



Newsletter 29

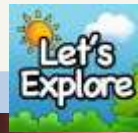
Friday 2nd May 2025



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admin2064@welearn365.com



Nursery and Reception



This week, Reception and Nursery enjoyed starting our new topic, 'Let's Explore'. This project teaches children about the environments that they share with others, including their homes, school and places in the local community. We started by looking more closely in our EYFS garden for creature habitats.

With careful observant eyes the children found 14 different animals including newts, butterflies, spiders, bees and ants. The children have thought about ways they can take care of the environment to protect these living things.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education





SUN SAFETY

This week, we have seen increased temperatures and several particularly sunny days at school.

During warm weather, please make sure that your child is safe at school by ensuring the following:

1. Sun Hat

Make sure your child brings a sun hat to school every day.



2. Named Water Bottle

Send your child with a named water bottle (water only, please).

They can refill their bottles throughout the day from our water cooler to stay well hydrated.



3. Apply Sun Cream

Please apply sun cream before school.

Children will be outside throughout the day—using the playground, school field, and class gardens.

While we provide access to shade and avoid extended sun exposure, we recommend a long-lasting sunscreen for added protection.



Let's Work Together to Keep Everyone Safe in the Sun!



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education

Article 5: Parental Guidance, Article 18, Parental responsibility

Article 24: Health and health services

Year 1 and 2



On Thursday, our Year 1 and 2 pupils enjoyed an exciting and inspiring trip to The MAD Museum in Stratford-upon-Avon.

The museum, which is dedicated to mechanical art and design, captivated the children with its imaginative moving machines, interactive exhibits, and hands-on displays.

The children were fascinated by the creative contraptions and kinetic sculptures, sparking curiosity and conversations about science, engineering, and art. They especially enjoyed exploring the marble runs and learning how gears, pulleys, and levers work in real life.

It was a fun-filled and educational day that brought learning to life and left everyone buzzing with ideas to take back to the classroom!

We worked really well as a team to build an amazing marble run that went all around the walls of the marble room!



Learning Detectives



This week, our Learning Detectives have been into our classrooms looking at the support and adaptations that teachers have in place for children who may have additional learning needs.

This includes children who are known as Neurodiverse, which is the term for when someone's brain processes, learns, and/or behaves differently from what is considered "typical".

At Lighthorne Heath Primary School, we celebrate diversity and are proud to be an inclusive community where every child is valued. Our staff work hard to ensure that all children feel seen, supported, and empowered to succeed.

The Learning Detectives were impressed by the creativity and care shown by teachers in adapting lessons and environments to help all children thrive.

We believe that embracing diversity not only benefits those with additional needs but enriches the whole school community. Thank you to our staff for their dedication—and to our amazing pupils for showing that every mind matters.

ARTICLE 23 (children with a disability)
A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

The teachers use visual time-tables so that children know what will happen throughout the day.



We saw some children using ear defenders, wobble cushions, therabands or focus items. Mrs Cox explained how these can help children with sensory sensitivities to focus.



All classrooms have regulation stations that children know how to use. Anyone can access these spaces to calm down and refocus, if they need.



Mr Sangha told us about how he adapts the language that he uses to help some children. Although his high expectations remain, he makes sure that he explains the meaning of new vocabulary, uses simple and direct instructions (often accompanied by visuals) to avoid confusion and make sure that all of the children understand.

We saw lots of visual supports in the classrooms. These help children to understand instructions and help them know what to do.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

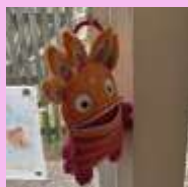
Article 29: Goals of education

Article 23: Children with a disability





Learning Detectives



We saw social stories being used to help particular children to understand what is expected of them.



We saw some children taking part in extra learning sessions. Mrs Maul told us about the phonics group that she leads.



Mrs Sharma showed us some word banks that she uses to support particular children in KS2.

Mrs Munday talked to us about her seating plan. Some children need to be close to the teacher, others need to be away from the windows (because of their sensory needs) and others need to be close to the door so that they feel safe and can access breaks. We had no idea that the teachers work so hard on deciding where the children sit!



Some children told us how using hands on resources help them to understand new ideas, especially in maths.

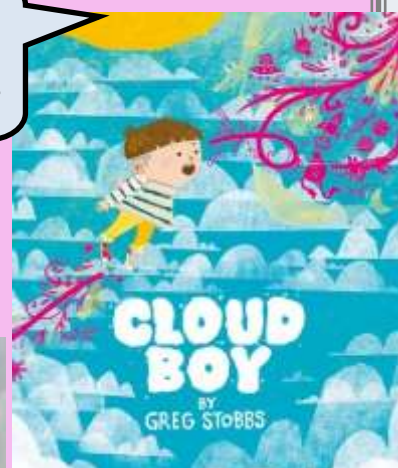


We saw some children in Year 2 having a sensory break. With Mrs T. They told us that this helps them to concentrate in the classroom.



