

Clare Mount Specialist Sports College

No. 167



October 2023



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Front cover: Our school visit to Paris earlier this month.

Dear Parents/Carers,

I'd like to start by saying how fantastic it is that we are united on one school site this year. It is so lovely to walk around our new school and see all our students making the most of the space and resources this move has provided. I look forward to sharing all the exciting things our students and members of staff have been up to in this and future newsletters.

Our students' summer exam results were again excellent this year. The high standards are a reflection of the dedication and effort that the staff and students put into their work and of the support parents and carers give, working in partnership with school. Well done to all our talented students; your hard work has certainly paid off! We send our best wishes to those students who have successfully moved on to their chosen college courses and warmly welcome back those who have returned to our Sixth Form.

Students returned in September looking smart and ready to begin the new academic year. Thank you for your support with uniform; it is much appreciated. Our new Year 7 cohort have made a great start to the academic and social life at Clare Mount. The transition to secondary school can be difficult but it has been lovely to see so many settle in so quickly and get involved in all the things we have on offer. We look forward to seeing our Year 7 Parents and Carers at the upcoming Family Welcome sessions.

On the subject of welcomes, September saw several new members of staff commence working with us: Mrs Freeman joined the English department, Mrs Prendergast joined us as a Teacher Across the Curriculum and Mrs Parry as a Teacher of Science.

The school year got off to a busy start with many of our students heading to Chirk Castle for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition. **The weather wasn't kind, but our students proved their resilience and** commitment by completing the expedition tired but happy.

We have held several parent meetings this term, including Welcome Evenings for Years 7, 11 and Sixth Form and an IEP evening for Years 8, 9 and 10. The turnout for these events was excellent and provided staff and parents/ carers with the opportunity to share information.

As always, our students have made us very proud with their donations towards our Harvest Festival collection. Forum Housing Association and Wirral Foodbank will welcome the generous donations.

Next term promises to be as busy as ever with our students' performance of 'Matilda' to look forward to, as well as a Bingo night and the Christmas festivities planned. So, in the meantime, I wish you a relaxing half term holiday and look forward to welcoming children back to school on Monday 30th October.

Kim Webster, Headteacher
October 2023

Paris 2023

In September, 39 pupils travelled for a five-day trip to Paris. This was the first real residential for many of our group, due to Covid restrictions and saw the comeback of the popular Paris trip. As expected, our pupils had a fantastic time!



The crossing from Dover to Calais was a bit choppy, but our pupils coped with the conditions well and enjoyed being able to wave farewell to the white cliffs of Dover and say 'Bonjour' to the northern coast of France.

Our chateau had its own heated swimming pool which was fantastic after a day of sightseeing.



Our first day took us to Brie-Comte-Robert for the morning to visit the local market.



In the afternoon, we headed into Paris to visit the Basilique du Sacré-Coeur et Place du Tertre in Montmartre to see the artists.



Paris 2023

Great fun was had on the scary and not so scary rides at Disney.



Our food was delicious! Every day we made our own lunches and we even had the opportunity to eat snails!



One evening, we cooked crêpes together.



On our final full day, we visited the Eiffel Tower and everyone made it up the stairs to the first floor at least, which was a great achievement for some of our pupils. Then we had a boat trip on the River Seine. Then we saw the sights of Paris

We had a great trip! Au revoir Paris, à la prochaine!

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Harvest Festival at Clare Mount



Clare Mount celebrated its first Harvest Festival in our new building this week as the Rev Joe Smith from St Oswalds Church in Bidston took our assembly.

We were inundated with tins, packets and jars in our **collection for Wirral Food bank and Forum Housing. "Wow"** was the reaction as staff and students saw the collection pile grow bigger as the day went on.

Wirral Food bank said that donations from the community had gone down recently so our collection really helped. They collected 18 large baskets of food supplies.

Forum Housing had to use a shopping trolley to load up supplies for their van. They said that they will make up hampers for their young people and also set up a shop where they can come and choose what they need.

Both wanted me to express how grateful they are to you for continuing to support the local community. **THANY YOU!**

Mrs Spracklen



Rehearsals for 'Matilda' have started and we have over 50 students involved. They have already shown their enthusiasm and dedication by turning up for rehearsals and learning their lines.

We can't wait to perform for everyone before Christmas!

Mr Gore



Ten Pin Bowling

Clare Mount Bowlers Continue to Shine! In October, a group of 12 students from year 9 and 10 represented Clare Mount at the Annual Merseyside Panathlon 10-Pin-Bowling Tournament in Liverpool. Each of the students won a silver medal for finishing runners-up overall!

Mr Byrne



Glow-Sport launches at Clare Mount



Glow-Sport Launched at Clare Mount' The School Games Programme, always on the lookout for new and innovative ways to engage our young people in sport and physical activity, launched their 'glow-sport programme this month. In addition to the introduction of glow-dodgeball to our curriculum we also hosted an inter-school event in October and were joined by students from Hilbre High School. As you can see - this is a brilliant addition to our school sport activities!

Mr Byrne

CONGRATULATIONS



Individual Accolades for two of our brilliant cricket stars.' Following the introduction of our Tuesday after-school cricket hub and the amazing ongoing work by Mr Kearney every lunchtime, 2 of our young athletes have made it into the County (Cheshire) squad for training and upcoming fixtures. Alfie and Luke are both - rightly - very proud of their selection and, as with all of our cricketers, are making rapid progress as young cricketers. We wish them all the success in the world as they continue their development!

Mr Byrne



THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD

This term year 10's have started their DofE journey and are about to start their training proper. We have one group of pupils joining Liverpool Victoria Rowing Club in Birkenhead to learn the new skill of rowing, whilst also developing their physical fitness for the event. Another group of students are about to undertake their voluntary section at Nanny Sharon's Alpaca Farm in Moreton.

Year 11 pupils have just completed their bronze expedition at Chirk Castle on the Wales / England border and despite the poor weather forecast and Hurricane Angus, no one blew away and all candidates completed their bronze expedition with flying colours. Those pupils who did not attend the expedition will have the opportunity to complete it again later in the school year. Everybody has worked so hard on each section of the award so far and should be congratulated on their efforts. Starting Friday 6th October, we have a group volunteering with the Wirral Park rangers in Birkenhead Park and another group who will be working with our Community Police officer to give back to our local community in and around Leasowe and Moreton.



Clare Mount SSC

Sports Department of the Year

At a glittering ceremony at The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton, on 17th October our incredible PE and Sport Department was recognised as the very best in all of Wirral. The judges recognised our unwavering commitment towards the provision of outstanding teaching and learning, extensive enrichment opportunities and the breaking down of barriers facing our young people in the pursuit of their sporting dreams. 3 other fantastic schools were also shortlisted and to win in that company is truly amazing. An unforgettable night that celebrated an enormous amount of hard work and determination.

Mr Byrne



Luke bowls them over!



Luke, in year 9, has received the 2023 Active Wirral Individual Award for his amazing work as a cricketer and young leader, fighting off competition from many amazing young sportsmen across Wirral. Luke has played cricket in school, virtually every day, since he started at Clare Mount and he doesn't just participate - Luke is a fantastic role-model for the other students and a valuable sports leader / assistant for Mr. Kearney, our teacher i.c. cricket. Luke received his accolade at a brilliant ceremony at The Floral Pavilion on 17th October, watched by over 800 people from across the borough: Well done, Luke and keep up the good work!

Mr Byrne





Sale Sharks – Coach Millie has been working with our year 8 pupils from the Sale Sharks Foundation, introducing our pupils to the game of rugby union. The programme targets health, education, inclusion, and grassroots rugby. Aiming to promote physical and mental wellbeing in children and adults across the North West using the power of sport. Pupils are learning about themselves and enjoying learning new rugby skills.

ECB Chance to Shine Cricket Coaching – Coach Chris is coming into school and working with year 8 using cricket as a means of developing personal skills and values. Their work focuses on leadership, teamwork, respect, individual and collective responsibility, and general standards of conduct through the game of cricket but most of all it is about playing cricket and having fun learning new skills.

WeDoTennis – Have provided tennis coaches for a one-off tennis event in our new Clare Mount Sports Hall. In conjunction with Wirral council and the LTA we recently had a coaching session with our pupils to introduce them to the game. The pupils throughout enjoyed their experience and are already asking can they do more.

As part of the GolfWay project designed by the National Golf Foundation. Pupils from Clare Mount have been introduced to golf with free lessons and rounds of golf in the local community. In Year 8, Kayden Pepper has been awarded a one year golf bursary at Leasowe Golf Club for his efforts working with the project. This is a membership that gives him free access at Leasowe to play until his hearts content. We recently celebrated Kayden's success and the other participants with a school assembly recognising Kayden's progress and hard work. Well done, Kayden.

Mr weights

FORM

Having been appointed in July 2023 as the Head of 6th form it has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with our 6th form students in the first half term of this new academic year. I have been delighted by the work ethic of many of our students but more importantly at their resilience and determination to be successful regardless of any challenges they may face.

I have always considered that the strength of any group of people is measured by the respect and care that they provide for one another; I witness on a daily basis how the 6th form students care for not only one another but moreover, the younger members of our school community. It genuinely fills me with immense pride at what very decent young men and women we have at our school.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of being part of the 6th form staff team is the opportunity to visit the students in their work experience placements every Wednesday. The feedback given to not only myself but other staff members by employers has in many instances been exemplary and bodes well for the students career aspirations going forward.

As parents of 6th form students will already know we are hoping to take the year group on a residential next March to the Conway Centre in North Wales. A letter has very recently gone out to parents, however should any parents/carers require any additional details please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

FORM

I cannot let this opportunity go amiss without mentioning the staff, not only in the 6th form but in the wider school. As a new member of staff I have been humbled by how welcome they have made me feel, the support they have provided and the camaraderie that exists in the school – it really is a family and a major strength of the school.

Finally a big thank you to those parents/carers who have been so supportive in the first few weeks in my new role and for sending your children into school ready to learn and make use of the opportunities afforded to them by staff – they are a credit to you.

Jon Rice

Head of 6th Form



Expressive Arts have been studying John Stezaker and students have completed a gallery using Stezaker work as inspiration.

FORM

This year a small group of 6th Form students are embarking on Horticulture studies. This half term we have been looking at plants for wellness, with pupils trying peppermint tea! Responses were mixed! We have also discovered what parts of plants we eat: leaves, flowers, stem and seeds. We decided to go to Claremont farm and meet farmer Mr Pimbley who showed us how pumpkins grow. We saw orange ones, warty green ones, white ones and even a pink one! We also saw asparagus plants. Pupils asked some fantastic questions about growing conditions and the planting process. Great work group.

Miss Vicars



FORM

Our students have been finding out about parts of a plant that we can eat and recently we went to the supermarket to find items that we had discussed. We did a tasting session of figs and pomegranates, too. Students enjoyed sorting the vegetables and fruits into flowers, stems, leaves and seeds.



6th Form had a great morning at Woodchurch farm earlier this term. Students weeded, cleaned out the goat paddock and Miss Vicars woke up Richard the cat who gave the biggest yawn!





The 6th Form Woodchurch Farm and Tam O'Shanter farm work experience groups have made a positive start this half term. Pupils have completed a mixture of horticulture tasks and animal care activities. The herb garden has been weeded as have the raised beds. The goats and sheep were very pleased with how clean their paddocks were after our team had cleaned them.

At Tam O'Shanter's members of the public have been stopping the volunteers there to pass on praise for Clare Mount 6th forms garden. It has been in full bloom attracting bees and other wildlife. Our group has maintained it so well. It is a credit to them.

Great teamwork, clear communication and supporting each other to get jobs done are just some of the skills our pupils develop during work experience. They also acquire subject or job specific terminology too.

I can't wait to see what they achieve over the coming year.

Miss Vicars



UPCOMING EVENTS!

- *Tues 17/10/23 - wheelchair rugby (KS4/Post16) delivered by Sale Sharks in our PE lesson inspired by wheelchair rugby world cup @ Clare Mount*
 - *Thurs 16/11/ - Open Court wheelchair tennis festival - LTA adult wheelchair tennis players will be inspiring the young people @ Wirral Tennis Centre*
 - *Tues 28/11/23 - Cheshire Cricket Skills festival - Cheshire Cricket Board @ Leasowe Recreation Centre*
 - *Panathlon Sports Events @ Greenbank Sports Centre ongoing throughout the winter term*
- 



**Welcome to our:
Next Steps Event
Thursday 16th November 2023**

You can attend between 2.00pm & 6.00pm

No appointment needed just drop in between the above times

We are holding an Information Fair for you to attend.

You will have the opportunity to chat to a variety of Colleges, Support Providers and other services who can provide you with information on education, training and learning opportunities available to your child after School.

**The event will be held at:
Clare Mount Specialist Sports College,
Birket Avenue, Leasowe, Wirral, CH46 1RA
0151 606 9440
k.magnall@claremount.wirral.sch.uk**

College Open Days & Evenings 2023



Wirral Met College All Four Campuses

Conway Park, Twelve Quays, The Oval & Wirral Waters Campus

0151 551 7777 www.wmc.ac.uk

Wednesday 4th October 2023



Cheshire College

Ellesmere Port & Chester Campus

01244 656555 www.ccs.ac.uk

Wednesday 11th October 2023

5.30pm to 7.00pm



Greenbank College

Greenbank Lane , Liverpool, L17 1AG

0151 733 7255 www.greenbankcollege.org.uk

Thursday 19th October 2023 5.00pm to 7.00pm

You must book so please go to website



Coleg Cambria

Holywell Road, Northop, CH7 6AA

0300 30 30 007 www.cambria.ac.uk

Saturday 18th November 2023

10am to 12pm

You must book so please go to website



WISH

Wirral Inclusive Sports Hub

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Inclusive Football Hub (CCB)	Crickets Hub (PK / CE / Cheshire CCB)	Inclusive Basketball Hub (JC / Wirral Raptors)	Shooting Stars Football Programme (GC)	Staff Wellbeing Night	SEND Cycling Hub (W4A)
	Dance Academy (SHADOW)	Community Sport Night (CMSSC - Multi-Activity)	Clare Mount Youth Hub (CMSSC)		
		Active Sensory Programme	Fit Families (GC)		
		Strength and Conditioning Programme			

WHAT TRUSTED ADULTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT: SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

Social Media is often scrutinised as having a negative impact on children's mental health. Children and young people are now growing up in a technology dominated world, and social media plays a major role in their social lives. This balanced guide focuses on both the positive and negative impacts that social media can bring to young people and their mental health.

POSITIVE IMPACTS

EASY ACCESS TO SUPPORT AND HELP

Due to delays in young people getting help for their mental health, such as experiencing low mood, or suffering from anxiety, they may sometimes reach out to access support from others online. Sharing problems or issues with friends, peers and broader social networks can be met with positive reaction, with nearly 7 in 10 teens reporting to receive support on social media during tough or challenging times. Where there are moderated communities which offer support and guidance, children can be provided with a great source of support.

SUSTAINING FRIENDSHIPS AND MAKING CONNECTIONS

There is evidence to suggest that strong adolescent friendships can be enhanced by social media interaction, allowing children to create stronger bonds with people they already know. Online relationships can actually make children more relationship-oriented, thoughtful, and empathic. By sharing comments on pictures, videos and posts, it can create long-term friendships as they can continually keep in touch, even with a distance between them.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Support can be found in various places online, sometimes this is known as "finding your tribe". Online platforms and groups can provide a wonderful sense of belonging for children. They can find peers with similar interests and circumstances which can sometimes be difficult to find in real life. As a result, this can create stronger connections and help to build confidence.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS

SELF-ESTEEM & BODY IMAGE

There are 10 million new photographs uploaded to Facebook alone every hour, providing an almost endless potential for young people to be drawn into appearance-based comparisons whilst online. No one is the same as how they portray themselves online as we tend to only show the best part of ourselves. The pressure to fit-in and conform is huge, which can become a driving force for children to replicate what they see from friends, celebrities and sponsored adverts. This pressure may contribute to anxiety, low mood and a feeling of inadequacy. As a result, it can lead to a feeling of low satisfaction with their own lives.

HARMFUL ADVICE

The online world provides the opportunity for anybody to upload and share photoshopped pictures, edited video, fake news and even unvetted advice. Children may stumble upon this, which could potentially encourage them make wrong decisions and not get the help that they need. It's important that you teach your child to differentiate between what is true and useful information and what is fake.

ADDICTION AND COMPULSIVE CHECKING

Social media addiction is thought to affect around 5% of teenagers. The Office for National Statistics found that children who spend more than 3 hours a day on social media are more than twice as likely to support poor mental health. Furthermore, compulsive checking due to 'Fear Of Missing Out' has been linked to poor and disturbed sleep, as well as difficulty to relax during evenings. One in five young people say they wake up during the night to check messages on social media, leading them to be three times as more likely to feel constantly tired at school than their classmates who don't use social media during the night.

CYBERBULLYING

One recent large-scale UK study showed that cyberbullying is one of the biggest challenges for young people. Other studies suggest that cyberbullying has a bigger effect on wellbeing and mental health than other types of bullying. 7 in 10 young people have experienced cyberbullying, with 37% of young people saying they experience cyberbullying on a high-frequency basis. Young people are twice as likely to be bullied on Facebook than on any other social network.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



HELPFUL APPS:

- Hub of Hope – <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>
- Mindshift
- Smiling Mind

SOURCES OF HELP:

- Childline, 0800 1111 or visit their website
- Bullying UK, 0808 8002222
- Young Minds Parents line, 0808 802 5544

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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+



Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe - with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI', a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends - but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse - so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beauty' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations - creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely - but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

Advice for Parents & Carers

TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.



DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.



CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up - and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.



KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life - especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.



BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



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.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, with over 1 billion users worldwide. The platform allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, create interactive 'stories', share live videos, exchange private messages or search, explore and follow other accounts they like - whilst at the same time continuously updating and adding new features to meet the needs of its users.

AGE RATING

13+

follow

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ADDICTION

Many social media platforms are designed in a way to keep us engaged on them for as long as possible. There's a desire to scroll often/more in case we've missed something important or a fear of missing out. Instagram is no different and young people can easily lose track of time by aimlessly scrolling and watching videos posted by friends, acquaintances, influencers or even strangers.

PRODUCT TAGGING

Product tags allow users (particularly influencers who are sponsored to advertise products) to tag a product or business in their post. This tag takes viewers, regardless of age, directly to the product detail page on the shop where the item can be purchased and where children may be encouraged by influencers to purchase products they don't necessarily need.

EXCLUSION AND OSTRACISM

Young people are highly sensitive to ostracism. Feeling excluded can come in many forms such as not receiving many 'likes', not being tagged, being unfriended, having a photo untagged, or not receiving a comment or reply to a message. Being excluded online hurts just as much as being excluded offline - with children potentially suffering lower moods, lower self-esteem, feeling as if they don't belong or undervalued.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Product tagging on Instagram only works on public accounts. If your child wants to share their clothing style, make-up etc and tag items in a post then they may be tempted to change their settings to public, which can leave their profile visible to strangers.

Buy Milk

GOING LIVE

Live streaming on Instagram allows users to connect with friends and followers in real-time and comment on videos during broadcast. Risks increase if the account is public because anyone can watch and comment on their videos, including strangers. However, other risks include acting in ways they wouldn't normally or being exposed to inappropriate content or offensive language.

INFLUENCER CULTURE

Influencers can be paid thousands of pounds to promote a product, service, app and much more on social media - the posts can often be identified because they state they're a 'paid partnership'. Ofcom found that young people often attempt to copy-cat influencer behaviour for their own posts to gain likes, sometimes posting content which may not be age-appropriate.

UNREALISTIC IDEALS

Children compare themselves to what they see online in terms of how they look, dress, their body shape, or the experiences others are having. The constant scrolling and comparison of unrealistic ideals can lead to children feeling insecure about their own appearance, questioning how exciting their own lives are and having a fear of missing out.

Advice for Parents & Carers

HAVE OPEN DIALOGUE

Talk to your child about live videos and the risks involved and how they can do it safely with family and friends. Talk to them about ensuring they have safety settings on so only followers can view them live, and maybe help them prepare what they would say when they do go live.

REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS

If you're happy for your child to have a card associated with their Instagram account, we suggest adding a PIN which needs to be entered before making a payment. This can be added in the payment settings tab and will also help prevent unauthorised purchases.

USE MODERATORS

Instagram has launched 'live moderators' on Instagram live where creators can assign a moderator and give them the power to report comments, remove viewers and turn off comments for a viewer. It's recommended to keep devices in common spaces so that you are aware if they do go live or watch live streaming.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Instagram is one social media app which has its safety features available to parents in a user-friendly manner. The document provides examples of conversation starters, managing privacy, managing comments, blocking and restricting and can be found on the Instagram website > community > parents.

FOLLOW INFLUENCERS

Following influencers will allow you to monitor what they're sharing as well as being able to discuss anything which you deem inappropriate. Talk to your child about who they follow and help them develop critical thinking skills about what the influencer is trying to do. For example, are they trying to sell a product by promoting it?

BE VIGILANT AND REASSURE

Talk to your child about the use of filters. While they can be fun to use they don't represent the real them. If you find your child continuously using a filter, ask them why and reassure them that they are beautiful without it to build up their feelings of self-worth. Discuss the fact that many images online are filtered and not everyone looks 'picture perfect' in real life, which can also lend itself to discuss what is real and not real online.

MANAGE LIKE COUNTS

Due to the impact on mental wellbeing, Instagram has allowed users to change the focus of their experiences online away from how many likes a post has by hiding the like counts. Users can hide like counts on all the posts in their feed as well as hiding the like counts on their own posts. This means others can't see how many likes you get. This can be done by going into settings > notifications > posts > likes > off

BALANCE YOUR TIME

Instagram now has an in-built activity dashboard that allows users to monitor and control how much time they spend on the app. Users can add a 'daily reminder' to set a limit on how much time they want to spend on Instagram, prompting them to consider if it's been too long with a 'take a break' message. There's also the option to mute notifications for a period of time. These features can help you have a conversation with your child about how much time they are spending on the app and to set healthy time limits.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at iCyberAware. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/introducing-follower-privacy-and-supervision-tools> | <https://about.instagram.com/en/uk/updates> | <https://school.instagram.com/parents-and-carers> | <https://www.nos.gov.uk> | <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/introducing-follower-privacy-and-supervision-tools> | <https://about.instagram.com/en/uk/updates> | <https://school.instagram.com/parents-and-carers> | <https://www.nos.gov.uk>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

(certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

TikTok is a free social media platform that lets users create, share and watch short videos ranging anywhere from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in duration. The app gained notoriety for its viral dances, trends and celebrity cameos and can be a creative, fun platform for teens to enjoy. Now available in 75 languages, it has more than a billion active users worldwide (as of spring 2022) and is most popular with the under-18 age bracket. In fact, a 2022 Ofcom report found TikTok to be the most-used social media platform for posting content, particularly among young people aged 12 to 17.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's "Following" feed only displays videos from users someone follows, "For You" is a stream of clips based on their previously watched content. Most videos on a child's "For You" feed will therefore be light-hearted and amusing, but it could potentially surface something unsettling. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the sheer volume of uploads mean they aren't manually monitored and vetted.

18
CENSORED

DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Due to TikTok's immense popularity, some young people have unfortunately been influenced by videos challenging them to perform harmful, criminal or even deadly acts. One extreme example was the "blackout" trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. It led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With around 1.1 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or youngsters using a false date of birth) are set to public by default. This not only means that someone's profile is visible to everyone else on the app, it also lets their videos be suggested to others and enables anyone to comment on them or download them.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase emojis in the app. These emojis are then sent as rewards (retaining their monetary value) to other users for videos they've created. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99. TikTok's policy is that they can't be bought by under-18s, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birthday.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

TikTok can be addictive, especially for young people; compulsive repeated use can interfere with sleep patterns and be a distraction from other activities. The platform recently introduced default usage time limits of 60 and 100 minutes for new members under 18 (in the UK, children with TikTok average 102 minutes per day on the app); but these restrictions can easily be removed in the settings.

TIKTOK NOW

Introduced in late 2022, the "TikTok Now" feature lets users post a daily video or photo at the exact same time as their friends. Users receive a synchronised notification at a random time of day, giving them three minutes to take a video or real-time photo. This addition can not only be a distraction to young people but could lead to them inadvertently sharing private content such as their location.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account with their child's and control their settings remotely. Parents can then, for example, turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content); set screen time limits; and manage their child's ability to send messages (and to whom). Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

MAKE ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Although under-18s will have their TikTok account set to private by default, bypassing this setting is relatively easy. However, parents have the ability to manually set their child's account to private – meaning that their videos won't be visible to strangers and they won't be able to exchange messages with people who aren't on their friends list.

LIMIT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter the settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend that you enable this feature, as it's quite easy for a young person – without realising what they're doing – to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins so they can unlock more features of the app.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If your child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's crucial to talk about the potential risks in this type of app. For example, ensure they understand not to share any identifying personal information – and that they realise they could be exposed to inappropriate content. Thinking critically about what they see on TikTok can help children become generally more social media savvy.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something inappropriate or upsetting that they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the possible signs: increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as are failing to complete homework or regularly not eating meals.

Meet Our Expert

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



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12 Social Media Online Safety Tips FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

With Christmas only a few weeks away, many of you will be using social media to share your excitement with friends and family. Being active on social media is a great way to show others how much fun you're having, but it's important that you know how to use these apps safely and securely so that bad things don't happen. By following our safety tips below, you can make sure that your personal information stays private, your postings are positive and that your social media use overall is responsible, healthy and most of all enjoyable.

1 DON'T ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS FROM STRANGERS

Make sure that you set your profile to private so that people you don't know can't find you online. Always tell a trusted adult if a stranger or somebody you don't know sends you a message or a friend request.

2 NEVER SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

Keep your personal information personal. Sometime people online aren't always who they say they are and might ask you to share things that you don't feel comfortable sharing.

3 DON'T SHARE EMBARRASSING PHOTOS OR VIDEOS OF OTHERS ONLINE

This could really upset them and could get you into a lot of trouble. Always think twice before posting anything on social media and treat people online as you would in real-life.

4 NEVER SEND NAKED PICTURES OF YOURSELF TO OTHERS

This is illegal if you are under 18 and you could get into trouble with the Police. If you are being pressured by someone, always say no and tell a trusted adult. Even if you think it is innocent fun, the photo could be shared with other people and you won't be able to control who else sees it.

5 CREATE A POSITIVE ONLINE REPUTATION

Always be kind and polite when posting comments on social media and only upload pictures and videos of things you are proud of. This forms part of your digital footprint. Everything you do online can be tracked and monitored and could affect what people think of you in real-life if it is negative.

6 LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME

Social media can be addictive, and it is easy to keep checking newsfeeds or your notifications every 5 minutes which can affect your behaviour and stop you from doing other things. Remember to only use your phone at certain times of the day, turn notifications off at bedtime and go out and have as fun as much as possible. This will keep you fit and healthy and make you appreciate there's more to life than just what's on social media.

7 BLOCK ONLINE BULLIES

Sometimes people might say nasty things to you online or post offensive comments on your pictures or videos. If this happens, always tell a trusted adult who will help you block them from your profile and support you in taking further action.

8 REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

If you see something on social media that you don't like, offends you or upsets you, you should always report it to a trusted adult. You should also report it to the social media app who will be able to remove the content if it is against their user policy and can block the person who posted it.

9 ONLY USE APPS WHICH YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO USE

Before downloading any new social media app, always check the age-rating. If you need help, ask your parent or carer to make sure that the app is safe for you to use and never download anything which you are too young for as it may contain content that isn't safe for you to see.

10 ALWAYS SECURE ALL YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES WITH A PASSWORD

This will help to keep your private information safe and won't allow others to access your profiles without your permission. Make sure your passwords are memorable and personal to you but something which other people can't guess, and always share them with your parents just in case you forget them.

11 ASK PARENTS TO SET-UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS' FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

When you download a social media app, you should always ask a trusted adult to help you set it up for the first time. This will help you control who sees what you post, who can contact you and make sure you are able to enjoy using the app safely and securely.

12 ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR TRUSTED ADULT IF SOCIAL MEDIA IS MAKING YOU UNHAPPY

Sometimes, social media can make us feel bad about ourselves or sad that we aren't the same as someone else or doing the same things as someone else. Remember, if you ever feel this way, it's really important to talk to your trusted adult(s) like your parents, carers, other adult family members or a teacher, all of whom will be able to support you and discuss your feelings with you to help make you feel better.



It was lovely to welcome back ex pupil and Paralympian Peter Miller as part of the “we do tennis” initiative. Peter and Nicky Smith delivered coaching sessions to our Year 8 pupils as part of their PE lesson. Pupils participated in skill coaching activities and mini games.

Pupils were then given the opportunity to attend a 6 week course at

Wallasey manor Tennis Club.

After the lesson, it was lovely to hear Peter inspiring our pupils with his own journey from Clare Mount to Gold medalist **and the Paralympics.**





There has been a few proud moments for the cricket squad this half term. Firstly, we have begun our Tuesday Night sessions after school with coaches Matthew O'Connell and Mr Basey organising sessions alongside Mr Kearney, ably assisted by ex pupil Reeve. These have proved to be a massive success and are well attended alongside our 5 lunchtime sessions.

Training is after school until 4:30 on a Tuesday night in the Sports Hall and Monday to Friday 12:35 - 1:05pm in the Sports Hall.

Secondly, 2 of our squad, Alfie W in Year 8 and Luke S in year 9, have been selected to train with the Cheshire Pan Disability squad in preparation for the 2024 outdoor season. They will attend 5 sessions at Birkenhead Park Cricket Club between October and December.

Well done!

Mr Kearney



Sunshine Diversity Plus

Are you a mum or female carer of a child who requires additional support?

Do you need a safe and calm environment to meet others and spend time building on your self-confidence and self-esteem.

Then come join us at our Diversity Plus Sunshine sessions.



**Fridays from
10am till 1pm
at
WEB Merseyside
10-12 Bentinck
Street, Birkenhead,
CH41 4DY**

Please contact us on
0151 653 3771 to join.



Let's talk about.... Adult Social Care

Does Social Care confuse you?

Want to know your rights and responsibilities?

Not sure what is available for you on Wirral?

**A free event for people with a learning disability,
families and supporters**

Listen to talks about the Care Act, Wirral Borough Council
Co-Production Strategy, Social Care moving back into the
council from the NHS, Direct Payments and more.

Browse our market place of local providers

Free light lunch included

When: Wednesday 15th November 2023

Where: Liberty Centre, 7 Whetstone Lane,
Birkenhead, CH41 2QS

What time: 10.30am - 1.30pm

Booking essential:

phone: 0151 666 1829

email: info@mencapwirral.org.uk



Term Dates 2023-2024

Autumn Term 2023	
Open	Monday 4th September to Friday 20th October 2023 *School closed to students Monday 4th September (Inset day) & Tuesday 5th September (Moving in day). Year 7 & 6th Form commence Wednesday 6th September Years 8 to 11 commence Thursday 7th September Please refer to starting day letters sent to parents/carers
October half-term	Monday 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2023
Open	Monday 30th October to Friday 22nd December 2023 *School closed to students Friday 1st December (Inset day)
Christmas holiday	Monday 25th December 2023 to Friday 5th January 2024
Spring Term 2024	
Open	Monday 8th January to Friday 16th February 2024 *School closed to students Monday 8th January (Inset day)
February half-term	Monday 19th February to Friday 23rd February 2024
Open	Monday 26th February to Thursday 28th March 2024 *School closed to students Monday 26th February (Inset day)
Spring Break	Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April 2024 (includes Easter bank holidays)
Summer Term 2024	
Open	Monday 15th April to Friday 24th May 2024
Early May Bank Holiday	Monday 6th May 2024
Half-term	Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2024
Open	Monday 3rd June to Tuesday 23rd July 2024 *School closed to students Friday 28th June (Inset day)

Inset days (school closed to students):

Monday 4th September 2023 (& exceptional closure Tuesday 5th September 2023)

Friday 1st December 2023

Monday 8th January 2024

Monday 26th February 2024

Friday 28th June 2024



INVIGOR8 Teen & Student Memberships

From just £15 per month*

Upfront cash pass available including unlimited access 7 days a week to:
Swimming Pools • Exercise classes • Gyms • Outdoor Tennis court hire
25% off single court hire

Join online, by telephone 0151 606 2010 or call into a centre.
Visit activewirral.com/invigor8-memberships for details.

*Free Gym induction required, Age restrictions apply (12-15 yrs), Teen specific sessions available, Usual T's & C's apply

INVIGOR8  ACTIVE KIDS

ACTIVE WIRRAL

STRONGER HEALTHIER HAPPIER

LGBTQ+ Support Group

Are you a young person who identifies as LGBTQ+?

Did you know that there is a weekly
LGBTQ+ Support Group session at The Hive?

If you would like to come along please email
LGBTQ@thehiveyouthzone.org

 brook

If you are not a Hive member but you are interested, please also email


at OnSiteHealth.com

Wirral FUSS



Wirral FUSS

Free UniformS for School

We recycle high-quality school uniform completely FREE FOR EVERYONE

- We have been operating for 10 years
- Served over 14,600 local families
- Given away over 60,000 items

CONTACT US: 07731 831936 wirralfuss@gmail.com

Registered Office: Methodist Circuit Centre, Seven Acres Lane, Thingwall.

We have 7 hubs across the Wirral, please check our **website for details of which hub stocks your school's clothes**, opening times & where you can donate.



Are you interested in volunteering & you can spare a couple of hours each week? Come & join our teams

www.wirralfuss.co.uk

Registered Charity 1199396

