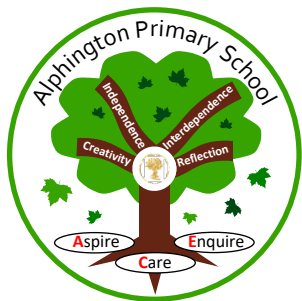




Alphington Primary School

Newsletter

03/12/2021



Message from the Headteacher

Dear Parents / Carers,

It would be lovely to write to you without mentioning Covid but unfortunately, we are not there yet. As you are aware we have a daily increasing number of positive Covid cases in school, both within children and staff. As Covid cases in staff are also on the rise please be aware that your child may not be taught by the class teacher and may also be supported by a range of adults. There may also be a delay in staff being able to respond to queries so thank you for your patience and support. Please can we also ask that all cases, both positive lateral flow test and PCRs are reported to the admin email account.

Christmas:

I am disappointed to tell you that sadly, we are having to cancel all of our Christmas performances for audiences, as we are unable to meet the risk assessments required, in order to safely run these events. I am sure you will be as disappointed as we are, but we have to do all we can to keep everyone safe and to try and slow the spread of Covid. We will look at different ways of sharing these performances with you either through video or audio, and will make this as festive as we can for the children. This isn't a decision that we have taken lightly, and we will do all we can to make sure the children have the best possible run up to Christmas in school.

Children in Need:

Our school community raised a staggering £539.50 for Children in Need - thank you all so much.



Christmas Lunch:

On Weds 15th December, we will hold our school xmas lunch for the children. The cost will be the same and a lunch can be ordered in the normal way. The menu will be :



Roast Turkey & pork sausage or Festive Quorn Roast

served with
**Roast potatoes
Sage & onion stuffing
Peas, carrots & sprouts
Gravy**

followed by
Festive ice cream tub

Hello from St Thomas Library:

We wanted to write to you about our brand-new reading challenge - The Secret Book Quest. The challenge is aimed at children five and over. It is free for children to sign up and a great way to develop their reading skills - any children who are not members can join the library, free again, at the same time as joining The Secret Book Quest.



How the Challenge works

- Children sign up at their local library and receive a Secret Book Quest booklet full of fun facts and puzzles
- Children borrow and read 50 books of their own choice at their own pace
- Children move through 10 'zones' – reading 5 books for each and collecting special stickers along the way to add to their booklet.
- Library staff are on hand to advise and help find books they'll love
- Children are presented with a certificate upon reaching the halfway mark (reading 25 books) and again when they complete the challenge (reading 50 books), along with a special finisher's prize.

ESafety Update:

Continuing our theme of One Kind Word which raises awareness of bullying, it is important we are still supporting children in understanding how one kind word can be reflected when playing games online and communicating through different social media and devices.

We are also noticing an increase in pupils using and talking about TikTok in school. TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-syncing and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around 1 billion active users worldwide.

We have attached two guides which highlights tips to support children in understanding how to spread kindness and on a number of potential risks such as age-inappropriate content, addiction and in-app spending when using TikTok.

Miss Naim

E-safety lead

All 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 issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

10 Ways You Can SHARE KINDNESS ONLINE

Last year, around one in five young people aged 10-15 in England and Wales admitted experiencing online bullying; most commonly being insulted or sworn at, or having hurtful messages sent about them. To someone who's being bullied, the world can seem like a bleak, negative place – but just one kind word can be a ray of hope: a turning point that brightens their day and refreshes their perspective. That's why 'One Kind Word' is the theme of Anti-Bullying Week 2021. We're supporting this year's event by bringing you ten top tips for beating online bullying by replacing it with kindness.