Some children showed us their individual targets

On Friday, the Learning Detectives shared their findings with the other children and read the story, Cloud Boy, by Gregg Stobbs in assembly. This is a book about Bobby whose family and friends worry about his distractions and differences but eventually come to understand and appreciate his neurodiversity and his unique way of seeing the world. The story highlights the importance of understanding and accepting difference



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education

Article 23: Children with a disability





Ancient Civilisations

Years 3 and 4

Science

This week in Science, the children in Years 3 & 4 embarked on a fascinating journey through the human digestive system. Through engaging discussion and creative group work, they learned to identify the key parts of the digestive system and understand the unique role each organ plays in turning food into fuel for the body.

Our learning objective was: *"To identify parts of the digestive system."* This links directly to the National Curriculum for Science in Years 3 and 4, where children are expected to describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans.

We began by learning about each major organ involved in digestion—including the mouth, oesophagus, stomach, liver, small intestine, and large intestine. The children discussed the purpose of each organ and how they work together as part of one continuous process.

After gaining a solid understanding of the digestive system, the children were split into groups and each group was given the task of recreating one part of the digestive system. From the churning stomach to the winding intestines, every group brought their part to life with creativity and collaboration.

Once complete, we assembled the digestive system as a class, checking whether the organs were in the correct order and ready to digest a *delicious steak!* The excitement was high as the children worked together to simulate the journey food takes through the body, and they showed an excellent understanding of how digestion works.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education



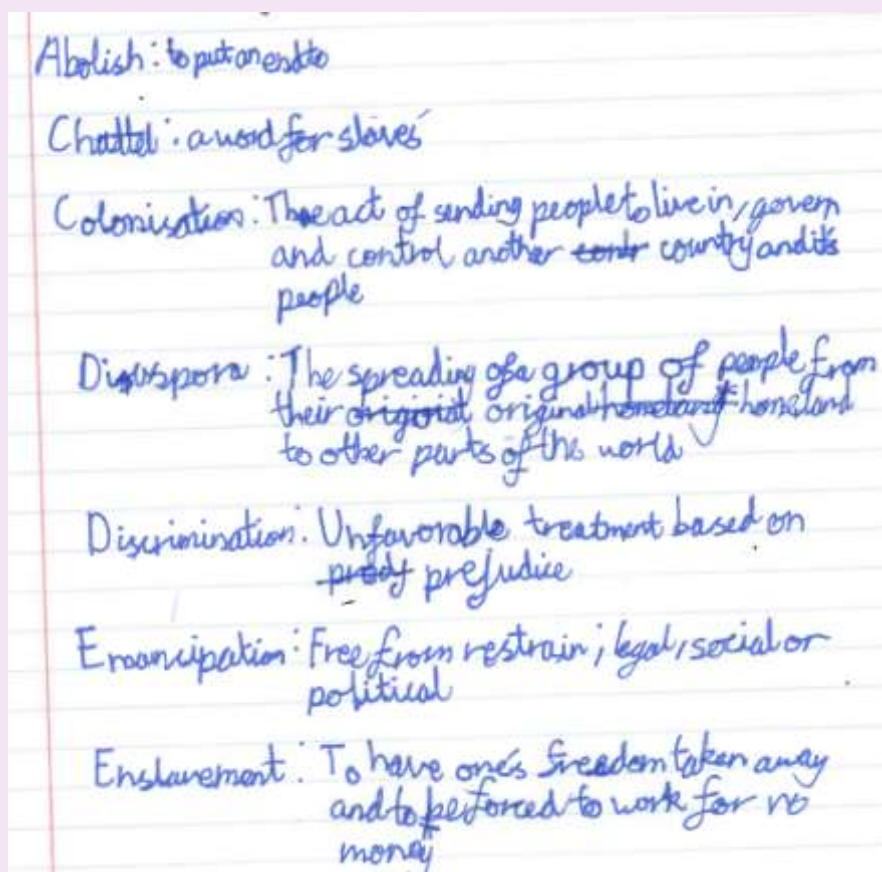
Maafa



For the summer terms, the children in 5/6 class have a new topic 'Maafa'. This project teaches about Africa past and present, with a particular focus on Benin. It traces the development of the slave trade and explores Britain's role in the transatlantic slave trade, the causes and consequences of the European colonisation of Africa and the worldwide communities that make up the African diaspora.

We found that there is a lot of subject specific vocabulary for the new topic, and many words that we have not encountered before. So, this week has been spent this week exploring some of these new words and working out what we already know about Africa.

We created a glossary of these newly learned words to support us in the weeks to come.





Diaspora: The spreading of a group of people from their original homeland.

Chattel: A word for slaves they meant that they were other people's property.

Abolish: To end or ban something.

Discrimination: Treating someone unfairly based on their race, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, disability age or any other way.

Emancipation: To be set free from legal, social or political restraints such as slavery.

Enslavement: To have one's freedom taken away and be forced to work for no money.

Indigenous: To naturally exist in a country or area.

Mansa: A Swahili word means 'great ruler'.

Rebellion: An act of resistance, usually violent, against the government.

Resistance: To go against something or to go against a group that goes against something.

Slavery: The state of being a slave or the practice or system of owning slaves.



We have a new class reading book 'Freedom 1783'. It is about an enslaved Jamaican boy who is separated from his family and taken to work in England. His owners, the Barratts, treat him cruelly but he is determined to escape and earn the money needed to buy his family's freedom. While in London, he attends the Zong slave ship's court hearing and learns about the horrors that took place on board.

Emotional Wellbeing



Mental Health in Schools Team

Tips For Wellness



Stress Awareness

Stress is what you feel when you're **worried, nervous, or under pressure**. It's your body's way of reacting to things that feel difficult, scary, or too much to handle. Everyone feels stressed sometimes!

Stress can come from lots of things, such as:

- **School** – too much homework, exams, or feeling like you have to do really well.
- **Friends** – disagreements/ arguments, bullying, or feeling left out.
- **Family** – disagreements/ arguments, moving house, or changes like a new baby in the family.
- **Big Changes** – starting a new school, growing up, or losing someone you care about.

Some stress can be good, but too much can cause us to feel anxious or depressed, which might affect our sleeping, eating habits and general wellbeing. If stress is going on for a long time, we may also experience 'burnout', which is when our body is exhausted and has not had a chance to rest. There are things we can do to help our body recharge and reduce stress:

Our tips for managing stress:

1. **Talk** to someone you trust. This helps you not to feel alone, because someone is there to listen to you and to care. Remember – it's okay to ask for help!
2. **Stress bucket activity** – follow the QR codes to complete your own stress bucket. This may help you to see what is contributing to your stress, as well as what helps you to feel calmer.
3. **Moving your body** can help to release stress and make you feel good. Why not try dancing to your favourite song or going for a walk with friends or family?
4. **Get creative** – Art has been found to help people feel present in the moment and reduce the feeling of stress and worry. Follow the QR code for more information!
5. Create a **calm corner!** It is important to have somewhere that you feel safe, and you could go there when you feel like you need a break. You could fill the corner with soft things like pillows and blankets, and is the perfect place to read, draw, or even listen to calming music!

Stress bucket activity



Ideas to get creative

In Coventry and Warwickshire, for any urgent mental health concerns, contact the RISE Crisis Helpline available 24/7, by calling NHS 111. Alternatively, call 999 or visit A&E in an emergency, for example if medical attention is required.

MHST are available to support you and your school throughout the school year including term time and school holidays.

Please contact your school's Mental Health Lead for information and advice.

Guide to Supporting Your Child's Reading

Lighthorne Heath
Primary School
Reading Diary
2024-25

Questions to ask your child when reading fiction:

Predicting:

What do you think this book will be about based on the title and cover?

Have you read any books by this author before? What were they like?

What do you already know about this topic?

Understanding the Story:

What is happening in the story so far?

Who are the main characters? What do we know about them?

Where and when does the story take place?

Making Connections:

Does this story remind you of anything in your life?

Have you read another book like this before?

How do you think the character is feeling? Why?

Vocabulary and Language:

What does this word mean? Can you use it in a sentence?

Are there any words that you don't understand?

How do the illustrations help to tell the story?

Encouraging Critical Thinking:

What do you think will happen next?

Why do you think the character made that choice?

If you were in this situation, what would you do?

Summarising and Reflecting:

Can you tell me what happened in the story in your own words?

What was your favourite part? Why?

Did the book end the way you expected?

Extending the Story:

If you could ask the author one question, what would it be?

