



Newsletter

No. 8. 17th June 2022

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In Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we learn about God and try to follow his footsteps by showing care and respect for one another.

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are enjoying the seasonal weather. Please can you ensure that the children are sent to school with plenty of fluids and that suncream is applied before they come to school.

I would like to put on record how proud I am of our Year 6 children, who went on their residential trip last week. Their behaviour was excellent and many of them faced their fears and undertook lots of adventurous activities. A massive thank you to Miss Newcombe and all the other staff who helped out during the week.

I am delighted to announce that we have employed two new teachers for September 2022. Miss Sobey and Mrs Fryers will be a wonderful addition to the school. Details of class arrangements for the next academic year will be sent out with the reports on Friday 15th July.

A reminder that it is the parent's and carer's responsibility to ring the school to let us know if your child is going to be absent. This needs to be done before 9.30am and for every day of the absence.

If you plan for another person to pick your child up from school, or after-school club, then you must alert the office during school hours. We will not hand over children at the end of the day unless we have had verbal confirmation to any changes in arrangements.

Outlined in this newsletter are the other key dates for the rest of the term. It will be great to see the return of the Y6 production and Sports Day.

I look forward to seeing you at these events.

Have an enjoyable weekend.

Mr Meech
Executive Headteacher

Some dates for your diary:

- Friday 1st July—Devon County Show
- Thursday 14th July—Y5 Trip to Lundy
- Friday 15th July—Reports out to parents
- Thursday 21st July—1.30pm—Y6 production to school.
- Thursday 21st July at 6.15pm—Y6 Production to parents and carers.
- Monday 25th July - 10am—Sports Day at Pilton Community College.
- Tuesday 26th July - 10am—Leaver's Mass at St Mary's Church (last day of the school year).

School Uniform for September

We will shortly have lots of stock of school uniform. Please could you order this on the Scopay system. We will be selling Jumpers, PE Hoodies, PE T-Shirts, Ties, School Backpacks and Barn A Bs Sweatshirts for our pre-school children.

Jumpers are £14.50 or £15.50 depended on size, PE T-Shirts are £7, PE Hoodies and Backpacks are £15, Barn A Bs sweatshirts are £10 and Ties are £4.

We do have a number of 2nd hand uniform items in our Thrift Shop, please speak to Mrs Silverlock in the school office about any uniform queries.

Olympic Legacy 2022

Last Thursday, 20 children represented Our Lady's at the Olympic Legacy Relay event at Park School. Everyone showed fantastic commitment, team spirit and resilience.

We were very pleased to be placed fifth out of thirteen schools from across Barnstaple and luckily, the rain held off until we'd finished running. Well done to everyone who took part. We are very proud of you.

Mrs Chavasse



I am delighted to inform you about a new service we're using to support your child's addition and subtraction skills, called NumBots, from the company who provides Times Tables Rock Stars.

Big Difference

NumBots is an online game and playing little and often will significantly improve your child's recall and understanding of number bonds and addition and subtraction facts. These are critical foundations in maths so we are excited by the impact NumBots will have.

Logging In

The children have been shown how to login and have a copy of their username label to take home. They might need some help navigating to the website and entering the details but once they're in, they just need some quiet space to get on with the games.

Important: please don't allow siblings, friends or family to answer for them but do support your child if they're stuck.

Little and often

In order to get the best out of NumBots children should regularly play for short bursts so we would ask you to give them 3 minutes, four five times a week.

Game Types

Story Mode – the emphasis is on learning the ideas and concepts behind addition and subtraction so it features more diagrams, shapes and question styles.

Challenge Mode – the emphasis is more on speed of recall of key facts, like number bonds to 10, doubling small numbers or adding & taking away in your head.

Please let your child's teacher know if you have any questions or comments.

Miss Wilby



Barn-a-b's at Our Lady's

Please could you put sunscreen on your child first thing, we will top up with our own Nivea brand throughout the day.

Please ring us if someone else is collecting your child. It will cause a delay in releasing your child if we haven't been informed, as we need to check for security. We finish at 3, please be on time.

We are learning about the sea, holidays and days out. We love seeing pictures on tapestry and the children like looking at their tapestry journal with us.

