



[www.gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk](http://www.gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk)

May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025 Issue 1/4 Summer Term 1



## Welcome Back!

It has been so lovely to finally see the sun make an appearance this week!

Please make sure that in case of warmer weather, children always have shoulders covered (no sleeveless or vest tops please). Please also remember to send sun hats when needed and apply sunscreen before school. Children can bring in their own sunscreen to reapply during the day. This should be a named bottle and kept in their bag. They must be able to apply themselves and must not share their cream with other children. Staff can help squeeze the cream into the children's hands at lunchtime.

Broad-brimmed or bucket style hats are recommended to adequately shade the face, neck, ears and cheeks. Children will be reminded during hot weather to remove their jumpers and cardigans to prevent overheating.

Although we are hoping the sun is here to stay, if there's one thing we can rely on it is the unpredictability of the British weather, so please remember to send your child to school with a coat in case of showers or sudden downpours. Our Sun Policy can be found [here](#). Mrs Lamb

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

every school day counts.

Attendance letters will be coming home today. Our attendance to date is **97%** which we are incredibly proud of.

Thank you so much for your support in making sure children are here and on time. If you have any queries about your child's attendance or coding, or if we can support you with attendance in any way, please pop in or get in touch.

Mrs Lamb



## Robinwood Presentation Evening

We would like to invite our Year 4 parents and pupils to join us on the evening of **Thursday 8th May** to share your stories and successes from the recent residential trip to Robinwood. **Doors will open at 6pm for a 6.15pm start.**

Mrs Lamb



## Easter Disco

Thank you so much to everyone who made the **Easter Disco** such a huge success! It was our first following COVID and the expansion of the building – it'll be an even smoother operation next time now we've got the first one done.

Huge thanks to Chris the DJ and his team, for all of the parent helpers who managed to successfully feed all of the children with hotdogs, supervise doors/toilets and keep the dancing going! We can't do these things for our wonderful children without you and it is really appreciated.

The disco made an incredible **£802** for PTA funds!

Huge thanks to Asda, Tesco and Morrisons for their donations of Easter eggs, hot dogs and buns.

## Bank Holiday Reminder

Please remember that **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May** is a bank holiday and school will be closed to all pupils. **Enjoy the long weekend!**

## St Aidan's Church Events



Our friends at St Aidan's Church are hoping to start a **free after school club** shortly, and would really appreciate your feedback. They have asked if anyone interested could please complete this very short survey so that they can gather parents' views.

Many thanks

<https://form.jotform.com/250655266413355>

St Aidan's are also holding an **Eco Fest** on **Saturday 3rd of May**, please see below:

*Please save the date for our Eco Fest, with free bike checks, crafts, outdoor activities, and lots of stalls from many different organisations. This promises to be a great event.*



# KS2 Big Gig 2025



Our annual **Big Gig** for 2025 will take place on **Friday 20th June 2025** at the **Vertu Motors Arena**.

The Big Gig is an amazing event with a live band and over a thousand young performers from schools across the North East. Our KS2 children have been learning their songs during our weekly Ukulele tuition lessons.

The theme for this year is **Sounds of the Seventies** so dig out those platform shoes, dust off that turntable and get ready to dance the night away under the disco lights!

We will be sending out more information closer to the time via ParentPay and will be looking for some parent volunteers to help us on the day.

Mr Patterson

**SOUNDS OF THE 70S**  
#mpnbiggig

# Holiday Homework Projects KS1/KS2

At Gosforth Park we absolutely love to see your incredible **holiday homework projects**. These projects (no matter the size!) help to introduce our new topics into classrooms. Children grow in confidence and are excited to present their projects to their classmates. Check out some of our projects below:



Well done everyone!