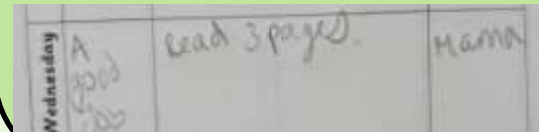
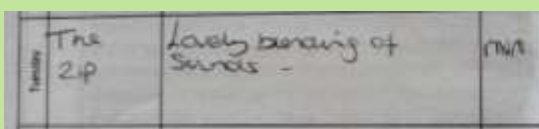
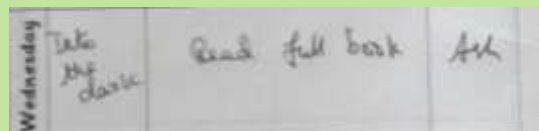
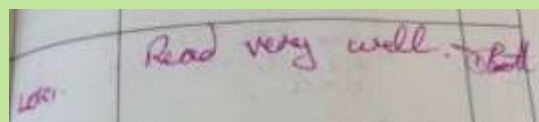
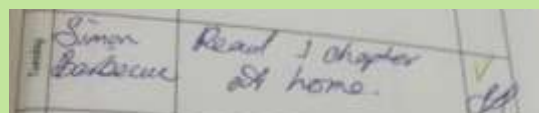
Can you think of a different ending to the story?

What lesson did you learn from this book?

Filling in the reading record:

When signing your child's reading record, please include the date that your child read, the title of the book (or the material that they read) and your initials.

You are welcome to include additional information about your child's engagement, comprehension and confidence or some praise if you would (and this is useful) but you don't have to.



READING INCENTIVE

REMEMBER...YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

1. Share a book with an adult at home at least 3 times each week (you can read your school reading book or any other reading material).
2. Ask the adult to sign your reading diary each time they share a book with you.
3. Make sure that your reading diary is in school each day. On Friday, bring this to the office and show the Learning Detectives. If your diary is signed 3 times or more for that week, you will receive a raffle ticket.
4. The raffle tickets will go to celebration assembly and prizes will be given each week for raffle tickets drawn.



Diary Dates



Summer Term	
May	
Monday 5th May	Bank holiday,
Thursday 8th May	School VE day celebrations. All parents are welcome to join us from 2.15pm on the school field for tea and cake. Please could children wear red, white and blue on the day?
Week beginning Monday 12th May	Year 6 SATS testing Mon– Thurs
Friday 23rd May	Mufti (non uniform) day, please bring 50p for school funds
Week beginning Monday 26th May	Half Term
June	
Monday 2nd June	RSC visit to KS2 classes
Friday 13th June	EYFS trip to Hill Close Gardens, TBC
Week beginning Monday 16th June	Refugee week– activities in classes
Thursday 19th June	RSC performance– KS2 children performing to other classes
Friday 27th June	Sports day led by Onside Coaching, weather permitting. Parents welcome to watch.9.30am—11.00am
Friday 27th June	Mufti (non uniform) day, please bring 50p for school funds
July	
Tuesday 2nd July	Transition day
Wednesday 9th July	Chef Idris Caldora visiting Years 5&6
Tuesday 15th—Thursday 17th July	Years 5&6 residential trip to PGL Liddington
Friday 18th July	Last day of term Mufti day

With best wishes from Mrs Westwood,
Mrs Manley and all the staff at Lighthorne
Heath Primary School.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 29: Goals of education
Article 5, Parental Guidance, Article 18, Parental responsibility

Lighthorne Heath Learning Heroes

EYFS

This week Mrs Hartley and Mrs Cox have chosen Harry as their class learning hero. Harry has been really enjoying being an explorer in our school environment and found lots of creatures in our garden. Harry has also been using more interesting vocabulary to add detail to his ideas. Well done Harry!



Co-operate

Years 1 and 2

Our learning hero for this week is Leroy. He has made such a wonderful start to the Summer term! Leroy has shown a great attitude towards his learning and has really been focusing on his work in the classroom. Leroy was a model student on our trip to The MAD Museum; using his manners, supporting his friends and showing great enthusiasm and interest in all of the attractions. He asked some fabulous questions and thought carefully about how each of the exhibits might work. Well done Leroy, we're so proud of you!



Have a go

Concentrate

Years 3 and 4

This week's Y 3&4 learning hero is Luella for her positive contributions throughout the week and consistently having a positive attitude towards her learning. Well done Luella!



Be curious!

Years 5 and 6

Mrs Cox has chosen Fatima as her learning hero this week. Fatima worked hard over half term practicing her times tables and managed to improve her speedy recall by nearly 300% Well done, Fatima!



Enjoy learning

Use your imagination

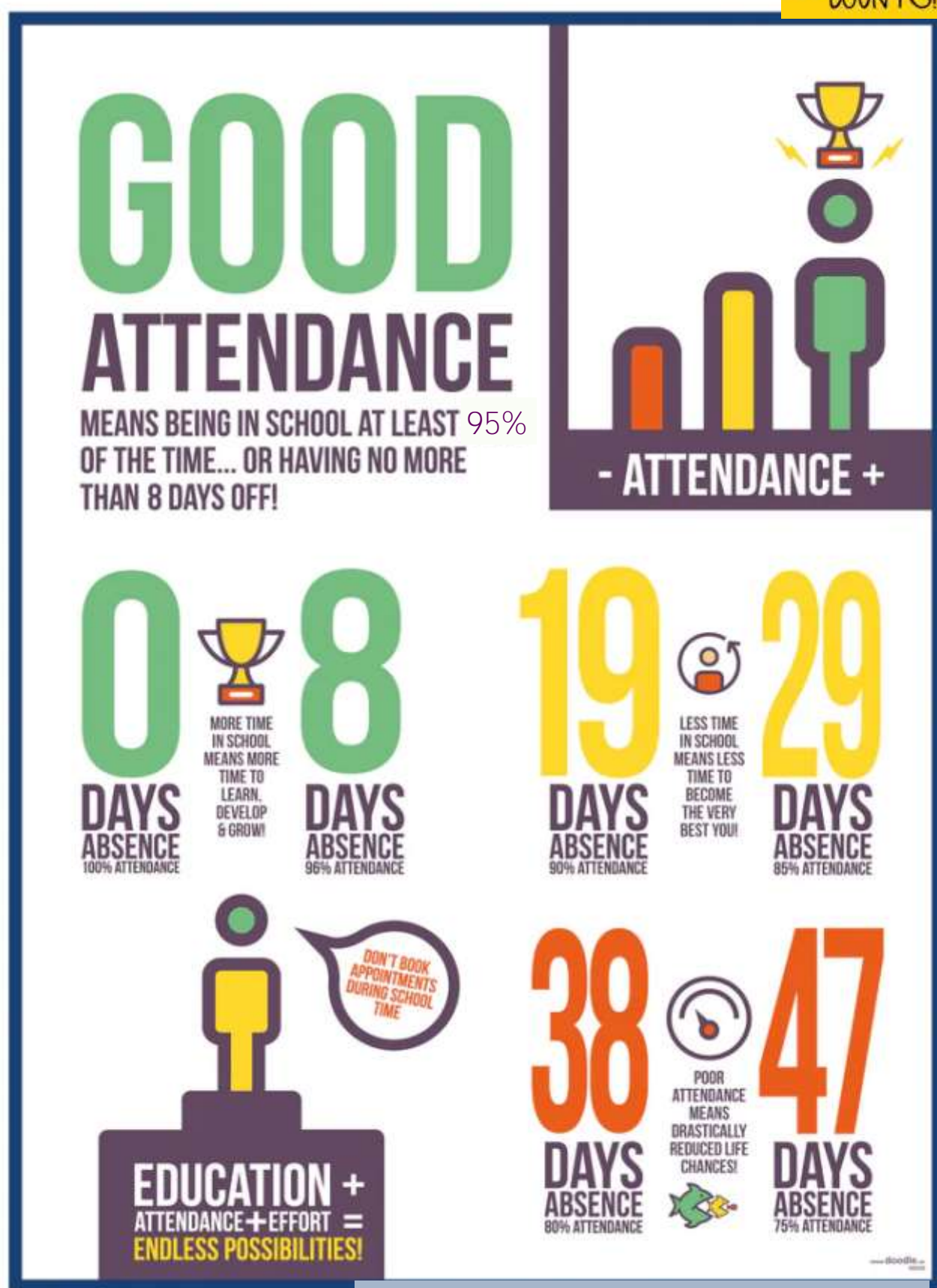
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education





Attendance and Punctuality



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

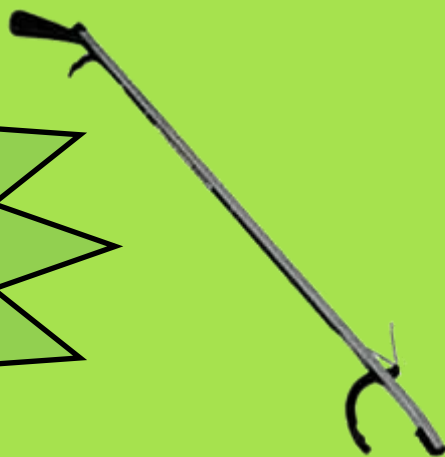
Article 29: Goals of education

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How can we help the local area?