- 1 PRAISE WHERE IT'S DUE**
Sometimes a friend or relative might post online about something they're proud to have achieved: maybe an exam they've passed, a new skill they've learned or a task they've completed. Celebrate their hard work and determination by being kind enough to praise them for it publicly.
- 2 REACH OUT**
It's not always easy to tell what kind of mood someone is in just from what they post online. Simply dropping somebody a message to say hi, to ask if they're OK or to tell them that you're thinking of them could totally make their day.
- 3 RECOMMEND FUN THINGS**
If there's something you enjoy doing online – perhaps you play a particular game, or you've found a really cool site – share it with someone you think will enjoy it. Even recommending a film or TV show you think they'll like can bring a little happiness to someone who really needs it.
- 4 OFFER TO HELP**
Sometimes you might see a friend or family member posting a question online or asking for help with something they can't do themselves. Don't just ignore it – if you can help, get in touch. Something that's difficult for them might be no trouble for you!
- 5 POST POSITIVELY**
Lots of people seem to go online purely to complain about things or be negative. Just because you're communicating online (and not face to face) doesn't mean you can't be positive, though! Post about things that make you happy and that you're thankful for. It could brighten someone else's day.
- 6 SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION**
If somebody that you know has done something positive or shown kindness themselves, go online and thank them with a message or a post. Expressing your gratitude costs nothing and showing someone that you appreciate them will really make them feel good.
- 7 BE UNDERSTANDING**
Showing empathy towards others is an act of online kindness which often gets overlooked. If you notice that someone you know is upset, drop them a message. Sometimes people just need someone else to listen to them and understand their situation.
- 8 SHARE INSPIRATIONAL POSTS**
When you see something online that inspires you or makes you feel happy, share it with people you know. A spot-on quotation, a beautiful photo or an uplifting video can lift someone's spirits and help them to feel better about life.
- 9 THINK BEFORE COMMENTING**
Thinking before we act can be just as important as acting in the first place. Taking a second to consider what you're saying in advance could stop you from posting something negative, hurtful or offensive – even if you don't mean to. It's better to post positively or not post at all.
- 10 LIKE, LOVE AND ENGAGE**
If somebody posts something that you like on social media, don't just scroll past – take the time to like it, love it or leave an appreciative comment! Reacting positively to other people's posts might seem like a small gesture but could mean a lot to them.

Meet Our Expert
Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with more than 10 years of experience in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.

National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

TikTok is a video-sharing social media app which lets people create, view and download looping 15-second clips. Typically, these are videos of users lip-synching and dancing to popular songs or soundbites (often for comic purposes), enhanced with filters, effects and text. Designed with young people in mind, TikTok skyrocketed in popularity in 2019 and has featured near the top of download charts ever since. It now has around a billion users worldwide.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Most videos appearing on a child's feed are light-hearted and amusing. However, some clips have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, themes of suicide and self-harm, or young teens acting in a sexually suggestive way. The sheer volume of uploads is impossible to moderate entirely – and since TikTok Jump's introduction in mid-2021, users can view third-party content outside the app.

18

CENSORED

EXPLICIT SONGS

TikTok primarily revolves around videos of users lip-synching and dancing to music. Inevitably, some featured songs will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the app's young user-base, there is a risk that children may view older users' videos and then be inclined to imitate any explicit language or suggestive actions.

W&H*

TIKTOK FAME

The app has created its own celebrities: Charli D'Amelio and Lil Nas X, for example, were catapulted to fame by exposure on TikTok – leading to many more teens attempting to go viral and become 'TikTok famous'. While most aspiring stars hoping to be 'the next big thing' will find it difficult, setbacks may in turn prompt them to go to even more drastic lengths to get noticed.



HAZARDOUS VISIBILITY

Connecting with others is simple on TikTok – including commenting on and reacting to users' videos, following their profile and downloading their content. The majority of these interactions are harmless, but – because of its abundance of teen users – TikTok has experienced problems with predators contacting young people.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

Like all social media, TikTok is designed to be addictive. It can be hugely entertaining – but that also makes it hard to put down. As well as the punchy nature of the short video format, the app's ability to keep users intrigued about what's coming next mean it's easy for a 5-minute visit to turn into a 45-minute stay.