Mr Hindess

# Holiday Homework



## KS1 Geography Fieldwork - Traffic Surveys



On **Monday 19th May** (Year 1) and **Tuesday 20th May** (Year 2) children in KS1 will be conducting some more Geography Fieldwork in our local area. This time we will be collecting data by conducting a traffic survey to answer the question, '**Which roads around our school are the busiest?**'

Full school uniform (or PE kit on PE days) and a waterproof coat or sun cream/sunhat depending on weather please.

Make sure to give us a wave if you spot us in our high-vis jackets!

Many thanks

Mr Hindess

# New Topics

Below are the topics that our children will be studying this half term:

## Reception: **What a Wonderful World**

### What a Wonderful World



exposes our children to the world beyond their doorstep through a rich curriculum of stories from other cultures. Children explain similarities and differences between life in this country and life abroad, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and personal experiences. There are also endless opportunities for children to explore the cultures and traditions of other countries through art, music, religious education and PE.

## KS1 – **On the Move**

Within this geography skills and fieldwork based topic, children begin to understand how to use grid references to identify features on maps.



We learn about aerial photography and use this to identify different human and physical features of Great Britain. Finally, we use our new skills to plan our very own fieldwork project in Gosforth!

## KS2 – **Extreme Earth**

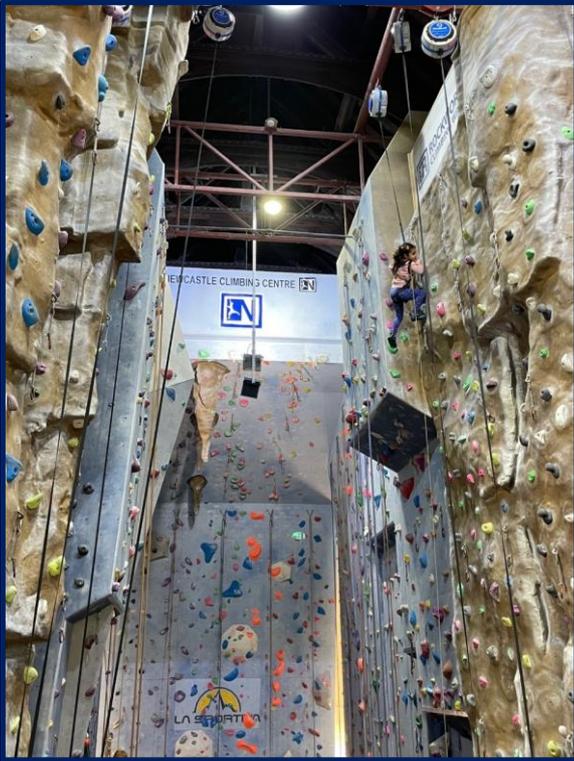
Extreme Earth is a geography-based topic that deepens our understanding of the structure of our planet. We begin by looking at plate tectonics before using our knowledge to understand why earthquakes and volcanoes occur, and where in the world these natural phenomenon are most prevalent.



Please also find attached our Topic Webs with more detailed information about each curriculum area.

Mr Hindess

CONGRATS



Look closely and you will spot our incredible **Alessia** from Year 1 at the very top of her 15m climbing wall. What a brilliant achievement. Everyone at GPFS is very impressed!



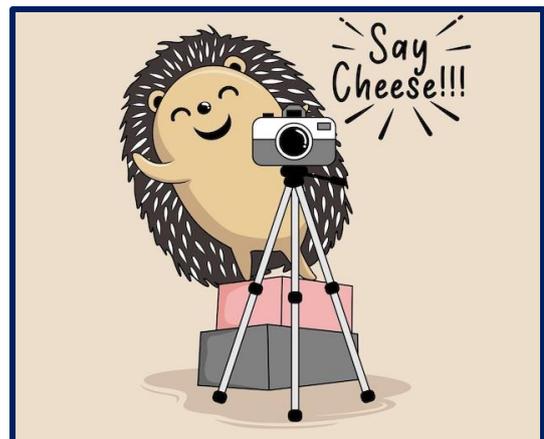
**Albie, Jack and Oscar** all took part in a rugby festival at Alnwick on the 27th of April. They all played great and did Gosforth Rugby Club proud!

