

WOODHAM BURN PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 22TH NOVEMBER 2024

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Message from Mr Sparrow

I want to express my heartfelt thanks, admiration, and gratitude to everyone who contributed to raising funds for Bob's bench and Children's Cancer North. Last Saturday, some of our school staff undertook an incredible 18-mile walk from Newcastle to Sunderland.

I am deeply grateful to the local businesses that generously supported the team with food and drinks for the journey. A huge thank you also goes out to everyone who donated—whether it was a small amount or a larger contribution, your generosity has helped us raise an astounding £3,271. This breathtaking figure is a testament to the compassion and dedication of our community.

I often find myself in awe of the incredible sense of unity we share at Woodham Burn and within Newton Aycliffe as a whole. While this achievement is the result of collective effort and not about any one individual, I want to give a special thank you to Mrs. Allinson. Her vision, determination, and humanity were the driving force behind making this wonderful thing happen.



Nursery Visit

This week we have read the book 'The tiger who came to tea', by Judith Kerr. This book linked well to our theme 'What does the darkness bring?'. In the story the tiger eats all the food, drinks all of the drink in the house, and the family visit the cafe late at night for tea.

After the cafe we visited the local library, where the Librarian 'Eileen' kindly read us our book focus. The children had the opportunity to tell her all about our visit to the cafe.

This week we are setting up a role play cafe in nursery and will be using our visit to the local cafe to help develop our role play.



Play Leaders

This week we had Nathan Beadle from Durham Sport join us to start some work with school Play Leaders in year 5. I was delighted to get an email from him on Thursday stating the following:

"The group were the most inventive and well-behaved group I have ever worked with. The ideas of playground games they came up with were more advanced than most secondary leaders come up with and their behaviour and feedback was absolutely superb – a true credit to the school."

I always speak of how proud I am of the children at Woodham Burn but this gave me the chance to have an extra broad smile when external visitors seen in our children what I get to see each day.

Key Dates – Autumn 2

12/12/24 – Whole school Glow Show (Christmas Jumpers)

17/12/24 – Christmas fair

18/12/24 – Christmas Dinner day (Christmas Jumpers)

19/12/24 – Disco/Party Day (Christmas Jumpers)

20/12/24 – Break for Christmas

Lateness

Lateness = lost learning	
5 minutes each day	3 school days lost
10 minutes each day	6.5 school days lost
15 minutes each day	10 school days lost
20 minutes each day	13 school days lost
30 minutes each day	19 school days lost

If your child arrives late for class:

- They miss out on important learning, which could affect their achievement.
- They don't have the social time to settle into class.
- It can be embarrassing for them.
- They may disrupt the learning of the rest of the class.

Our school day starts at 8.50.

Children should be in school ready to learn at this time.

If your child arrives after 9 they will then receive a Late mark.

If your child arrives after 9.20 they will receive a U mark which will mean that they are marked as unauthorised.

This has a huge impact on your child's attendance.

Having 12 unauthorised absences on your child's attendance record over a 12 week period may mean that you are liable to incur a Fixed Penalty Notice or could face prosecution.

If you are struggling to get your child into school or have any questions or concerns then please feel free to come in and chat to Karen Robinson our Pastoral Manager.

Durham Constabulary launch 'Right Care, Right Person' initiative

In England and Wales, the Right Care, Right Person approach assesses if the police are the most appropriate service to respond. While some mental health related incidents may need the police, other services may be more appropriate. Health and social care staff have the experience and training to provide the relevant physical and mental health support.



The aim of the approach is:

- to get the person or people involved the right help as soon as possible
- to prevent further distress to the person
- to allow the police to focus resources on preventing crime, protecting life and property and keeping public order.

Police forces using this approach have already benefited by being able to provide more appropriate responses.

In England, police and partner agencies have signed a National Partnership Agreement. They will work together to ensure people get the right support. Their regular meetings allow knowledge sharing and improved services.

When the police can help

If we are the most appropriate service, we will attend when there is:

- an immediate risk to life of a person
- an immediate risk of serious harm to a person.

