

Whitchurch Weekly



4th Apr
2025
Issue 27

Message from the Headteacher



Dear Whitchurch Families,

As we come to the end of another busy and exciting term, I want to take a moment to reflect on all the wonderful experiences our children have had and to thank you for your continued support.



Our teachers have been working incredibly hard to enhance the way we teach whole class reading and it has been wonderful to see our pupils engage so enthusiastically. A huge congratulations to our fantastic spellers who won the inter-school spelling bee - we are so proud of you!

Across the school, children have been immersed in a range of enriching workshops and visits, bringing learning to life. Year 1 created some truly impressive bug hotels and Year 2 had an inspiring visit to the Florence Nightingale Museum. Our much-loved Whitchurch Woodland continues to flourish, providing children with a fantastic outdoor learning space.

Meanwhile, Year 3 explored volcanoes through an incredible VR experience, whilst Year 4 enjoyed a fascinating visit to the Science Museum and took part in an important Road Safety show. Year 5 delved into the world of Ancient Greece through drama and Year 6 embarked on their exciting residential trip to Danbury and have been working exceptionally hard in preparation for their SATs.

As always, music has been celebrated this term, with the Spring Music Concert showcasing our talented young musicians and our participation in the HMS String Festival. It has been a joy to see such confident musicians! Additionally, our Science Week this week was packed with hands-on investigations, inspiring future scientists across the school.



A special thank you to the Friends of Whitchurch for organising the 'Celebrate Your Female Hero' sale, which was such a meaningful and thoughtful way of supporting the school.

As we now head into the Easter break, I hope you all have a restful holiday filled with special moments. Thank you for your continued partnership - we look forward to welcoming everyone back for another exciting term.

Wishing you all a wonderful Easter!

Ms Rachel Inniss
Headteacher

Summer
term begins
Tues 22nd April
(gates open
8.40am)

**Farewell
and good luck
to Mrs Chikhlia,
who is leaving
Whitchurch after
being with us
for 13 years!**



**Year 4
'Rocks and Soils'
projects on
display in our
exhibition
area!**

Enrichment Highlights

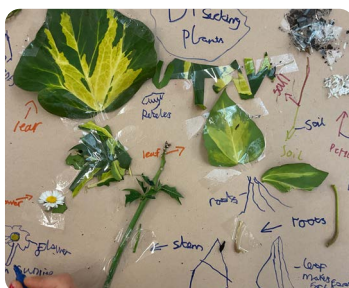


Science Week

Our school buzzed with excitement and was packed with scientific exploration during our fascinating Science Week, themed 'Change and Adapt'! Pupils across all year groups delved into the wonders of the natural world and the processes of transformation. Some classes were fortunate to welcome a STEM ambassador, who led engaging workshops and activities, sparking curiosity and innovation. Others had a fascinating visit from our local expert, Mr Khan, who introduced us to the captivating world of exotic animals.

Back in the classroom, hands-on learning took centre stage, with activities ranging from insightful plant dissections to the creative development of comic strips about immunity. The week culminated in a fantastic exhibition, where parents and carers were able to witness the incredible work our children produced. A huge thank you to everyone who made this week such a resounding success!