CONGRATS

Huge congratulations to Mr and the new Mrs Patterson who had their beautiful wedding over the holidays!



## School Photographs



Our school **photographer** will be in on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May** to take this year's **class photos**. Please send your child to school in their uniform.



## The Children's Cancer Run 2025

We would like you and your family to join our school team at the Children's Cancer Run at Newcastle Racecourse, Gosforth Park on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2025**.

Please ensure that you **register online** for the event:

1. Log on to <https://childrenscancernorth.org.uk/event/childrens-cancer-run-2025/>
2. Complete your entry form, selecting our **school name** as the team
3. Click **proceed to payment** to complete the registration for you and your family

There is a feature that allows our school to have an online team fundraising page with a shared school total. We have been advised on the following: **Once your pupils have registered, that on their fundraising page they go to 'edit display name' and change their display name so that it does not include their full name and don't update their picture for safeguarding reasons.** For example, just first name or initials. If they do not do this then it is possible for external participants to see a child's full name and the school they go to.

**Every child must be accompanied by an adult.**

Thank you,

Miss Walsh



Our Golden Welly class for this week is **Miss Tate's class** for amazing collaboration and tidying in our den building area!

Miss Gasper

## Makaton

This week's sign is –

### Sign of the Week

**Finished**

Sign



# TIMES TABLES ROCK STARS

Thank you to everyone who practised their times tables over the Easter holidays. We are just over a month away from the **Year 4 Multiplication Check** so make sure Year 4s you are practicing the times tables you find difficult.

**Mrs Easdon and Mrs Armstrong's class** are our most active class over the holidays! Our top coin earners are **Ava U, Thomas T** and **Thea T**.



There has been some great number bonds practice over the holidays, well done everyone!

Our top class is **Miss Gledhill's**.

Our top coin earners this week are:

Miss Parsons-Munn – **Maisie P**

Miss Coughlan – **Elliot B**

Miss Gledhill – **Rosalyn R**

Miss Pope – **Maya B**

Miss Walsh – **Cora L**

Mr Patterson – **Jacob A**

Mrs Easdon/Mrs Armstrong – **Alfie R**

Miss Tate – **Max H**

Well done everyone, Miss Pope.

## Attendance

Our whole school attendance to date is a fantastic **97%** up from **96.7%** this time last year!

Our classes of the week this week are:

**Year 2 Miss Walsh** with **100%** and **Year 2 Mr Patterson** with **98.6%**

Well done everyone!

Mrs Lamb



Healthy School



Wow! What a lovely, warm start to the summer term. This has given us a timely reminder that we all need to stay hydrated so please could you remember to provide a named water bottle with water only in it please. The children are always active on the yard and can get quite hot after a busy playtime or PE session so it is extra important to remember our bottles in the summer months. Water not only quenches thirst but is important for brain function, improving memory and attention, it reduces the risk for some chronic diseases in later life and aids digestion and bladder function. And an added bonus is that it is free!

Mrs Wells

# Important Dates 2024-2025

Summer 1	
<b>Monday 5th May</b>	<b>Bank Holiday</b>
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Robinwood Presentation Evening for Year 4 Parents at 18:15
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> May	Skipping Festival
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May	School Photographer – Class Photos
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	Safety Works Visit for Year 2 and Year 4
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> May	Children's Cancer Run
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	KS1 Local Geography Fieldwork – Traffic Surveys – Year One
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May	KS1 Local Geography Fieldwork – Traffic Surveys – Year Two
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Last Day of Term
Summer 2	
<b>Monday 2nd June</b>	<b>GST Training Day</b>
<b>Tuesday 3rd June</b>	<b>First Day Back at School</b>
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	Author Visit (Alex Falase-Koya)
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 1 Trip to Washington Wetlands
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 4 Multiplication Check
<b>Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>KS2 Big Gig 2025 'Sounds of the 70s'</b>
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Sports Week
WB 30 <sup>th</sup> June	In school transition week
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July	Year 2 Trip to Alwick Castle
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 4 Transition to GEMS
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> /Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 3 On site residential with Mr H
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Year 4 Author Visit (Guy Bass)
Wednesday 9 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 1 Seaside Workshops
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> July	End of Year Reports
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	Summer Fayre + BBQ
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Last Day of Term

