

Meadowhead Community Junior School Newsletter



Spring Term: Newsletter 8

World Book Day and Stay and Read Event

On Thursday, the whole school celebrated World Book Day in school! We dressed as our favourite book characters, held joint reading sessions with the children from the infants and had a picnic lunch to link in with our theme of 'Journeys'. We also had the Blackburn with Darwen Libraries mascot, 'Wordsworth' visit us in school! Wordsworth is an enormous dog who loves to read and he had a wonderful time in school high-fiving the children and having his photograph taken!

Our theme for this World Book Day was 'Journeys' and the children spent time on World Book Day documenting their journey through reading that day. They thought, not just about what books they were reading or had read, but also about other things they might read such as cereal packets, cooking instructions or street signs. The children then created their own 'reading rivers' which showed their journeys through reading that day.

After school, we held our termly Stay and Read session. Ms Blackledge led a journey-themed storytime and school put on a free picnic tea for all who attended. All-in-all, the children (and staff!) had a wonderful World Book Day and I would like to thank parents and carers for all their support.

Nurture Group Farm Visit

On Thursday, the children from our nurture group visited Smithall's Farm in Bolton. They met cows, llamas and baby alpacas and had a wonderful time! Mrs Grogan, Mrs Rawlings and Mr Whalley report that the children's behaviour was impeccable and that they were a real credit to the parents and the school! Many thanks to Mrs Grogan for organising such a lovely visit.

Parents' Evening

Parents and carers will shortly be receiving a message to allow them to book a parents' evening appointment via the Weduc app. I would like to take this opportunity to explain that parents' evening was originally planned for the 20th March, however, as this clashes with the Year 5 trip to France, we have decided to put it back a week. Parents' evening will therefore now take place on Wednesday, 27th March which is the day before school closes for the Easter holidays.

Please could I ask all parents and carers to check the app for messages and to book their appointments as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. Many thanks.

School Dinners

Please can we remind all parents and carers that school dinners must be booked online, via the Weduc app whether parents pay for lunches or receive free school meals. As we are no longer in receipt of the Schools Food Grant, any parents not entitled to free school meals will need to pay for their child's lunches using the Weduc app. Many thanks for your continued support.

Ms R Blackledge (Acting Headteacher)

Class Attendance for this week

Congratulations this week to class 6L!

Green: 97%+

Amber: 95 – 97%

Red: Below 95%

3M	3FP	4B	4CW	5A	5C	6L	6LV
93.5%	95.1%	86.7%	90.8%	94.1%	96.6%	99.3%	92.6%

Our whole school, class and individual attendance target is 95%



Monday, 18th March – Year 5 trip to France

Friday, 22nd March Year 5 children return from France

Wednesday, 27th March – Parents' Evening

Thursday, 28th March – break up for the Easter holidays

Monday, 15th April – school reopens for the Summer Term

Welcome to your weekly bitesize information sheet on online safety – this week's theme is Whatsapp!

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+
in UK and Europe;
rest of the world 13+



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original ... and might not be entirely factual, either.

ONLINE

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.



THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval; you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except ...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.



CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.





School Council Toy and Book Sale



Tuesday 12th March

**All money raised will be spent
on new games for wet
playtimes.**

**Please bring in
donations to school
for us to sell and
hand to your school
councillor.**