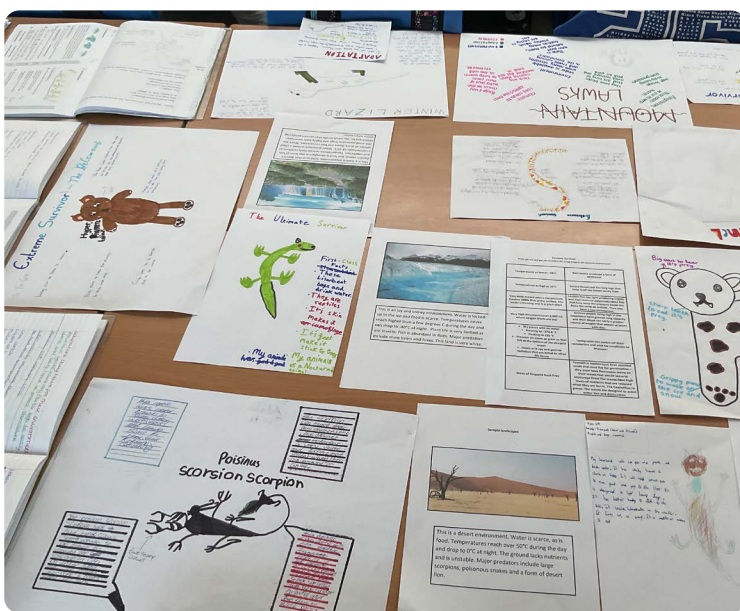
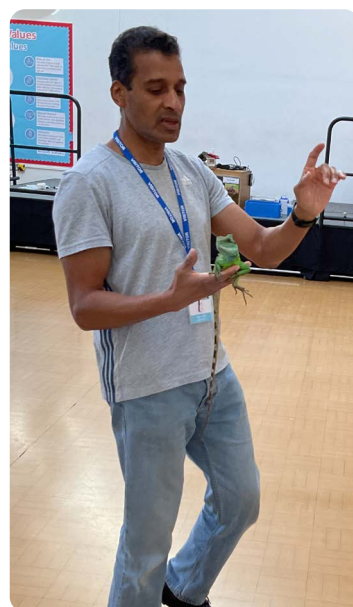
Miss Nickson



Enrichment Highlights



More Science Week Highlights



Music Highlights



Music Achievements

We are very proud to announce that Reyansh in Year 6 secured second place in the Classical Guitar category (Grades 4-6) at the North London Festival of Music, Speech & Drama. Many congratulations to our talented and hard-working young musician!



A big well done to all the children who successfully passed their instrumental exams this term. A special mention to Toby, our Year 6 pupil, who achieved the highest score on his exam among all HMS pupils across the Harrow Borough. What a brilliant result!

Recorder Toby (Year 6) - Grade 4 with Distinction

Flute Mila (Year 6) - Grade 3 with Merit; Shayan (Year 6) - Grade 3 with Merit

Piano Kian (Year 6) - Grade 2

Guitar Hriday (Year 6) - Grade 2 with Merit

Grimsdyke Brass Band

At our Music Assembly this week, Grimsdyke Brass Band treated the whole school to an exciting performance. The children enjoyed a fantastic selection of pieces, including themes from Jurassic Park, Lord of the Rings and Star Wars. They were introduced to the brass family and had the opportunity to join in by keeping the beat and even practising the technique of producing sound like brass players.

A highlight of the session was attempting to play a very long garden hosepipe to learn how to buzz through a mouthpiece - much to everyone's amusement! Our pupils had a brilliant time. If any Year 3, 4 or 5 pupils are interested in learning a brass instrument, please come and see me.



Mrs Leutfeld, Director of Music

Enrichment Highlights



Table Tennis Tournament

This week, Whitchurch took part in a table tennis tournament against other Harrow primary schools at Salvatorian College and won their group stage in singles and doubles matches. They then proceeded to beat another school to win the final. Well done to all of the children who participated - a great achievement!



Schools' Football Week

We have been supporting Schools' Football Week in association with Pokémon. The children have been enjoying the activities and mini tournaments we have run for them!

#SchoolFootballWeek

Miss Wong and Miss Byrne



Spelling Bee Competition

Eight children from Year 3 and 4 competed in a Spelling Bee against four local schools on Wednesday. They sailed through the Year 3 and 4 spellings round and also tackled challenging Year 5 and 6 words. Congratulations to all participants, especially our first place winner, who was crowned the spelling bee champion and took home an amazing trophy!

