



Gig Mill Primary School Newsletter

Date: 18.10.24

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a busy first half term we have had in school!

Our Reception children have not only settled brilliantly into their routines, but they have also been on their first 'school trip' this week as they have walked around our local area looking at different types of buildings. The teachers were really proud of their very sensible behaviour and of all their knowledge about types of homes.

Last week we had a visit from a photographer and videographer who captured lots of aspects of Gig Mill School life from Nursery to Y6 and when the video and images are uploaded onto the website, we will let you know.

Finally, thank you to all the children and families who supported the HSA discos last week. It was a fantastic night of fun and dancing – and everyone had a great time. A big thank you to the volunteers who helped on the night too!

Best wishes,
Mrs Griffiths
(Head of School)

On Sunday 10th November, we will be taking part in the Remembrance Parade and wreath laying in Mary Steven's Park.

If any children who are attending with their Beavers/ Cubs/ Scouts/ Rainbows/ Brownies / Guides groups, would like to have a role in laying our school wreath on this occasion we would like to hear from you.

We are asking any children interested to write a short piece to explain why they would like this responsibility and opportunity to represent our school.

All applications will be carefully considered by our Trust Council and Senior Leaders in school. The deadline for entries is Friday 25th October. All entries to be handed to class teachers.

Anyone attending the parade on Sunday is also invited to wear their Beavers/ Cubs/ Scouts / Rainbows/ Brownies / Guides uniform to school on Monday 11th November if they wish to.

Finally, if anyone has a special art / craft talent and would like to help us create a very special wreath by donating any handmade poppies we would love to receive them. Think about your use of materials as this wreath needs to stay outside in all weathers. Poppies made of paper and card won't last very long, but any that are made of wool or plastic for example will last much longer.

All donations of handmade poppies need to be in school by the start of the day on Wednesday 6th November.



Important Diary Dates for this term:

Parents' Evenings -
21/10/24 & 23/10/24

School photos day –
22/10/24

Half term –
28/10/24 – 01/11/24

INSET day 04/11/24

Whole school carol
concert 1.00pm
20/12/24
*** Term finishes at 2pm
on 20/12/24**

Christmas holiday-
23/12/24—3/1/25
**School re-opens to
pupils on Monday 6th
January**

October House Points

Emerald 2963

Diamond 2920

Sapphire 2669

Ruby 2577



Congratulations to all the children who have achieved awards in our Celebration Assemblies so far in October.

Gig Mill Kindness Award -

w/c 07.10.2024 - 1H - Jake, 1W - Ashley, 2DJ - Keshav, 2B - Lula, 2KJ - Owen, 3AB - Mia, 3MB - Dorothy, 3D - Eliza, 4C - Nevaeh, 4FG - Chloe, 4JR - Thomas, 5F - Seth, 5GW - Josh, 5G - Caitlin, 6P - Eden, 6H - Isabelle, 6W - Imogen, ASD Base - Ezra

w/c 14.10.2024 - 1H - Lola, 1W - Florence, 2DJ - Sophia, 2B - Leo, 2KJ - Jenson, 3AB - Connie, 3MB - Milly, 3D - Cody, 4C - Sienna, 4FG - Eli, 4JR - Elizabeth, 5F - Isobel, 5GW - Alex, 5G - Matilda, 6P - Cameron, 6H - Riley, 6W - Millie, ASD Base - Arran



School Photos: Tuesday 22nd October

All children **with photo permission** will have their school photograph taken during Tuesday 22nd October.

We are able to take individual photographs **or** family groups where siblings are in school or in our Nursery. You will be able to order online once the proofs are returned to school. If you would like your child to have their school photograph taken, ensure that you have completed the 'Use of Images and video parental consent form' sent out via Parentmail on 3rd October and said 'Yes' to Q7 - If not, please complete here <https://forms.office.com/e/LubN7FjTcB>

TT Rockstars

Part of the maths curriculum is for children to learn their times tables up to 12x12, and to be able to recall these rapidly from memory. TTRS supports children with learning and revising the tables in a fun, game-style way.

You can access this app through the internet at <https://play.ttrockstars.com> or by downloading the Times Tables Rock Stars app from your app store. Your child will have a personal login and password that they will bring home with them.

3 minutes 3 to 4 times a week will really help support your child with learning their times tables. We can't wait to see who will become a Times Table Rock Star!

Pre-loved uniform -

We have quite a selection of pre-loved uniform in a range of sizes. If you are interested to see what we have, please get in touch with our school office.

Our cupboards are pretty well stocked and for most items we can't take any more donations at the moment— however if you have any jumpers to donate, sizes for Y4 upwards— we do have a need for any donations of either plain or school logo jumpers to fit Y4, Y5 and Y6.

Thank you!

Important dates for your diary:

Friday 20th December school

closes at 2.00pm

Friday 18th July school closes at

2.00pm

Water bottles -

Please could all the children bring non-spill water bottles as we are having a lot more spillages with some of the different cup designs.

