



Newsletter

13th May, 2022

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I write with trepidation about what the day will bring...it's Friday the 13th!

Our Year 6 children have completed their SATs week, always an important milestone in a child's journey through school. I must confess, however, that I haven't missed them in the past two years (cancelled due to COVID)! As you would expect, the children coped admirably with the challenges set by the week and by the tests—absolutely no sense of reducing the expectations because of missed learning/school in the past two years. Children in Year 2 will start their tests next week, although these follow a different format and have a slightly different 'feel'. Elsewhere in school, it's been a busy week. Staff are working to finalise arrangements for a whole school Jubilee celebration on 27th May; details will be confirmed for you shortly. Our Robins have been learning more about caterpillars and butterflies and have used their knowledge of patterns to create a symmetrical butterfly mural. Whinchats have been learning more about measure, this week practising skills in measuring capacity. Canaries have had a busy science week, testing whether their umbrellas work (Mr Tapley didn't get too wet!) and visiting the Cambridge Science Park, where they made land yachts. They coped brilliantly when the bus unexpectedly broke down on the way home! Green Jays have enjoyed special science sessions also, led by students from Bedford School. Kingfishers have been writing adventure stories about finding a magical chalk.

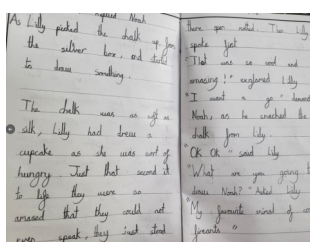
We have also received our bronze level Modeshift award for all our work to develop sustainable journeys to and from school—you will have noticed our new Pavement Buddies outside school, reminding you all about ways to keep the roads safe outside school. These have been provided to the school via funding from Bedford Borough, for which we are very grateful, and we ask that you all take note of the messages shared by the Buddies. Special thanks to Mrs Hawkins for all her hard work in this area, and to Yo Highton for all her support and help.

I've been made aware of a growing number of children bringing nut-based foods into school. Please remember we are a **nut-free school**, as we have children who have severe nut allergies. Under no circumstances should nut-based foods such as peanut butter or Nutella be brought into school.

Next week looks to be a busy sporting and activities week. Sabrewings will be heading off on their residential on Wednesday, and elsewhere Peacocks have a multi-sports morning at Biddenham School, Robins will have some tennis workshops in school, and Years 3, 4, and 5 will have a full day of PE on Friday with enrichment sessions in the morning and fitness sessions in the afternoons. It certainly feels like we're now making up for all the missed activities during COVID times! Please rest well over the weekend!

With all our love and best wishes,

Maria & all the team at St James'





We're looking for any donations of good quality, nearly new toys (especially for teenagers), smartphones which older children can use to stay in contact with friends and families in other places, or good quality bikes for children of all ages, especially teenagers. Please contact if you can help.

Children & Screen Time

We've had a few reports this week of children in school watching material on their Smartphones/tablets/ SmartTVs which is not appropriate. For example, watching 18 rated horror films. Primary aged children whose brains are still developing will be harmed by seeing this material and it is really important that parents monitor this carefully. If you have Youtube on your SmartTV or other devices which are accessible by your children, please put controls on this or remove it and replace with Youtube Kids.

[Important information for grownups about YouTube Kids - YouTube Kids Parental Guide \(google.com\)](#) gives further information about Youtube Kids

[How to Use YouTube's Parental Controls \(lifewire.com\)](#) gives a step by step guide to set parental controls on Youtube

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps that we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

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.

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.

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, cyberbullying and even to encountering online predators.

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.

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.

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 changing 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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YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People

Whether you work at a youth club, coach a sports team, or run extra-curricular activities outside of school, we know the positive and crucial role you play in the lives of young people but understand you may often feel under-equipped to support them.



Pupil Governor Summer Fair!

We are in the process of organising our own Summer Fair, which will be held on **Friday 27th May** during school time for all the children. But we need your help! We need donations of soft toys for Robins soft toy stall. ***Please could any donations be brought into school from Monday 23rd May.***

We decided to plan and run a Summer Fair to raise money for our new chosen charity- **Young Minds**, which is a charity that supports young people's mental health. For more information, please click on the link: www.youngminds.org.uk

We will have the following stalls:

Soft toy sale, Hook-A-Duck, Pin the crown on the Queen, Guess the Total Sweets in a Jar, Coconut Shy, Bounce Cup, and a Penalty Shoot Out!

We are very excited to plan this, and hope all of the children will have a brilliant time.

The Pupil Governors and Mrs De Luca

COVID Vaccinations for 5-11 Year Olds—we have been asked to share this information by the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group

Please could you remind parents that if they wish to bring their 5 – 11 year old child for their COVID-19 vaccination they can either book on-line through the National Booking System www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/ or by calling 119 between 8.00 and 20.00 every day? Availability is updated frequently so please advise them to check daily.

Alternatively they are welcome to walk-in to any of the centres listed on this page on the BLMK website - www.blmkccg.nhs.uk/covid-19/parentguide/

It would also be extremely helpful to guide parents towards this guidance around preparing your child for a vaccination. <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/supporting-children-their-feelings-about-needles-can-help-those-who-want-covid-19>. We know that some young children are very anxious about needles and we hope this will help them.

Assistance with transport

The free Vaxi Cabs service will also be available via the usual route for families who may be finding it difficult to travel to our vaccination centres.

Each local authority has full details on their website.

[Bedford Borough](#)

Explore the gardens of Church End Biddenham



Sunday 26th June 2022, 2pm–5pm

Come and explore the variety of gardens along Church End, The Old Barns and Manor Road, Biddenham - whether pristine, everyday, interesting or just “work in progress”.

Afternoon tea with home-made cakes for sale in the Church Barn.
Plants for sale.

Tickets £5 per person for all gardens, available on the day from the Church Barn (next to St James’s Church at MK40 4AS), or by the postbox, The Old Barns. Accompanied children under 12 free.

*Parking along Main Road. Well controlled dogs on leads, children and buggies all welcome. **Note:** There are ponds, steps and other hazards in some gardens and wheelchair access may be limited in some areas.*

For more information, email churchendgardens@gmail.com

In aid of The Friends of St James, Biddenham
- the charity which preserves and enhances the historic church buildings for future generations



This May, we will be running a two day multi-sport camp hosted at Castle Newnham School, focusing on delivering a wide variety of sports on Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st of May from 10:00 – 15:00 each day.

<https://register.enthuse.com/ps/event/BedfordBluesFoundationMultiSportCamps>