Miss Goldsmith



Whitchurch Woodland

Project
update



Spring Woodland Update

There have been lots of Whitchurch pupils from all across the school enjoying both structured lessons and free time in the Whitchurch Woodland.

We have a new music wall for fun noise making.
We also have two new composting areas so now we can work on sustainability and biodiversity and use our vegetable and fruit scraps to make nutrient dense composting soil.

We would like to thank 'Riya's Rainbows' for their very generous donation of a brand new shed, which is now fully stocked and ready for lessons.

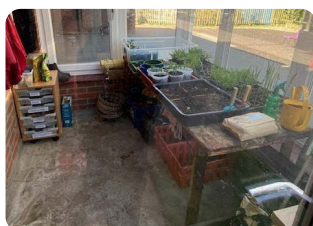
Also thank you to Idris and family for the many kind donations - and for the many other donations we have received.

What's next...

The Florides family are very kindly and generously going to complete the pond and decking works for us later in the academic year. We have invited the Mayor of Harrow and the local press for the grand opening in July - so watch out for Whitchurch in the local papers!

Thank you again to our wonderful community for all your support on this amazing and worthwhile project. We are nearly there!

Mrs Portou



View our
Whitchurch
Woodland
Amazon wish
list here

General Notices and Highlights



Summer Lunch Menu

The lunch menu for the Summer term (and list of allergens) can be found on the School Meals page our website. Please remember to book your meals by Sunday 20th April via ParentPay.

View our
Summer term
menu and
allergens
here

HAF in Harrow Holiday Club and Activities

There are still some places available for holiday clubs and clubs this Easter that are **FREE** for your child if you are in receipt of (income-tested) free school meals. To apply for a place please visit the **Young Harrow Foundation** website.



HAF in
Harrow -
view clubs
activities
here

FoW Easter Treats

This week your child will have received a chocolate Easter treat from Friends of Whitchurch. Just a little something from us to say Happy Easter and enjoy your holidays! **Team FoW**



2025-2026 Term Dates

Term dates for the next academic year (including staff training days) have now been confirmed can be viewed on our website and **page 15** of this newsletter.

View
2025-26
term dates
here

Dates for your Diary

Summer 1



Tuesday 22nd April	3NL visit to Pizza Express, Stanmore
Mon 28th to Tues 29th April	Year 5 residential visit to Woodrow High House
Tuesday 6th May	Year 5 (Girls) Discovery Day at Northwood College
Friday 9th May	Year 4 Trumpets/Clarinets (9.15am and 10.15am)
Monday 12th May	3SH and 3SM visit to Hindu Temple
Monday 19th May	3LA and 3NL visit to Hindu Temple
Tuesday 20th May	5SK and 5RC visit to Kew Gardens
Wednesday 21st May	Year 6 visit to the Paradox Museum (2 classes)
Thursday 22nd May	Class Photographs Year 6 visit to the Paradox Museum (2 classes)
Friday 23rd May	Class Photographs 5SC and 5TG visit to Kew Gardens



Class Assemblies

Tuesdays
Reception
to Year 3
(9.05am to
9.45am)

Tues 29th April	3LA
Tues 20th May	RBP
Tues 10th June	RLS
Tues 24th June	RTP
Tues 8th July	RWD

Thurs 24th April	4ND
Thurs 1st May	1PD
Thurs 8th May	5RC
Thurs 22nd May	5SC

Thursdays
Years 4 to 6
(9.05am to
9.45am)

Inclusion Highlights



This half term the children have enjoyed participating in a range of indoor and outdoor learning activities, taking in the signs of Spring. They have made excellent progress in all areas.

Life Skills - 'Navigation'

Children have been exploring a map of the school and spent time getting to know where their classrooms are, where they can go to visit the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher and their favourite places such as the playground and lunch hall. They have learnt directional vocabulary to guide their friends around the school and took part in an exciting Easter egg hunt!