## Staff Training Days

Staff Training Days for GST schools this academic year will be:

- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

School re-opens Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025



# Rainbow Wraparound

Bookings must be made during the booking window which opens on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month and closes on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, for the following month.

	<b>Booking opens 12 noon</b>	<b>Booking closes 12 noon</b>
<b>October bookings</b>	September 10 <sup>th</sup>	September 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>November bookings</b>	October 10 <sup>th</sup>	October 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>December booking</b>	November 10 <sup>th</sup>	November 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>January bookings</b>	December 10 <sup>th</sup>	December 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>February bookings</b>	January 10 <sup>th</sup>	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>March bookings</b>	February 10 <sup>th</sup>	February 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>April bookings</b>	March 10 <sup>th</sup>	March 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>May bookings</b>	April 10 <sup>th</sup>	April 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>June bookings</b>	May 10 <sup>th</sup>	May 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>July bookings</b>	June 10 <sup>th</sup>	June 20 <sup>th</sup>

Parents must make their own bookings on the school cloud system. The only exception to this is families using vouchers. If you are emailing dates for voucher bookings, you must include

- Your child's name
- The day and date
- The sessions required (breakfast, until 5pm, until 6pm).

If you would like to, you can book sessions in advance for the entire school year.

If you do wish to book the same sessions for the entire school year, please email Mrs Carrick at [wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk)

Block bookings can only be made via email or through school cloud (not text message).

Please email [wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk) for any wraparound queries, **NOT the admin inbox or Mrs Carrick directly, as this will delay any response and may result in you missing the booking window.**

**Please ensure all block bookings are made/requested before the booking window closes. We cannot guarantee any block bookings after this date.**

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thanks

Mrs Carrick

[wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk](mailto:wraparound@gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk)

**FUN & CREATIVE TAG RUGBY THEMED CLASSES**  
**RUGBY MINIS**

**FUN EASTER CAMP**  
 3yrs - 11yrs

**BAKING & TASTING**  
**SPORTS & GAMES**  
**FRIENDS & FUN**  
**ARTS & CRAFTS**

Week 1-Mon 14th April - Thurs 17th April  
 Week 2- Tues 22nd April-Fri 25th April  
 10:00-15:00  
 Newcastle School for Boys, Gosforth  
 NE3 4DT  
 07726 328498

**\*FREE WRAP AROUND 08:00-17:30\***

[WWW.RUGBYMINIS.CO.UK](http://WWW.RUGBYMINIS.CO.UK)



**EPIC CAMPS**  
 KIDS HOLIDAY CAMPS

**EPIC EASTER CAMP**  
 3yrs - 11yrs

**Week 1-Mon 14th April - Thurs 17th April**  
**Week 2-Tue 22nd April - Fri 25th April**

Single Day Bookings  
 Week Booking Discount

**2 Incredible Venues**  
 Gosforth Junior High Academy (ages 5-13)  
 Dame Allan's Junior School (ages 3-11)

Something for everyone from rugby and yoga to baking and crafting!

**Free Wrap Around**  
 From 8am - 5.30pm  
 07726328498

[www.EpicCamps.co.uk](http://www.EpicCamps.co.uk)



**Forest Adventurers**

**\*\*\* EASTER HOLIDAY CLUBS \*\*\***  
 Michelangelo's, Ryton, 10-3pm

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April, Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April  
 Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April

Order a delicious Italian takeaway to be delivered to the woods! (£34 per day with own food / £39 per day with food)  
 Suitable for children from Reception age and upwards.

