

Happy Half Term

Sarah Gospel
Headteacher

Monday 3rd
November
Year 2 Drama
Workshop

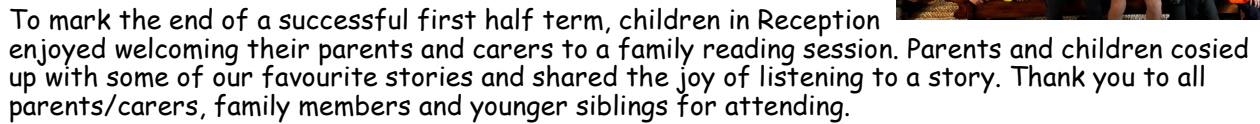
OPAL

Children's Playdough



These links can be slightly temperamental; if they are not working please try again later. Thank you.

Year 2 had a fabulous time at Hever castle last week. The children took part in a castle tour, scavenger hunt, medieval workshop and explored the adventure playground. The children were excellent role models and represented The Gattons so well. We particularly loved the castle tour guides fascinating facts and going into rooms set up for medieval times. Thank you to all the adults who helped on our trip.

[illegible]

Online safety—Please find below what you need to know about Minecraft. If you'd like more support with online safety for your children, please look at the following websites or come and talk to your class teacher or Mrs Gospel:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

<https://nationalcollege.com/institutions/national-online-safety>

Please remember PEGI age ratings on games are to keep your children safe - would you let them watch a 15 or 18 film?

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

AGE RESTRICTION
PEGI 7

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal



Each year we support the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. From Monday 3rd November, Year 2 children will be visiting classrooms to sell poppies. If your child would like to purchase a poppy, can you please send a silver coin donation into school in a named envelope in your child's book bag.

Diary Dates



November

Monday 3rd
Thursday 6th
Friday 7th
Monday 10th
Friday 14th
Thursday 20th
Friday 21st
Saturday 22nd
Tuesday 25th
Thursday 27th

Y2 Drama Workshop
Reception Learning Meeting - 9am
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
Anti bullying week - wear odd socks to celebrate our uniqueness
Children In Need Day - Details to follow
Non Uniform Day - FOGS Christmas Fayre Donations
Y1 Drama Workshop
FOGS Christmas Fayre
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings
Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings

December

Monday 1st
Tuesday 2nd
Thursday 11th
Thursday 11th
Monday 15th
Thursday 18th

Flu Immunisation
Carol Service @ Kings Church - Years 1 & 2 - 2pm
Reception Nativity at school 9.30am or 2pm
FOGS Christmas Discos - Years 1 & 2
Thank you assembly for volunteers
'All Things Christmas' Day - Details to follow

January

Tuesday 6th

First day of the Spring Term