IN-APP SPENDING

There's an in-app option to purchase 'TikTok coins', which are then converted into digital rewards for sending to content creators that a user likes. Prices range from 99p to an eye-watering £99 bundle. TikTok is also connected with Shopify, which allows users to buy products through the app.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TALK ABOUT ONLINE CONTENT

Assuming your child is above TikTok's age limit, talk to them about what they've viewed on the app. Ask their opinion on what's appropriate and what isn't. Explain why they shouldn't give out personal details or upload videos which reveal information like their school or home address. In the long run, teaching them to think critically about what they see on TikTok could help them to become social-media savvy.

MAINTAIN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The default setting for all under 18s' accounts to 'private'. Keeping it that way is the safest solution: it means only users who your child approves can watch their videos. The 'Stitch' (which lets users splice clips from other people's videos into their own) and 'Duet' (where you build on another user's content by recording your own video alongside their original) features are now only available to over 18s. This might clash with your child's ambitions of social media stardom, but it will fortify their account against predators.

LEARN ABOUT REPORTING AND BLOCKING

With the correct privacy settings applied, TikTok is a relatively safe space. However, in case something does slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report inappropriate content and get them to come to you about anything upsetting that they've seen. TikTok allows users to report anyone breaching its guidelines, while you can also block individual users through their profile.

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

'Family Pairing' lets parents and carers link their own TikTok account to their child's. Through your mobile, you can control your child's safety settings remotely – including limiting screen time, managing their ability to exchange messages (and with whom) and blocking a lot of age-inappropriate content. TikTok's Safety Centre also provides resources for parents and carers to support online safety among families. These resources can be found on their website.

USE RESTRICTED MODE

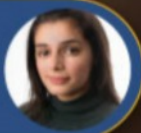
In the app's 'Digital Wellbeing' section, you can filter out inappropriate content (specific content creators or hashtags, for instance) using 'Restricted Mode'. This can then be locked with a PIN. You should note, though, that the algorithm moderating content isn't totally dependable – so it's wise to stay aware of what your child is watching.

MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child to manage their time on it in the 'Digital Wellbeing' section. Under 'Screen Time Management', you can limit the daily permitted time on the app (in increments ranging from 40 minutes to two hours). This preference can also be locked behind a PIN. That way, your child can get their regular dose of TikTok without wasting the whole day.

Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



SOURCES: tiktok.com

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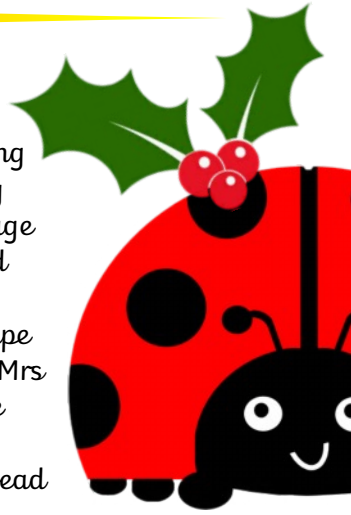
@nationalonlinesafety

