

WOODHAM BURN PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 29TH NOVEMBER 2024

WWW.WOODHAMBURNPRIMARY.DURHAM.SCH.UK

Message from Mr Sparrow

Hello everyone, I hope that this newsletter finds you well and that you have had a good week. In school this week we have had a huge focus on active listening in school and the children have done a brilliant job showing how much they care about their learning. As I have walked around the school, the children have been more attentive and this has had a clear impact on their learning.

This week, we have also had Mini-Police in school working with our Year 5 children. They will look at how to be a good citizen and how to keep safe. The feedback from the children after the first session was extremely positive.

Attendance

What is the expected attendance for primary school children? The Government expect that pupils attend school for at least 96% of the school year.

We strive to achieve at least 97% attendance across all our classes who attend Woodham Burn Primary. If your child's level of absence concerns us or attendance falls below 95%, you may be contacted by a member of our Attendance Team to look at what support can be offered to improve your child's attendance. We want to work with you to ensure we give your child the best opportunities to grow and succeed. Attendance that falls below 90% is categorised as persistent absence.

An attendance figure of 90% is the equivalent of a half day absence every week.

If your child is persistently absent, a number of things may happen depending upon the reasons for absence and your child's previous attendance record. You may receive a letter, an invitation to an attendance meeting, a home visit or, in serious cases, your child's attendance may be closely monitored, and you may be asked to provide medical proof of absence. If you have any concerns or want to discuss anything around attendance please contact Mrs Robinson who will be happy to help.

Friends of Woodham Burn

It's that time again, Christmas fair planning has begun...

We are looking for donations of the following

- Raffle, tombola, lucky dip prizes
- Baskets and gift bags
- Books
- Cakes (closer to the time)
- Brick a Brac
- Bottle bar items (things like alcohol, smellies, anything that comes in a bottle/jar)

We are also making up two large hampers as part of the raffle so donations for these would be massively appreciated.

- Food and drink items
- Kids craft items

As always any donations are greatly appreciated and can be left in main reception.

Key Dates – Autumn 2

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

16/12/24 – Year 1 and 2 Christmas Show (**New Dates**)

17/12/24 – Christmas fair

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

18/12/24 – Nursery and reception Christmas Day (**New dates**)

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

20/12/24 – Break for Christmas

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

SNAP STREAK

97

DAYS

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

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.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapMaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn'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 to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

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 in younger 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.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger *does* connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

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.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College