University in July. Whilst his sister, **Lillie** has received a special letter of commendation from one of the judges.

This is a huge achievement for both pupils. We are all very proud of what they have achieved.

### **Dates for the Diary...**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May – Sapphire class visit to the Imperial War Museum North

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May – Bikeability for year 6 children

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May – Ruby class to the music festival

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May – Share Our Work afternoon from 2.00pm

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May – school closes for half term holiday

### **Year 6 Bikeability**

Please ensure that you have consented for your child to take part by clicking on the link that you have been sent. If consent has not been given, your child will be refused a place. Please also ensure that your child's bike is in a road worthy condition and a suitable size.