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Phase News - Early Years

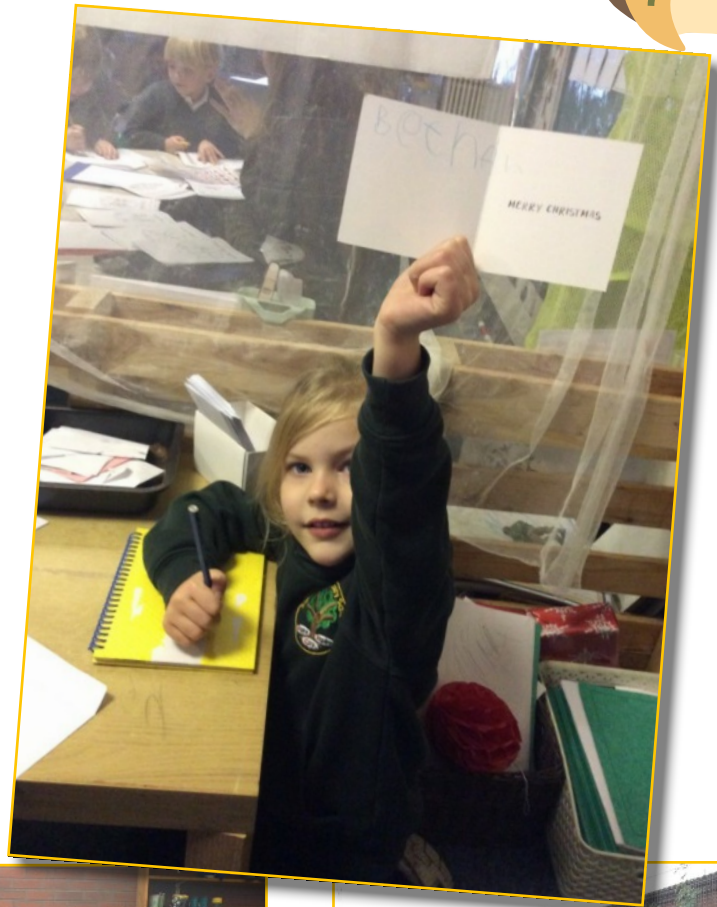
Ladybirds

Preschool is looking very festive at the moment and the children have been busy getting ready for Christmas, from singing songs to making decorations. They have been using their mark making skills to write letters to Santa, thinking carefully about their language while listing the ideas of presents which they would like for Christmas. They have had great fun exploring Christmas objects which has led to some fantastic questions and creations. After exploring different decorations, the Ladybirds used clay to design, shape and cut their own Christmas decorations, which will look fantastic in their homes. In Mrs. Claus's kitchen, the children have been busy baking all kinds of sweet treats and have enjoyed serving them to their friends. One particular biscuit has also featured in the Ladybird's storytelling sessions where they have learnt to tell the tale of 'The Gingerbread Man', the children worked as a group to tell the story and act out different characters.



Foxes and Hedgehogs

The children have loved using their new class story 'The Jolly Postman' to revisit lots of traditional tales and this week, have looked at Goldilocks and the three Bears. The children's knowledge of the story has spilled into their play; from serving porridge in the three bears cottage, to designing chairs for the Bears using junk modelling. The Foxes and Hedgehogs have been busy writing and delivering letters in our roleplay post office where they have used the sounds we have learnt to write some amazing messages to one another! Their maths skills have been developed in the post office too, with parcels to weigh and stamps to count. In PE sessions, Foundation have been developing hand eye coordination by learning some tennis skills- balancing bean bags on our rackets, passing the bean bag in pairs and counting how many repetitions they could complete without dropping their bean bag. They have been real risk takers in Forest Folk sessions, exploring the climbing equipment and adventuring in the woods.



Phase News – Key Stage 1

Year 1 have been collaborative Callies this week, working together to make globes and then finding the equator. We used torches and our globes to explore why the temperature changes through different seasons. We have also started our Little Wandle phonics sessions this week and have all done an amazing job learning our new sounds. You might have noticed that both Squirrels and Bumblebees have had a very special visitor! The elves have joined us in the run up to Christmas and have been setting us all a different well-being challenge each day.



In **Year 2**, Grasshoppers and Dragonflies have been working very hard during our theme lessons and we enjoyed learning about the history of castles. We labelled the different features of castles and we also had a go at making some castles outside during our outdoor learning sessions! This week, we are getting excited about Christmas as our focus text in English is 'Meerkat Christmas!' We are writing postcards about the perfect Christmas in the role of Sunny the meerkat from the story and we have been using some amazing vocabulary to describe all the elements of the perfect Christmas!