Social Skills

Children took part in a range of team work and sharing activities including Jenga, building Lego towers and discussed all the exciting event they have planned for the holiday. These sessions have helped to with their attention, listening, collaboration and decision making skills.

Therapy Provision

Children have spent time in the Whitchurch Woodland exploring the mud kitchen, playing sounds on the music wall and making dens! They have also enjoyed weekly library sessions, sensory circuits and ongoing literacy and numeracy based activities - focusing on number bonds to 10, speech and language and fine motor skills such as cutting and threading. We are seeing great improvements in children's extended concentration.



We look forward to more exciting activities in the Summer term!

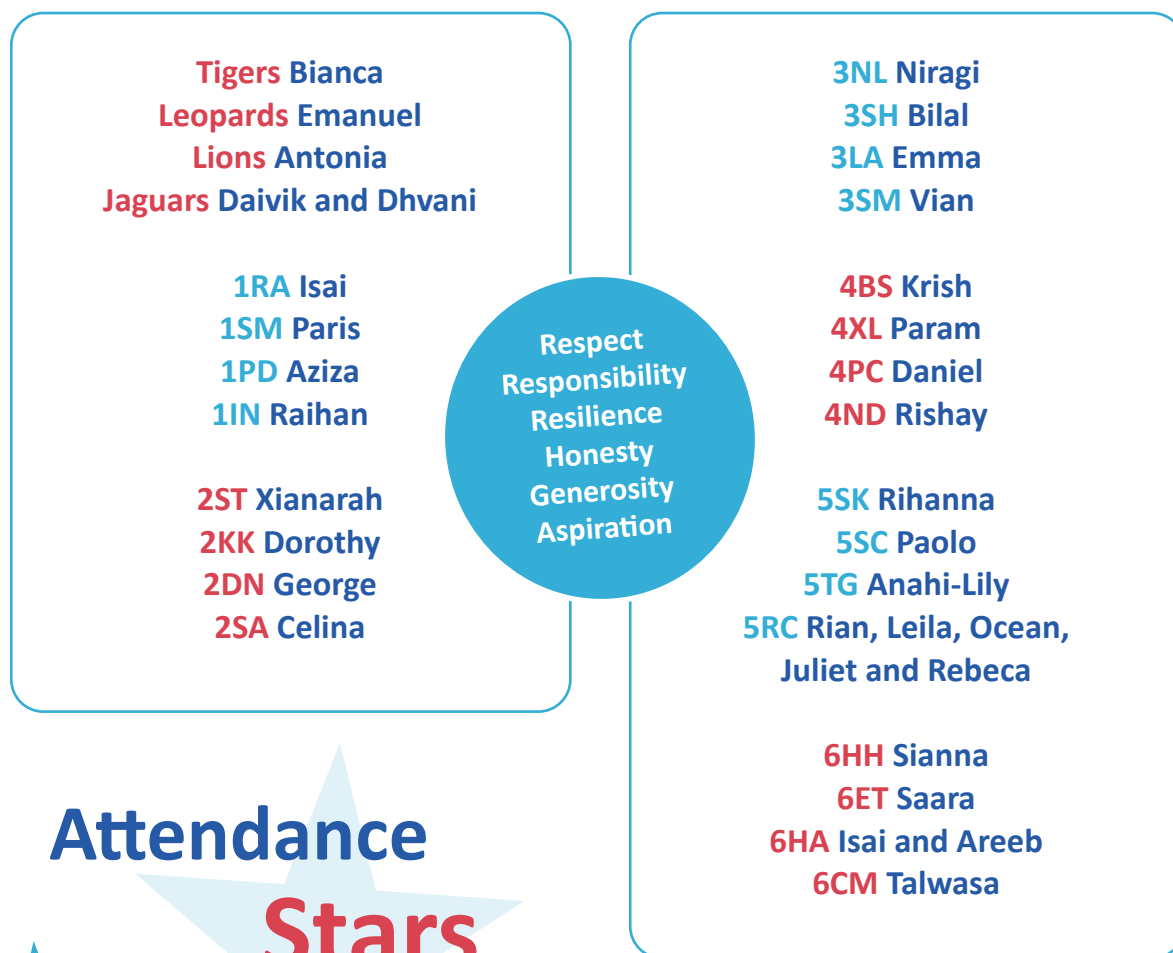
Miss Tunstall



Whitchurch Star Pupils



Well done to our stars of the week, who have been selected for excellent work and demonstrating our school values



Attendance Stars

This week's attendance stars are 2SA (94%)



Did you know?