We'll still respond to reports of crime in the usual way.

We will always attend when we are the right service to respond.

We assess every request against things like threat, harm, risk, and vulnerability.

The Right Care, Right Person approach becomes part of this process.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IN-GAME CHAT

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Video games are continuing to grow in popularity – including, of course, among children and young people – and the emergence of gaming communities has been accelerated by the inclusion of chat functionality across many different titles. While in-game chat isn't inherently a bad thing, it can create some concerns about online safety and the people that children might be interacting with.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHAT

There are a number of ways that gamers commonly chat with one another online. As the name would suggest, in-game chat happens within the game itself. There's also party chat: a group voice conversation that console users can have with anyone on the same platform. This tends to be more commonly used by players who already know each other. Finally, many gamers – especially on PC – will chat via a third-party app such as Discord.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Whether it's text- or voice-based, in-game chat is frequently open to all players to use. Many games default to making it an opt-in function, but some don't: meaning a child could start seeing messages within the game from people they're playing with, regardless of whether they know those individuals or not. While most strangers won't necessarily have ill intent, there are some who may behave inappropriately when chatting to a child – intentionally or otherwise.

DANGER OF GROOMING

It's been reported that some young gamers have encountered older players online who pretend to be a lower age to manipulate children, sending gifts in exchange for chatting and sending photos. Just as on any messaging platform, it's good to advise young people to avoid speaking to strangers; emphasise that they shouldn't accept gifts from anyone online that they don't know.

BULLYING AND ABUSE

While some in-game chat can turn toxic because of how a match plays out, others turn that way because of people who engage in trolling – in essence, behaving in an offensive and abusive way simply to cause pain or get a rise out of whoever they're talking to. These 'trolls' often lean on racial slurs, anti-LGBT sentiment and other hateful rhetoric; they normally feel most confident preying on younger, more impressionable gamers.

POTENTIAL FOR PRIVATE CHAT

If a player would like a re-match with a stranger after meeting them in the game, they can send a friend request, or use the party chat together in the future. For the most part, this is harmless – but it might lead to messages being exchanged in private. This could then escalate to the sharing of private information, and potentially attempts to manipulate or scam younger players.

COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE

Certain games are very competitive, and players can sometimes get upset if they feel a teammate is underperforming, an opponent won unfairly, or they're just a bad loser. This can lead to unpleasant messages that stray away from playful 'trash talk' and wander into the territory of bullying. Some players have been known to get incredibly abusive in situations like this, and the impact of this on a young gamer's emotional wellbeing could be severe.

Advice for Parents & Educators

LOCK-DOWN IN-GAME CHAT

In-game chat can often be disabled in the game's settings. This allows children to play without risk of contact from strangers – but it will need to be done in each individual game. Text chat appears in the corner of the screen in many titles, so it's normally easy to take a quick glance and see what's being said. With voice chat, explain to children what behaviour is inappropriate, so they can spot the dangers themselves.

REPORT POTENTIAL OFFENDERS

Most games offer a robust means of reporting other players, so you can flag an account as potentially harmful. This normally leads to the account not being matched with yours in the future and, if that person's conduct breaks any of the game's rules, they may be banned from playing entirely. This is done within the game itself, so each title has a slightly different process, but these tend to be designed for simplicity.

CONSIDER OTHER CHAT OPTIONS

If a child wants to play with people they know, consider using party chat or a third-party service like Discord. This allows everyone involved to chat on a private server and even enjoy each other's company while playing different games. It's also far more secure, as anyone looking to join will need to request and be granted access – normally by whoever is hosting the chat.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Make sure children understand the differences between being competitive and being abusive. Talk about what constitutes unusual or inappropriate behaviour from strangers online. Be clear that if anything ever concerns or worries them, they should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Empower children to identify the risks of in-game chat for themselves and reassure them they won't get in trouble for seeking help if anything goes wrong.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Editor in Chief of GGRecon and has been working in the games media industry for five years. He's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his work has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at nationalcollege.com/guides/in-game-chat