Phase News - Key Stage 2

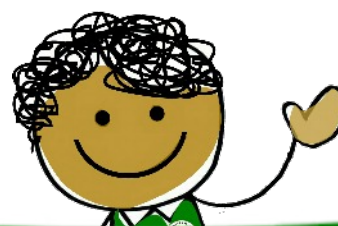
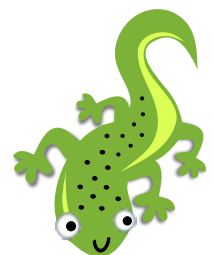
Year 3

Year 3 have been singing and getting in the spirit for Christmas by learning some new Christmas songs, including a French carol with actions to help us remember the new vocabulary. Ask us what 'Noel' means! We have also had a super week of writing, where we have been completing our final writes, focusing on our vocabulary and description. In maths, we have been learning about different lines and carefully using our rulers. We have become experts in drawing perpendicular, parallel and vertical lines. Finally, in science we have been learning about different magnetic materials and testing out the different materials that we could find in class. We noticed a pattern with items that were and were not magnetic!



Year 4

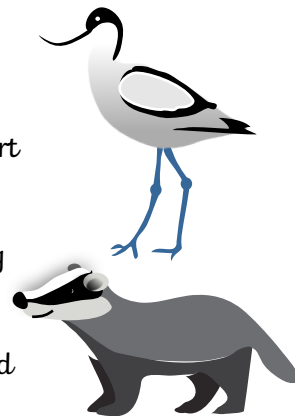
We have been learning so much about living things in science and outdoor learning in the last two weeks. We have been practising our observational drawing skills when finding invertebrates on Pearl's Land and thinking about the different micro-habitats there. We also played a game of migration where we learnt that not all birds survive their long journeys. We also went on a worm hunt and made nests using only one hand, so it was like we had beaks! In English, we have started our new book: An Anthology of Intriguing Animals. We have learnt the page about the orcas off by heart and were impressed with how many facts the writer put in such a short piece of writing. In art, Mrs. Coombes has been teaching us how to paint amazing toucans and monkeys. We are a very artistic year group!





Year 5

Year 5 really enjoyed their visit for the Exeter Chiefs this week as they took part in a quiz. It was very exciting and they showed excellent resilience. In their English lessons, the children have been looking at persuasive writing and how they can use this to help support the environment. Many of them have been using the litter pickers around the school field and playground, to ensure we are not allowing any plastic waste to blow away in the wind. We are really proud of Year 5's efforts with this. The children have also been getting into the Christmas spirit with lots of singing - we are a very musical bunch! Finally, in science, the children have been learning about reversible and irreversible changes and exploring through lots of experiments which changes could be reversed. They have produced some super write-ups. Well done Year 5!



Year 6

Year 6, have been loving our new book: Cracking Contraptions and performed some amazing speeches this week using technical vocabulary. We have also been looking at a curious invention, the manipulation-o-matic and using expanded noun phrases to describe it. During maths, we have been extending our knowledge of classifying 2D and 3D shapes learning and proving Colin and Coco wrong using our explanation skills! In Theme, we have designed our own outfit after learning about fashion styles of different decades since the 1930s - they were beautiful! In science, we have been creating classification keys to help group and name different animals. When outdoors, we made our own invertebrates and created a food chain, thinking about what would eat our creatures and what the apex predators on Pearl's Land would be.



Little Wandle update:

As you are aware, we are preparing to move over to Little Wandle letters and sounds revised in January. In preparation for this, all decodable reading books need to be audited and re-grouped in school. Over the next two weeks, we are asking for all reading books to be left in school and for children to access BugClub for their home reading home. We understand this may be difficult for some, so please feel free to enjoy any books you have at home with your children too. If you have any questions, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. There will be an online parent meeting in the new year to explain the changes and how you can support reading at home.

Thank you,

Miss Oakley



Wraparound news:

Thank you for your amazing support. In a week where we have found ourselves working once again in bubbles and navigating staff shortages, you have responded with such kindness. Your children have shown great resilience during this time, taking the changes in their stride and we are very proud of them. Thank you also for your kind donations. The children now have some fantastic new equipment and toys and are enjoying them already.

Bookings for next half term will open on Monday 6th December. Please can we ask that the sessions you require are booked in advance of attendance. Children who attend but are not booked in may need to be collected from session due to exceeding staff to child ratios. Sessions can be booked up until midday the day before. Thank you for your help with this.