Forming good habits with attendance and punctuality early on can be crucial to success later in life.

Summer Lunch Menu



Allergens
are listed on
our website
(click here)



Salad bar
and bread
available
daily

	WEEK ONE 21/4, 12/5, 9/6, 30/6	WEEK TWO 28/4, 19/5, 16/6, 7/7	WEEK THREE 5/5, 2/6, 23/6, 14/7
MONDAY MAINS	Chicken Hot Dog, with Potato Wedges & Garden Peas Grilled Cheese Sub, with Potato Wedges & Garden Peas (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Fruity Flapjack (Ve)	Chicken Burger with Jacket Wedges & Green Beans Vegetable Burger with Jacket Wedges & Green Beans (V) (Ve) Pasta & Tomato Sauce (Ve) Cornflake Cake (Ve)	BBQ Chicken & Sweetcorn Pizza with Diced Potatoes & Peas Margherita Pizza with Diced Potatoes & Peas (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Banana Bread Traybake
DESSERT			
TUESDAY MAINS	Turkey Korma Curry, with Jewelled Rice & Green Peas Vegan Lentil & Chickpea Keema Curry with Rice & Green Beans (V) (Ve) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Tropical Fruit Salad (Ve)	Beef Hot Pot with Potatoes & Broccoli Macaroni and Cheese with Garlic Bread & Broccoli (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Tropical Fruit Salad (Ve)	Mild Lamb Chilli with 50/50 Rice & Green Beans Mild Vegan Mince Chilli with 50/50 Rice & Green Beans (V) (Ve) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Tropical Fruit Salad (Ve)
DESSERT			
WEDNESDAY MAINS	Beef Bolognese, with Pasta & Broccoli Vegetarian Meatballs in Tomato Sauce, with Pasta & Broccoli (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Cherry Shortbread	Chicken Sausage & Mash with Gravy, Peas & Carrots Vegan Sausage & Mash, Peas & Carrots (V) (Ve) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Strawberry Mousse	Roast Chicken with Roast Potatoes, with Carrots & Cauliflower Lentil Cheese & Mixed Pepper Roulade with Potatoes, Carrots & Cauliflower (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Raspberry Jelly (Ve)
DESSERT			
THURSDAY MAINS	Chicken Fajita Wraps, with Diced Potatoes & Sweetcorn Quorn Fajita Wraps, with Diced Potatoes & Sweetcorn (V) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Chocolate & Pear Traybake	Peri Peri Chicken with Rainbow Rice & Corn on the Cob Peri Peri Quorn with Rainbow Rice & Corn on the Cob (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Jam & Coconut Sponge Cake	Sticky Honey Chicken with Noodles & Broccoli Sticky Honey Tofu with Noodles & Broccoli (V) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Jam Sponge
DESSERT			
FRIDAY MAINS	Fish Fingers, Chips & Baked Beans or Peas Cheese & Onion Lattice with Chips, Peas or Baked Beans (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Strawberry Jelly (Ve)	Battered Fish, Chips & Baked Beans or Peas Cheese & Sweetcorn Puff, Chips & Baked Beans or Peas (V) Pasta and Tomato Sauce (Ve) Vanilla Ice Cream	Fish Cake Chips & Baked Beans or Peas Cheese & Tomato Quiche Chips & Baked Beans or Peas (V) Jacket Potato with Cheese, Baked Beans (Ve) or Tuna Mayo with Side Salad Chocolate Ice Cream
DESSERT			

Allergen Information: Menu descriptions may not list every individual ingredient. We are aware of the presence of allergens requiring labelling, so please ask a member of the catering team should you require any more details. Vegetarian options are indicated by the symbol (V) and Vegan options are indicated by the symbol (Ve).