Coats -

Now the weather is much colder and very changeable it is essential the children have a coat in school every day. Please could you ensure all coats (and other uniform items) are labelled with their names.

Celebrating attendance

Congratulations to **2DJ** who had 98.46% attendance for w/c 07.10.2024 and to Class **5F** for w/c 14.10.2024 who had 98.37% attendance

Our whole school attendance figure for this term so far is **94.84 %**

Safeguarding

If you are concerned about a child then please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead who is Mrs Griffiths or our Deputy Safeguarding Leads Mrs Powell, Mrs Suchomski, Mrs Daniels, Mrs Garratt.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of us all. If we are concerned about a child we have a duty to contact Children's Service, if you are concerned about a child, outside school, then you can call 0300 555 0050 with your concerns and seek advice. Our safeguarding policy can be found on our school website.



Skills Builder– at Gig Mill Primary School

This year, we are very proud to be working with The Skills Builder Partnership to ensure every child at Gig Mill Primary School has opportunities to build eight essential skills to support them now and beyond their primary education.

Research has shown that building the eight essential skills within the Skills Builder programme can support the emotional well-being and academic success of children and young people, as well as preparing them for life beyond school. The Skills Builder Framework takes each of these essential skills and breaks them down into steps from initial exposure to a high level of mastery.

The essential Skills are:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Staying positive
- Aiming high
- Leadership
- Teamwork

Each month we will focus on a different skill and through specific lessons and indirect teaching, we will help to develop this skill across school. We will let you know via the school newsletter which skill we are focusing on each month so that you can help to reinforce this at home if you wish. We also hope to involve parents in this journey. For example, if you have a job or role that utilises any of these essential skills, we would be interested in hearing from you!

The start of this programme should offer your child many exciting opportunities within school and we look forward to sharing these with you throughout the year!

Our October Skills Builder focus has been Leadership. You could try this at home:



Take a walk with a family member or friend. Talk about how you are feeling today. You could ask them how they are feeling too.



This is an interesting news story about 'people in power accepting gifts' that you might like to discuss further at home with your child. Look at the 'things to talk about at home' section.

TAKEHOME

14th - 20th
October



In the news this week

UK Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, has faced questioning and criticism recently for accepting free gifts. The Prime Minister has said he would continue to accept such gifts, despite the negative comments, stating that he is not doing anything wrong. Sir Keir, an Arsenal football fan, has also come under pressure for receiving thousands of pounds worth of football tickets. Although he is already an Arsenal season ticket holder, Sir Keir explained that security concerns mean he can no longer watch games from his usual seat in the stands.

Things to talk about at home ...

- > Do you believe politicians should always be allowed to accept free gifts?
- > Can you make a list of the different times you give people gifts, and times you receive them?
- > Do you prefer to give or receive gifts? Ask your people at home what they think.

Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss



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At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they can be great for connecting with others, there are several risks posed by these tools.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Teens are often trying to find their place in their social group. Unfortunately, group chats can sometimes lend themselves to unkind comments being shared freely, putting people down to make their peers laugh – often creating a vicious circle that encourages others to join in. Being bullied so publicly – in front of friends and acquaintances – can also amplify the hurt, embarrassment and anxiety that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: for instance, starting a new group, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one person doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss events that exclude them – for example, sharing photos from a day out that they didn't attend.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by a child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some apps have features that cause messages to disappear after they're viewed, so children may be unable to report something they've seen, as it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

Group chats can feel more private and protected, allowing children to share inside jokes and video calls with a smaller group of friends. It's important to remember that while the chat's content is private between those in the group, individual users can easily share material with others outside of the group, or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something a child intended as private becoming public is higher if there are strangers in the chat.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely for children to communicate with people they don't know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly towards everyone present. It's wise for young people to avoid sharing personal details and remember that they have no control over what others do with the material they send into the chat.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications they tend to generate. Every time someone sends a message, each member's device will be 'pinged' with an alert. This could result in hundreds of notifications a day. This is often highly distracting, and young people's fear of missing out (FOMO) can cause increased screen time as they try to keep up with the conversation.

74

Advice for Parents & Carers

117

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for young people to compete for social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse which could upset others. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave in this way. If the child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure children understand the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school, or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up and how it might be used.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being picked on.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their identity to gain a child's trust and serve their own ends – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure the child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and why they should never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block whoever sent the material, report that person to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could put a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise that it's OK for children to simply leave any group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a device bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of the group chat while disabling notifications – and that it would be healthier for them to do so, avoiding a situation where they could feel pressured to respond.

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

Sources: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11-13/lets-talk-about/socialising-online/group-chats/> | <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>



FREE water safety sessions for Years 5/6 children (ideal for weak and non-swimmers)

Venue: Crystal Leisure Centre

FAMILY SESSION for families with children in school years 5/6

Monday 28 October at 6.30pm

Wednesday 30 October at 6.30pm

Thursday 31 October at 6.30pm

For booking & further info contact

Water Safety Coordinator

Claire Porter

claire.porter@activeblackcountry.co.uk

danielle.gubatts@dudley.gov.uk