Summer Reading Challenge 2022

GADGETEERS

Presented by The Reading Agency.
Delivered in partnership with libraries.



summerreadingchallenge.org.uk



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about VIRTUAL REALITY

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Virtual reality (VR for short) has existed for decades, but it's only in the last 10 years that the technology has really become publicly available. With VR's rapid rise as a gaming and educational medium, there are plenty of unknowns regarding its use – for adults and children alike. Is it safe? How long should someone use VR for? How expensive is it? What's clear is that VR is becoming ever more ubiquitous in everyday life: from companies using it for training to at-home fitness. Knowing what the technology is capable of is more useful than ever.

PREMATURE EXPOSURE

13+

While VR has already found its way into schools worldwide – allowing teachers to take their class on digital field trips – most manufacturers advise an age restriction of 13. This safeguard is based on the idea that children's brains, eyes and bodies are still developing. With the technology still in its infancy, not enough research has been conducted as to how VR affects children in the longer term.

EYE STRAIN

One of the main worries about VR is that essentially having TV screens so close to your eyes could harm them with prolonged use. Lenses inside each headset have been specifically designed to trick the human eye into focusing to infinity (just as they would in the real world) to mitigate possible eye strain. Even so, longer VR sessions should be limited to adults only.

PHYSICAL ACCIDENTS

When used correctly, VR isn't dangerous as there are safety features built in. A common concern is that a child wearing a headset could bump into real-world objects while playing – so creating a clear, tidy gaming space is essential. Headsets also come with 'Guardian' or digital barrier systems that can be set up beforehand, indicating where walls and furniture are located so nobody trips over and hurts themselves.

SOCIAL VR

VR is more immersive than normal gaming and makes players feel very present in the moment. There are additional online safety fears, therefore, relating to trolling and abusive comments as players engage with each other in social VR spaces. Personal information shouldn't be given out and privacy and safety controls (who can see your real name, for example) need to be activated where possible.

MOTION SICKNESS

Children who are prone to travel sickness might encounter what's known as 'simulator sickness'. This is nausea caused by the eyes seeing images which tell the brain that the person is moving, while the rest of the body knows it is stationary. Most apps have features to reduce this discomfort, while some games simply don't feature locomotion to make for a more comfortable experience.

VIOLENT CONTENT

Among the growing range of VR games and apps, not all of them are appropriate for young players. Violent content can be far more visceral and disturbing in VR, so it's important to consider the age and maturity of your child before giving them access to this type of gameplay. As the majority of VR content is digital, online store access is easy – so careful curation is advised.

Advice for Parents & Carers

START OFF SLOWLY

Just like regular video games, if your child wants to try VR the best way to reduce risks is moderation. Keep their VR sessions to short stints – and for young adults new to the technology, build up their usage time gradually to let them get acquainted with it. If they feel any discomfort, remove the headset and try again at a later point.

NO SURPRISES

It's easy to get lost in the moment in VR – and possibly forget where you might be standing in the real world. A minimum 2m x 2m play area is recommended, with no plant pots or other delicate objects within reach of flailing arms. Take pets into account, too: don't let the cat or dog walk into the room, for example, because a VR player won't see them and could certainly trip. A child is far more likely to get over-enthusiastic in VR, posing a risk to themselves and anything in their path.

KEEP A WATCHING BRIEF

It may seem that a VR player is in their own world, but all VR headsets allow external viewing via a linked monitor or mobile phone. This is the best way to ensure whatever a child is playing is appropriate. More VR supervision tools are on the way, such as securing specific apps behind unlock patterns or sending an approval notification to the parent if their child wants to purchase a game.

ANTI-NAUSEA OPTIONS

It's wise to get used to VR while comfortably seated and progress to standing or 'room-scale' VR (where players physically walk around an area) later. Look at the in-app options first: switching between seated and standing adjusts the player's height, while a vignette or 'tunnel' darkens the peripheral vision to reduce nausea. Teleportation Mode and Snap Turning are also important options for enhancing comfort.

RESEARCH CONTENT

There will be information online about most games and apps, explaining what type of experience they provide. They'll list age ratings indicating how violent the gameplay might be; comfort, so you'll know the intensity of the experience; and how much access the game requires to personal information or features like the built-in microphone.

Meet Our Expert

Peter Graham is the editor at XR (extended reality) and Web3 specialist site gmw3.com and has been writing about VR, augmented reality and the immersive tech industry for more than seven years. He's served as a panel speaker and a judge at awards events and game hackathons.



Sources: gmw3.com, vint.org

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