COOMBS
CATERING PARTNERSHIP



Support for Families

Online Safety



Instagram

Instagram remains one of the world's most popular social media platforms, especially among teens - used by around 70% of 13 to 17-year-olds. It may be one of the most familiar social media names around but features like AI-powered chatbots and Threads integration have added fresh challenges for families and schools to navigate.

From worrying livestreams to issues like social exclusion and fear of missing out, Instagram isn't just about photos. As the platform evolves, so too must the conversations we have with young people about how they use it.

Please see the poster attached to this newsletter for guidance about these new features, the possible risks they bring and how to make the most of Instagram's parental controls to keep children safe online.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday



Hope Harrow Online Workshops

Parenting for Separated Parents - Tuesdays until 6th May
Gaining Family Cooperation - Monday 28th April
Setting Limits Defining Boundaries - Monday 12th May

View
leaflets
here

Harrow's Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) Programme

Harrow's Holiday Activities & Food (HAF) programme is still open, offering eligible families the opportunity to book a free place for children at a participating holiday club. **For more information and booking places please refer to the Harrow Young Foundation website.**

View
Harrow's HAF
Programme
here

Support for Families



Schools
Counselling
Partnership



Holiday Survival Guide

Breaks from school can actually feel quite stressful for children, especially with all the disruption to the start of the year and their regular schedules and routines are again disrupted. Here are some tips on how to minimise the tears and maximise the joy at home.

As always with parenting, it is most important to look after yourself first. Make sure your own cup isn't full so you can stay calm. You can also let them know in advance what they will be doing over the holiday and remind them again every morning the plans for that day. Many children will also do better if you keep to some routine and schedule every day, to offer them some predictability. If you can, always include some outdoor or physical activity every day as it helps them to stay regulated.

Finally, remember to do less and connect more!

Reach Out - Schools Counselling Partnership

Sometimes we could all do with someone to talk to. If you would like to meet Tom for a confidential and non-judgemental chat about you, your child, or any other worries, he is available on **Wednesdays at 9-10am**.

You can call/text Tom on **07799 028 461** or email him at **tom@schoolsounsellingpartnership.co.uk**

Barnet FC Easter Football Camp at the Hive

Monday 7th April to Thursday 17th April, £17.50 per day

To book a place for your child please visit
www.thehivefoundation.com/holiday-camps

View
leaflet
here



Term Dates

2025-26



Term time
holidays
are not
permitted

Autumn Term 2025

Autumn 1st Tuesday 2nd September to Friday 24th October
Half Term Monday 27th October to Friday 31st October
Autumn 2nd Monday 3rd November to *Friday 19th December*
(2pm finish)

Staff Training Days Monday 1st September and Friday 3rd October
(no children in school)

Spring Term 2026

Spring 1st Tuesday 6th January to Friday 13th February
Half Term Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February
Spring 2nd Monday 23rd February to *Friday 27th March* (2pm finish)

Staff Training Day Monday 5th January (no children in school)

Summer Term 2026

Summer 1st Monday 13th April to Friday 22nd May
Half Term Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May
Summer 2nd Tuesday 2nd June to *Friday 17th July* (2pm finish)

Staff Training Days Monday 1st June and Monday 20th July
(no children in school)

May Day
Bank Holiday
Monday
4th May



Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Absences

2024
updates:
what you
need to
know

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for unauthorised absences that occur after 19th August 2024.

5 consecutive days of Term Time Leave

Fines
will be
issued
for:

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days *(or for fewer days where this has happened before)*.

