

ST. JAMES' (C OF E) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day.



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 7TH MARCH 2025

PETER PAN...

Our after-school drama club performed their version of Peter Pan, 'Pantastic' three times this week! They were absolutely amazing! We were treated to some brilliant singing, including some very brave solo performances. The children worked incredibly hard to learn all of their lines and they performed with huge smiles on their faces. A massive thank you to all the parents and carers who attended the performance and a huge well done to everyone in the drama club.

YEAR 3 TRIP...

On Tuesday Year 3 visited Cresswell Crag in Derbyshire to take part in a number of activities related to their Stone Age topic. The children had a great time and even created their own cave paintings. It was lovely to hear all about the trip from the children returned.

WATERSTONES VISIT...

On Wednesday all children visited Waterstones Bookshop in Derby City Centre. Each class spent some time exploring the book shop and the children got to exchange their voucher for a book to take home. The children had a great time and their behaviour was great. Thank you to all the parents and carers who came along as volunteers.

SCHOOL GATES...

We have had some work done on the pedestrian gate. The gate will now no longer open automatically. To come into school please press the buzzer and a member of staff will unlock the gate. You will then need to push the gate open. To leave the school please press the green button and then pull the gate open.

YEAR 6 PARENTS' SATS MEETING...

As you may know, all Year 6 students across the country are required to participate in the Key Stage 2 SATs tests in May. These tests assess their skills and understanding in Reading, Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, and Maths. To provide further information for parents and carers, including examples of the tests, and to offer a chance for you to ask any questions, we will be hosting a Year 6 Parents Meeting on Tuesday 18th March at 3:30 pm.

DERBY BOOK FESTIVAL...

Derby Book Festival are hosting a World Book Day event on Saturday 8th March this year. It is free for families to attend and will involve storytelling, poetry, drama and lots and lots of books! They will also be hosting a book swap so children can walk away with a nearly new book. Costumes are encouraged and celebrated, after all it is a party!



Derby Book
Festival

In support of

WORLD
BOOK
DAY

The **BIG** Derby
World Book Day Party

Saturday 8th March 10am - 3pm

The Roundhouse, Pride Park, Derby DE24 8JE



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56008005>
<https://proudsocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>

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National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday