Unique and Valued by God

The St Mark's Fortnightly Newsletter

20th January 2023

'A school where children develop the passion to learn, the skills and knowledge to succeed and the confidence to take Christian values into our diverse society.'

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Governors,

Parent School Association (PSA)

PSA—It was great to have over 30 parents present at last week's PSA meeting and we look forward to meeting again on **Tuesday 24th January at 9.00am** to select out PSA Committee. There are a number of other events and activities taking place across the week, including trips to Durning Library, RE trip to learn about different religions; Year 3 and 4 music concert ; Coffee morning and EYFS Stay and Play.

CAR PARKING

Please be considerate when parking outside the school. Avoid causing congestion, making it difficult for other drivers and parking that will endanger our children as they cross the road.

Omnibus theatre in Clapham is running a fantastic **free theatre programme for 8-11 year olds** this February half term **for Pupil Premium** students. Check for email sent for full information.

Parents' Prayer Group

Mrs Natasha, our Family Liaison Worker will be leading at parents prayer group every Friday Morning at 9.00am. Please join us from Friday 27th 9.00-9.15am

Bus strikes are planned throughout January. Please plan your journey ahead.
More info on page 4

VALUE OF THE WEEK

Digital Flourishing Friendship

BIBLE VERSE

"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends."

John 15.13

ATTENDANCE NEWS

N - 82.81%

R - 91.43%

1 - 99.26%

2 - 88.08%

3 - 95.93%

4 - 91.67%

5 - 97.6%

6 - 93.48%

Total - 92.57%

Attendance & Punctuality

Dear Parents and Carers,

A massive well done to all the children in Year 1 and Year 5 for an excellent attendance!

Please continue to do your best to ensure children arrive by 8.45am

Thank you

Mrs Natasha

What is happening at St Mark's

Dodgeball Competition

Awesome day out!

A cohesive team, the kids implemented all the tactics practised. St mark's finished second in the group stages; with 2 wins and 1 loss

Oak Class learning adventures!

Friday 13th January Children in Y2 became super heroes for one day!

And every Wednesday they will visit the Triangle Playground.

Juniper class Rocket making afternoon!

Year 1 have been learning about space. They spent the afternoon junk modelling creating their own rockets.

They built some amazing rockets, I think we have some future engineers!

Many thanks to all the parents and children for all the recyclable materials we received!

NOTICES, EVENTS & Term Dates

Wednesday 25th January 2023	Parent's Coffee Morning –Led by the Lambeth Autism Advisory Service	9 – 10.00
Thursday 26th January 2023	Year 3 Olive Class visiting Balham Mandir as part of their work on Hinduism	Morning
Thursday 26th January 2023	Year 3 and 4 Music concert for Parents	2.50pm Start
Friday 27th January 2023	EYFS Stay and Play for Nursery and Reception Parents	9.00-10.30am
Friday 27th January 2023	Year 5 Sycamore Class visiting the British Museum for a Mayan exhibition	
Tuesday 31st January 2023	Year 4 Palm Class out to British Museum as part of focus on Ancient Greece	Leaving in the morning and back by 1.00pm—This is a date change
Thursday 2nd February 2023	Year 2 Oak Class out to Vauxhall City Farm as part of science focus on habitats	
Tuesday 7th February 2023	Safer Internet Day	
Tuesday 7th February 2023	Reception Ebony Class out to Vauxhall City Farm	
Wednesday 8th February 2023	Parents Evening	3.00-5.30pm
Thursday 9th February 2023	Parents Evening	3.30-5.00pm
Friday 10th February 2023	Year 4 Palm Class Ancient Greece Day	
Friday 10th February 2023	Year 3 Olive Club Ancient China Day	
Friday 10th February 2023	Parent and Staff Football	9.00 at the school gates
Friday 10th February 2023	Last Day of Term 3	
Monday 20th February 2023	Term 4 Begins	

- **Bus strikes** **Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 January**

There are strikes planned on Abellio bus services, with TfL warning commuters to expect disruption.

The action will be on the following dates:

The following routes will be affected:

Day routes – 3, 27, 45, 63, 68, 109, 130, 156, 195, 196, 201, 207, 267, 270, 278, 315, 322, 350, 367, 381, 407, 415, 427, 433, 464, 482, 490, 969, C10, E5, E7, E10, E11, H20, H25, H28, H26, P5, P13, R68, R70, S4, U5, U7, U9

Route 481 will operate but with fewer services on weekdays from 7.30am-8am, and from 3pm-4pm.

- **24-hour routes – 24, 111, 159, 285, 344, 345**

NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL ABOUT CHILDREN'S ABSENCES

Please ensure to phone or e-mail the school office if your child is not well enough to come to school or notify any other reason for the absence.

Tel. 020 7735 1467 or admin@st-markscofe.lambeth.sch.uk

Join the St. Mark's Family

Nursery Spaces available

If you, a neighbour, a friend or a relative are interested in a free, full-time Nursery Class place for this academic year or a Nursery or Reception space for September 2023, please contact us to express your interest, complete an application form and arrange an informal tour of the school.

St Mark's C of E Primary School is located on the Oval/Kennington borders (just behind the Oval cricket ground).

We are a friendly, family-based school that provides our pupils with a rigorous, yet inspirational, all-round education. We aim to challenge and engage all pupils during their learning journeys at St Mark's and prepare them for their lives beyond the school.

Our size, alongside our strong Christian ethos, also enables us to place an equal emphasis on nurturing each individual child's growth, development and character.

Phone: 020 7735 1467

Email: admin@st-markscofe.lambeth.sch.uk

Web: www.stmarkscofeprimarylambeth.co.uk

Twitter: @StMarks_Lambeth

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

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about TWITTER

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Twitter is a social media network which allows users to post short messages ('tweets') of up to 280 characters. Tweets can consist of text, photos, videos, audio, links, polls and GIFs – often linked by hashtags if they share a common theme or message. Hashtags receiving high levels of interest are said to be 'trending'. Twitter users can engage with other people's posts by liking, retweeting (sharing) or tweeting back (commenting on). Since the entrepreneur Elon Musk acquired Twitter in October 2022 for $44 billion, he has implemented several major changes to the platform.

INTERACTION WITH STRANGERS

Tweets are public by default, meaning that anyone can view and interact with posts, follow someone and send direct messages. The concern here is that young people may therefore connect and communicate with strangers. Some individuals may follow a young person's Twitter account simply because they have similar interests; however, others may turn out to have more sinister intentions.

FIXATION ON VIEW COUNT

Twitter has recently introduced a 'view count' feature – telling users how many people have seen their tweet (even if they haven't reacted to it). Previous research has found that unfavourable comparisons with other social media users can cause young people to experience feelings of insecurity, jealousy and low self-esteem – leading to an obsession with increasing their numbers.

TROLLS AND BULLYING

The anonymity offered by fake profiles encourages some users to send tweets designed to provoke a reaction; to disrupt conversations; to spark an argument; or to harass the recipient. Such trolling and bullying can impact the mental wellbeing of both the target and anyone who witnesses it. Encourage your child to come to you if they experience such behaviour on Twitter, or if they see it taking place.

PAID-FOR VERIFICATION

Previously, if a Twitter profile displayed a blue tick icon, it meant that the owner – usually a celebrity or a major organisation – had been verified as genuine. Now, however, anyone can pay for a Twitter Blue subscription to receive the tick, with the platform carrying out limited checks on the account's authenticity. This could easily lead to more fake accounts impersonating real people or companies.

CONTENT MODERATION CHANGES

In late 2022, Twitter stated that their "policy enforcement will rely more heavily on de-amplification of violative content: freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach". No policies have changed yet, but this wording suggests they may limit who can see posts rather than removing them. While supporting free speech, this could encourage an environment where some toxic content remains online.

HIJACKED HASHTAGS

The hashtag (#) is one of Twitter's most recognisable facets, allowing users to find specific trends or topics. But the sheer volume of tweets each hour can rapidly distort a hashtag's meaning: an initially innocent search term can quickly end up returning inappropriate results. This is common with 'trending' hashtags, as people know that using them will get their tweet seen by a larger audience.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SET ACCOUNTS TO PRIVATE

To reduce some of the fear of your child's tweets being seen and shared by anyone, you can always make their account protected. This means that your child has to give approval for another user to view their posts. You can change Twitter's privacy settings so that your child can't be messaged directly by other people on the platform and their geographical location won't be shared.

FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

It can be difficult for *anyone* to ascertain if something online is real or false, but particularly for young people. Encourage your child to check several reputable sources to determine if a story they've seen is true; remind them to watch out for scams and think about the message's possible motive. Emphasise that it's not a good idea to retweet something if they aren't sure it's correct.

ENGAGE SAFETY MODE

CENSORED

When Safety Mode is activated, Twitter checks for abusive or spammy behaviour such as hurtful language or repeated negative replies. The platform then flags these suspect accounts and blocks them from responding to your child's tweets. The autoblock function then prevents these accounts from interacting with your child's again for seven days.

EXPLORE THE NEW SETTINGS

Previously, any user could reply to anyone else's tweets. However, the new conversation settings let your child determine who can reply to their posts – either by selecting everyone (the default option), people they follow or only people they mention (using the @ symbol). This improvement has given users extra control, providing them with more protection from trolls and online abuse.

PAUSE BEFORE POSTING

It's important that young people think about what they're about to post and whether they might regret it later. Twitter has developed 'nudges': little prompts which appear if someone is about to tweet using harmful or offensive language. These nudges promote more positive online behaviour by giving users an opportunity to pause and consider their words before they post something.

BLOCK, REPORT OR MUTE

If someone is upsetting your child on Twitter, you can block and report them. Blocking stops them from messaging or following your child, while reporting an account alerts Twitter to investigate possible misuse. The 'mute' feature, meanwhile, keeps tweets from a specific account (or which include certain words) out of your child's timeline. The other user won't know that they've been muted.

BE CAREFUL WHO TO FOLLOW

As accounts are no longer being as rigorously verified under the 'blue tick' system, it's essential that young Twitter users understand what this means, in terms of people not necessarily being who they claim. Anyone who your child only knows online is *still* a stranger, regardless of how long they've been communicating for. Remind your child never to disclose personal information on social media.

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.

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: https://blog.twitter.com/common-thread/en/topics/stories/2022/how-twitter-is-nudging-users-healthier-conversations | https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/product/2022/twitter-blue-update https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2022/twitter-2-0-our-continued-commitment-to-the-public-conversation | https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2131&context=etd

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