10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10 week period

Penalty Notice fines will be considered where there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10 week period.

Each parent/carer - for each child

Fines
will be
issued
to:

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent/carer, for each child who was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent/carer receiving 3 separate fines.



First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,
per child when paid
within 28 days.**

*(reduced to £80 per
parent/carer, per child
if paid within 21 days)*

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

**£160 per parent/carer,
per child when paid
within 28 days.**

*(no option to pay
at £80 level)*

Third Offence (and any further offences within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. the case will proceed to the Magistrates' court.

**Magistrate's fines can
be up to £2,500 per
parent/carer, per child.**

Please refer to our Attendance and Punctuality Policy and speak with the school if you are thinking of taking your child out of school during term time. You will need to make a written request to take your child out of school and any leave of absence will need to be agreed by the Headteacher before it is given.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

INSTAGRAM

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Instagram remains one of the world's most popular social media platforms, especially among teens – with around 70% of 13 to 17-year-olds using it. Owned by Meta, Instagram allows users to share photos and videos, create interactive 'stories', broadcast live, send private messages and follow others. With regular updates and new features, it's essential for parents and educators to stay informed about how children are using the app – and what the risks are.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Instagram's design encourages prolonged use through endless scrolling of trending content and generating a fear of missing out (FOMO). Children can quickly lose track of time browsing posts from friends, influencers, and strangers, which may disrupt their day-to-day activities.

AI CHATBOT CONCERNS

Meta's AI, which is available on Instagram, allows users to chat with an in-app chatbot. While often helpful, it can blur boundaries for young users, who may ask for or read content that is inappropriate or see it as a real friend or confidant. Privacy issues also arise, as conversations may not be as secure or private as children assume.

RISKS OF GOING LIVE

The livestream feature allows real-time broadcasting to followers – or anyone, if the account is public. This increases the chance of unwanted contact from strangers and pressure to act in ways that gain attention, including engaging in inappropriate behaviour. Viewers may also post offensive or harmful comments during live sessions.

THREADS INTEGRATION

Threads is Instagram's sister app for public, text-based conversations. Posts from Threads appear in users' Instagram feeds and can lead children to view, share, and comment on public conversations with strangers. The content may not always be age-appropriate and can be misleading or false.

SCHEDULED MESSAGING

Instagram's newer ability to schedule direct messages means that children could receive messages late at night or early in the morning. This can disrupt their sleep or keep them preoccupied before the school day even begins.

EXCLUSION AND LOW SELF-WORTH

Feeling left out online can have a real emotional impact. Being left out of photos, receiving fewer likes, being unfollowed, or being ignored in chats and comments can leave children feeling excluded, which often hurts as much as in real life. There is a risk this can lead to reduced self-esteem and a sense of not belonging.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE INSTAGRAM'S SUPERVISION TOOLS

Instagram's built-in Family Centre lets parents monitor how much time their child spends on the app. Specialised 'teen accounts' are private by default and offer controls on who can message them. Make sure that children use their real age when registering their account to ensure they have these protections.

OPEN UP THE CONVERSATION

Talk regularly to the children in your care about what they enjoy on Instagram – and what makes them uncomfortable. Encourage honest chats about filters, body image, and online approval. Reassure them that they don't need to edit their appearance or chase 'likes' to feel valued.

SET BOUNDARIES FOR THREADS AND AI

Parental controls on Instagram also apply to Threads. These allow parents to monitor time spent in the app, check follower lists and adjust exposure to sensitive content. Discuss AI features, too, therefore helping children understand that chatbots aren't real people and should be used with care.

BE MEDIA-SAVVY WITH INFLUENCERS

Parents should follow a few of the influencers their child watches, so they can better understand the content they're seeing. Use this as a springboard to talk about the difference between genuine recommendations and paid promotions – and how online personalities can shape opinions and behaviour.

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.



The National College®