At Lighthorne Heath Primary School our Eco Committee are working hard to raise the awareness of issues relating to the climate and environment. Last week we led an assembly talking about litter. The children knew lots about why litter is so bad for the environment and the animals that live locally.

You can borrow our litter picking equipment if you wish to do some litter picking in your local area. We would love to hear about how much you collect and see some photos!

Please speak to Mrs Hendriksen and Mrs Tencuse in the office if you would like to borrow some litter pickers. Please make sure you wear gloves and wash your hands after use!

Plastics on the floor break down and end up in the soil which can then put microplastics in our food.

Animals can get hurt by litter.

Litter looks horrible and ruins the look of our area.

Animals might think the litter is food and try to eat it.

Litter can be sharp and hurt people.



We want to provide the healthiest possible environment for all our children to thrive.

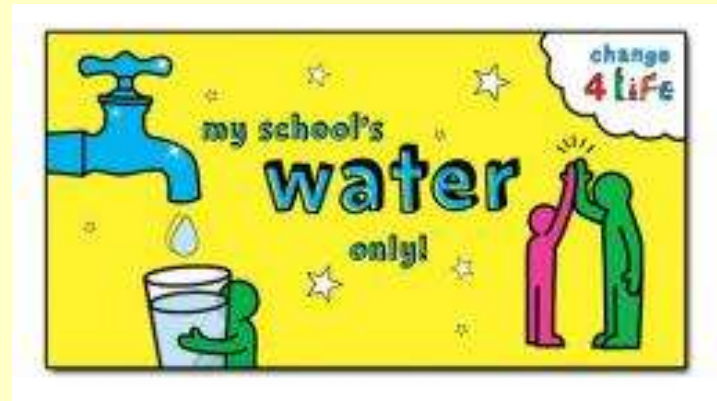
Please remember that we are a water only school and children are not permitted to bring juice or squash to drink during the day. This is in line with NHS advice.

We have a water cooler in school and children are welcome to fill up their bottles when they need.



The NHS states that the best drinks to give children are water and milk.

Children should avoid sugary fizzy drinks, squash and juice drinks completely. Children who drink a lot of sugary drinks are more likely to become overweight. The added sugar in these drinks can also damage teeth.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education

Article 18: Parental responsibilities

Article 24: Health and health services





Mobile Library

Warwickshire Libraries have a new timetable for their new electric vehicles and visit Lighthorne Heath.

Each mobile library has:

- A selection of books, including large print
- Spoken word
- Books for young children



Contact the Mobile Library Service

Email: mobilelibraryservice@warwickshire.gov.uk

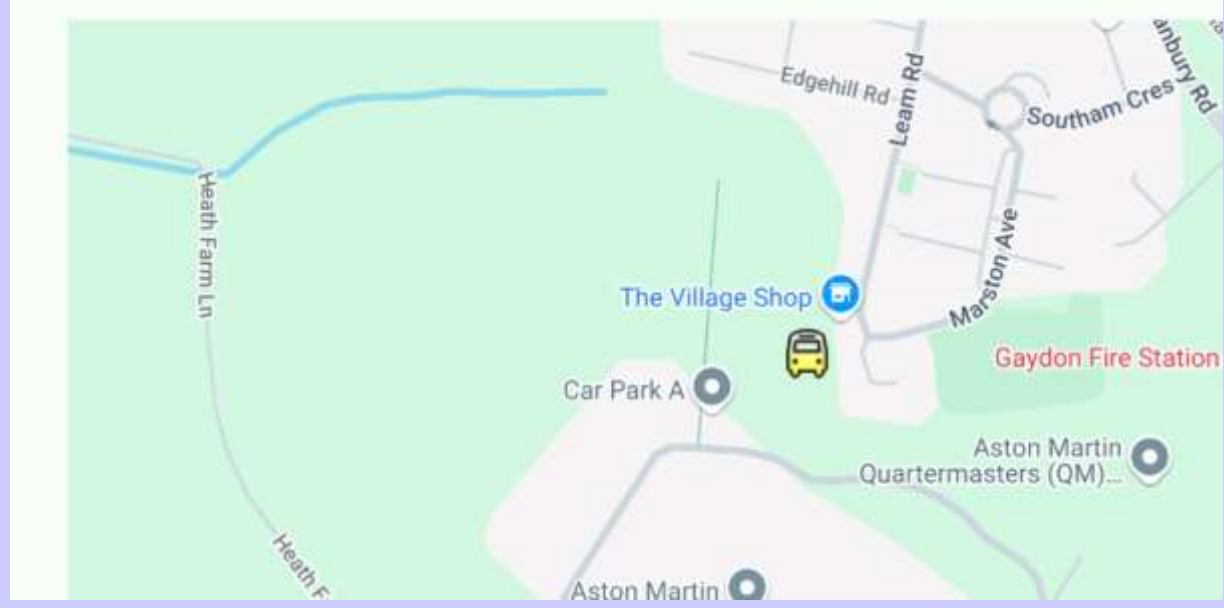
Telephone: 01926 851031

The Mobile library will be here from 15:15 to 15:35

This route will operate on:

24 March 2025	22 April 2025	19 May 2025	16 June 2025	14 July 2025	11 August 2025
8 September 2025	6 October 2025	3 November 2025	1 December 2025		

Village Hall, Lighthorne Heath



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education

Article 3: Leisure, play and culture

Monday



Pork Meatball Pasta Bake G.D

Vegetarian Customers Only



(v) Tomato Pasta Bake D.G.

Tuesday



(v) Cheese & Tomato Pizza Wedge G.D



(v) Jacket Potato with Cheese D.

Wednesday



Roast Beef in Gravy, York Pud D.E.G



**(vg) Quorn Roast G.
(v) Yorkshire Pudding D.E.G**

Thursday



(vg) Quorn Dippers in a Wrap G



(v) Jacket Potato with Cheese D.

Friday



Battered Fish Fillet F.G



(v) Texan Sausage & Bean Bake G.D

Educaterers' New Menu

Next week we will be on Week 1 of the new Educaterers menu.

Jacket potato and choice of fillings available daily

Free School Meals

If you think that you may be eligible for free school meals applications can be made online at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/education-learning/apply-free-school-meals>



Mrs. Manley and Mrs Hendriksen are happy to help with FSM applications, please ask if you require assistance.



Lighthorne Heath Primary School



Thursday 8th May 2.15 - 3pm

Thursday 8th May marks 80 years since V.E. Day. This is a very special day being celebrated nationally and we would like to hold a special event in school to mark the occasion.

All parents are welcome to join us from 2.15pm on the school field for tea and cake. The children are preparing to sing a few songs, including the national anthem.

Please could children wear red, white and blue on the day. We'd appreciate donations of cake to help make the day a success.



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of education

Article 31: Leisure, play and culture

We have been asked to forward the message below to the families of our Year 6 pupils who will be joining Southam College in September.

Dear Parent/ Carer,

We would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome you to Southam College and we are thrilled that you have now accepted your child's place for September 2025. We are contacting you because we wanted to share our exciting programme of events linked to the transition of your child from primary school to secondary school. Below you will find details of the events which will be running through May and June as we prepare for both our induction days in July and your child's start with us in September, both of the events are optional.

- Tuesday 6th May 2025 – 6pm Welcome to Southam College Event in the main school hall.

A launch of our transition programme for parents/carers to attend. We will outline how we work with Primary Schools, our transition events and also how Year 7 is structured to support students. This is for adults only.

- Tuesday 17th June 2025 – 4:30 – 5:30pm or 6:00 – 7:00pm Afternoon tea with Year 7 in the main school canteen.

Current Year 7 students will be our hosts for an informal afternoon tea. This will include a Q&A session with the students, a tour of the school for students and further information to be shared with parents. This will be one adult and one child.

Our first event on the 6th May does not require a reservation as it is an open event to all parents, however, this is an **adult only** event where we will outline the transition process itself. Our Afternoon Tea is open to the new students' themselves as well as their parent or carer – please click on the below link or scan the QR code to register for the Afternoon Tea by Friday 6th June 2025.

<https://forms.office.com/e/B1CW7MhK9Z>



We look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to our transition events, and hope that you find them both informative and enjoyable.

Best wishes
Mr J. Johnson



UK Health
Security
Agency

Stop norovirus spreading

Norovirus, also known as the 'winter vomiting bug', is the most common stomach bug in the UK. It can spread easily through close contact, or by contaminated surfaces, food or water.

The main symptoms of norovirus include a sudden onset of nausea, followed by projectile vomiting and diarrhoea, usually 1 to 2 days after becoming infected. Other common symptoms include a high fever, a headache and aching arms and legs.

Good hand hygiene is important to stop norovirus spreading.

