



Newsletter

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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

As you may well be aware, we have had an increase in COVID cases in school recently. With this in mind we have made the decision to continue with the current precautions in school. To this end staff will continue to wear masks in communal areas until the February half-term. Parents and visitors entering the school building will also be asked to wear a mask. We will review this at half-term and communicate any changes.

We will also be holding off any mass gatherings in school (assemblies/parents' evenings) until after half-term. We hope to hold a face-to-face parents evening in mid-March. As we move through into Spring, we envisage more whole school events being able to take place, both in school time as well as the PTFA events that the children enjoy so much. As always, thank you for your incredible patience and support with this matter.

Over the past two weeks we have said a temporary goodbye to Mrs Blackmore and Ms Massey as they go off on their maternity leave. We can't wait to meet the new additions to the Our Lady's family.

A warm welcome to Mrs Crystal Davies who has joined the school to work in the EYFS and pre-School. We wish her every success in her new role.

Wishing you a safe and enjoyable weekend.

Mr Meech
Executive Headteacher

Lost Property

We have a number of PE Hoodies and School Jumpers that have been put into an ever growing pile in the school hall. We have checked them all for names but unfortunately they have not been put in them.

If your child has lost a jumper recently then please come and see if one of them is your child's. It is really helpful if all items of school uniform have name in them as it is much easier to pass them back to their owners.

School Crossing Patrol

Please be aware that there will be no school crossing patrol outside our side gates until further notice. Please take care when crossing this busy road.

As a school we have signed up to access the National on-line Safety software.



They provide regular updates and access to short videos that will help you stay informed on the latest online safety news, quickly gain practical tips and advice, and access free online resources. Please can you register via the link below to allow you to start accessing these useful and important resources:

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/our-lady-school>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

YOUTUBE

YouTube is a video-sharing social media platform that allows billions of people around the world to watch, share and upload their own videos with a vast range of content – including sport, entertainment, education and lots more. It's a superb space for people to consume content that they're interested in. As a result, this astronomically popular platform has had a huge social impact: influencing online culture on a global scale and creating new celebrities.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate material. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as messaging other users directly. Connecting with strangers online, of course, can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, to cyberbullying and even to encountering online predators.

SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but can also lead to binge-watching and the risk of screen addiction, especially if 'auto-play' is activated. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

HIGH VISIBILITY

Content creators can also be put at risk – especially young ones who try to make their online presence as visible as possible. Creating and uploading content exposes children to potential harassment and toxicity from the comments section, along with the possibility of direct messaging from strangers. Videos posted publicly can be watched by anyone in the world.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends, challenges and memes that are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may harm children through either watching or copying. The painful 'salt and ice challenge', which can cause injuries very quickly, is just one of many such examples.

SNEAKY SCAMMERS

Popular YouTube channels regularly have scammers posing as a well-known influencer in the comments section, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and sometimes offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users are not who they claim to be.

Advice for Parents & Carers

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate content (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence and sexual situations) to underage viewers. To prevent your child from chancing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that your child uses to access YouTube.



TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows you to monitor what your child is watching, uploading and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives you an oversight of how your child is using sites like YouTube and helps you ensure they are only accessing appropriate content.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that your child is subscribed to can be hidden. If your child is only uploading videos that are protected as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

CHECK OTHER PLATFORMS

Influential content creators usually have other social media accounts which they encourage their fans to follow. Having an open discussion about this with your child makes it easier to find out how else they might be following a particular creator online. It also opens up avenues for you to check out that creator's other channels to see what type of content your child is being exposed to.

MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them children. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course, and react to content differently. You may want to keep an eye on how your child interacts with content on YouTube – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand the types of videos they are interested in.

LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases: users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch, for example. If you're not comfortable with your child purchasing content online, limit their access to your bank cards and online payment methods. Many parents have discovered to their cost that a child happily devouring a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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