

Headlines

Welcome to the new term and 2022! It has been lovely to have all the staff and pupils back over these first few days as we look forward to the year ahead. I have been talking to the children in assembly about new year's resolutions and hearing some of their aims and promises – we look forward to hearing about the progress over the coming months. This term, we are delighted to welcome to the staff Mr Raymond Pinto who, as Year 5 and 6 will know, is working part time to share teaching responsibilities with Mrs Herriett. Parents of Year 5 and 6 should read the leaflet that came home today for further details and contact information. Along with that, all year groups should have received a digital copy and a paper version of the curriculum leaflet for this term today. Please do read through and keep it safe as a guide for your child over the Spring Term. We hope that it is useful.

We are busy planning the term and more dates for your diaries will pop up in the coming weeks, so do please check the dates below. In particular, do make a note of the class assembly dates as parents are welcome into school to watch their child's presentation. This will include the new parents in Reception class this term too!

I would like to say thank you to all those parents who carried out rapid lateral flow tests before the beginning of term. It did the job of picking up a few positive cases in our pupil community. Please do try to keep up regular testing if possible as this can identify new asymptomatic cases. If there is a case in your child's class, we will inform you by email.

Thank you for all your support in this matter. All the very best for the weekend ahead....

Mr Leigh Hardie, Head

Stars of the Week



Squirrels – Belmia

Woodpeckers – Amelie

Owls – Alayna

Ash – Annabel

Maple – Jeyaram

Birch – Emilian

Oak – Shamas

Drama – Oscar

Music – James B

Sport – Leo G



**House winners
Nelson & Haig**





Woodland exploration



Year 6 back together

Polar explorers in Reception



Back to our lunches with friends



Football at Walcountians fields

Netball practice is back



Well done Year 4 with your collages of emotions

Star badges this week...

10 stars to:

Luna, James B, Lia, Kayden, James D, Raelyn, Ryan

20 stars to:

Pooja, Liam, Faith, Safia

Dates for diaries

20 th January	Year 2 Archery Competition at St David's (1.30pm – 3pm)
24 th January	Park Hill ILG Sports Tournament (TBC)
4 th February	Year 4 Assembly (8.50am)
7 th February	U9 Football and Netball – Oakwood (2.15pm)
11 th February	Year 3 Assembly (8.50am)
14th February	Half Term
23 rd February	U11 Football and Netball – Oakwood (2.15pm)
25 th February	Year 6 Assembly (8.50am)
3 rd March	World Book Day
4 th March	Year 5 Assembly (8.50am)
7 th March	Year 5 Bikeability (all week)
10 th March	Year 4 – Trip to the Science Museum
11 th March	Year 1 Assembly (8.50am)
14 th March	Year 6 – Bikeability (all week)
15 th March	Year 3 – Trip to the National History Museum
16 th March	Year 5 – High Ashurst Residential (16 th – 18 th March)
16 th March	ILG Singing Festival (TBC)
18 th March	Reception Assembly (8.50am)
18 th March	Year 3 – Easter Through Art (Holy Trinity Church)
25 th March	Year 2 Assembly (8.50am)
29 th March	Last Day of Spring Term (break up at 12 noon)

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 game of many which 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

FORTNITE

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First released in 2017, Fortnite has become one of the most popular games in the world. It currently has around 350 million registered players. Developed by Epic Games, it began life exclusively as a 'battle royale' contest, where up to 100 online player characters would fight – with weaponry including rifles, handguns and rocket launchers – to be the last one standing. Today, it features multiple modes which each offer something different (although some modes, such as 'Save the World', are only available on certain platforms).

IN-APP PURCHASES

Not all of Fortnite is free. Save the World mode, for example, can become quite costly. An in-game currency called V-Bucks is used to buy items such as cosmetics, which are not a necessity to play the game. It can feel like buying them is essential, however – even for adult players. Making sure no payment methods are linked to the game's store is a good idea when children are playing Fortnite.

REPEAT SUBSCRIPTIONS

Fortnite now offers a monthly repeat subscription which costs £9.99 (or equivalent). This package offers different non-essential benefits every month – including fancy cosmetics, rare weapons, V-Bucks and special bonuses. Signing up, therefore, can be tempting for dedicated players. However, subscriptions cannot be paid for with V-Bucks earned in the game, only with real-world money.

COMPETITIVE COMMUNITY

Fortnite isn't purely a competitive experience (some modes prioritise cooperation), but the rivalry aspect remains central. Battle Royale is an especially ruthless mode, where the last player or squad left standing wins. Games can become heated, and players' desire to win can often cause excessively aggressive or "toxic" behaviour towards others – via the game's audio chat, for instance.

POSSIBILITY OF SCAMS

Popular games like Fortnite are often targeted by unscrupulous individuals trying to trick or exploit genuine fans. In Fortnite, scammers have been known to offer children free V-Bucks or vast amounts of V-Bucks in exchange for rare items – often asking the player to click a particular link. These scammers are seeking access to your child's account, personal information and payment details.

USER-CONTROLLED CONTENT

Some elements of online video games can't be rated for age appropriateness because the developer doesn't have control over them. In Fortnite, for instance, things like voice or text chat, usernames, trades and other player-generated content may not always be suitable for children. It also means that the makers aren't liable for anything a stranger might say to young Fortnite players online.

Advice for Parents & Carers

STAY AWARE OF SPENDING

Free-to-play games (that is, ones without up-front costs) can still be big financial drains. In Fortnite, for example, the Battle Pass – a set of rewards to improve players' experience in the game – can be either earned through playing or bought with real money (with additional incentives for the latter). With supervision however, this can be a great lesson in money management for children.

TALK ABOUT TALKING

Communication is key in the squad-based Fortnite modes, and children will quickly realise that talking with team-mates online helps to increase their win rate. It's a good idea, therefore, to chat with your child first about speaking to strangers online, trading, scammers and other potential risks. Remind them that they can always come to you for help if they run into problems online.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS

Gaming sessions can reach marathon lengths, especially when your child is on a winning streak and doesn't want to stop. Sitting in the same position for hours, of course, isn't healthy but it's an easy habit to form. Encouraging young ones to break regularly for drinks and so on will help them stay hydrated, rest their eyes and release some of the tension from competitive gameplay.

DISCUSS OTHER APPS

Games like Fortnite can lead on to third-party apps (Discord, for example) where players can join a voice, text or – in some cases – video chat about the game. Certain add-ons also let children talk with other players from their local area, which clearly presents a potential risk. When discussing Fortnite with your child, you might also want to ask them about other apps they use while playing.

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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