To stop norovirus spreading, you should:

- wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water after using the toilet or contact with a sick individual and before preparing and eating food.
- stay off school or work until you have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least two days
- not rely on alcohol gels instead of washing your hands, as these do not kill the virus
- wash any contaminated clothing or bedding using detergent at 60°C using disposable gloves to handle any items
- use bleach-based cleaners to disinfect surfaces

If you catch it, stay home for 48 hours after your symptoms clear

DO



Wash clothes and bedding at 60°C



Wash hands with soap, clean surfaces with bleach-based disinfectants



DON'T



Go to work or school, visit care homes or hospitals



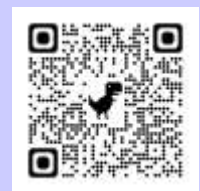
Prepare food for others



Most people will make a full recovery in 2-3 days without needing any medicine. It is important to keep hydrated – especially children and the elderly.

Try not to visit A&E or GP surgeries if you have symptoms of norovirus unless advised to do so by a healthcare professional, as this may spread the bug to others. Call ahead to a GP or ring NHS 111 if you are worried about your symptoms.

Further information is available at NHS 111 or NHS.uk (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus/>)



A number of free online parenting courses are available to Warwickshire families. These are a great way to get advice and learn new skills in the comfort of your own home and at times to suit you. All of the courses are filled with helpful techniques and ideas developed by our experienced parenting professionals to help you become a confident and happy parent. Crucially, you can do our course whenever and wherever suits you and work through it at our own pace.

Follow the link via the QR code above or access these courses and other support via: <https://www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-parenting-courses>

Parents Together

[Read More](#)

Let's Play

[Read More](#)

Coping with teens

[Read More](#)

New Baby in the Family

[Read More](#)

Raising Confident Children

[Read More](#)

Sibling arguments

[Read More](#)

Giving praise effectively
9 easy steps to give praise effectively

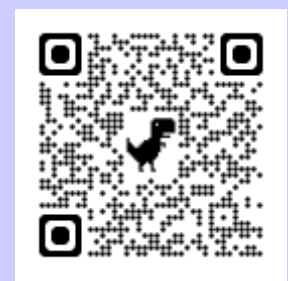
Steps for empathy
10 easy steps to show and develop your empathy

Time to calm down
10 steps for giving time to calm down

Choices and consequences
7 steps for giving choices and consequences

Active ignoring
8 steps for active ignoring unwanted behaviour

Problem solving
7 steps for problem solving



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 29: Goals of education
Article 5, Parental Guidance, Article 18, Parental responsibility



GOGO MAKERS
INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS TO THINK BIG!

ACCESS GRANTED
TO 4-12 YEAR OLDS

SPY CAMP

MAY HALF TERM

YOUR MISSION: INFILTRATE THE
AWARD-WINNING OFSTED APPROVED HOLIDAY CAMPS

MISSION DATES: 27-30th **MAY**

MINI's RECEPTION

GO GO CREATORS
GO GO GROOVERS
GO GO ACTIVE
GO GO EINSTEIN'S
PLUS FREE PLAY
SMALLER GROUPS (RATIO 1:8)

JNR's 5-7 YEARS

ART
DANCE
STEM
SPORT
ARCHERY

SNR's 8-12 YEARS

CRBTIVES
BATTLE SESSIONS
SPORTS SKILLS
SCIENCE LAB
FUTURE STARS
(DANCE)
+ MORE!

NEW IMPROVED PROGRAM FOR RECEPTION YEARS

EMSCOTE
INFANT SCHOOL
WARWICK

FINHAM PARK
SECONDARY SCHOOL
COVENTRY

PRIORS FIELD
PRIMARY SCHOOL
KENILWORTH

HEATHCOTE
PRIMARY SCHOOL
WARWICK GATES

10% EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT AVAILABLE
PLUS 10% SIBLINGS DISCOUNT & PAYMENT INSTALMENTS

See website for details. Offers can not be used in conjunction.

£34.50

FOR A STANDARD DAYS CARE FROM 9AM - 3.30PM

EARLY 8AM DROP OFF AND LATE 5.30PM PICK UP AVAILABLE WITH A SURPLUS FEE

W: www.gogomakers.co.uk

E: hello@gogomakers.co.uk

T: 01926 935377

✓ WE ACCEPT
CHILDCARE VOUCHERS
& TAX FREE CHILDCARE

✓ OFSTED
REGISTERED

★★★★★
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⚠ WARNING
EXTREME FUN!!

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

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'.

SNAP STREAK 97 DAYS

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.

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.

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 'SnapMap' – 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.

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.

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.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' 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.

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.

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.

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

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>

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Some useful information for parents and carers, including online webinars can be accessed via The National College (formerly National Online Safety). At school, we teach the children about safe online behaviours but it is important that these messages are reinforced at home at that parents and carers are aware of how to support their children if issues arise.