Activities can include campfire and s'mores, fire lighting, mud, sand and water play, outdoor crafts, mud kitchen, tools, hammocks, messy play, hill climbing and free time to explore.

**Contact us for more information on:**

- Corporate Events
- Parent and Preschool Groups
- After School Clubs
- Birthday Parties
- School Trips

<https://bookwhen.com/forestadventurers>  
 susanne@forestadventurers.co.uk  
 07711461409




**Forest Adventurers**

**\*\*\*SPRING FAMILY SPECIAL\*\*\***  
 Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 11am-12:30pm

At our Spring Family Special we'll have lots of Spring crafts, a scavenger hunt, hammocks, mud kitchen, campfire snacks and lots more!

Family events are held at Michelangelo's, Ryton and are suitable for families with children from around 14 months to year 6 (£12 for the first child - sibling discounts available).

Snacks and drinks available for all.

**Contact us for more information on:**

- Corporate Events
- Parent and Preschool Groups
- After School Clubs
- Birthday Parties
- School Trips

<https://bookwhen.com/forestadventurers>  
 susanne@forestadventurers.co.uk  
 07711461409




**FUN & CREATIVE TAG RUGBY THEMED CLASSES**

**RUGBY MINIS**

**BOOK NOW**

**AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS**  
 RECEPTION, YR 1 & YR 2  
 TUESDAYS 15:25-16:25  
 YEARS 1, 2, 3 & 4  
 THURSDAYS 15:25-16:25

**CHALLENGES**

**TEAM FUN**

**SKILLS**

**GAMES**

[www.rugbyminis.co.uk/gosforthparkfirst](http://www.rugbyminis.co.uk/gosforthparkfirst)

**MUSIC PARTNERSHIP NORTH**

**GOSFORTH VOICES**

**Do you enjoy singing and making music?**

Our Gosforth Voices choir meet on Wednesdays after school with young people from Years 3 and 4. It's a fantastic opportunity to make music with others and meet new friends from other schools!

To join us, scan the QR code to find out more or visit our website:

**FREE**

[www.musicpartnershipnorthnewcastle.co.uk/ensembles](http://www.musicpartnershipnorthnewcastle.co.uk/ensembles)

**Open to Y2 from Summer**

supported using public funding by

Department for Education | ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND | MUSIC PARTNERSHIP NORTH

Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | QR Code

**COME ALONG TO**

**ST AIDAN'S ECO FEST**

**BRUNTON PARK**

**3RD MAY**

**10AM-1PM**

**HOMEWARES & ECO PRODUCTS**

**CAKES & PLANTS**

**FREE FAMILY CRAFTS & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

**COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**

**FREE BIKE CHECKS**



Lee Sterry  
**sports**  
coaching



## Nursery Saturday Morning Courses

VENUE GOSFORTH ACADEMY

STARTING

SATURDAY 3RD MAY - SATURDAY 24TH MAY

(4 week course)

TIMES

11:00 - 11:50

Prices

£8 FOR ONE SESSION £32 FOR FOUR SESSIONS

For more information

email : [leesterrysportscoaching@gmail.com](mailto:leesterrysportscoaching@gmail.com)

mobile: 07729058119

website : [www.ls-sc.co.uk](http://www.ls-sc.co.uk)



@leesterrysports

GPFS PTFA  
presents.....

# An evening of self care

With Angela's Massage Therapies

On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June  
6pm - 8pm  
in the Community Room

Fancy making your very  
own self care products to  
take home?

Grab some friends and  
come and have fun making;

- Bath salts and scrubs
- Shower steamers
- Aromatherapy  
rollerballs
- and more!

\*Products made might vary on the night

Tickets cost £30 each, include  
a snack and are available on  
Parent Pay now!



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SAFETY ON THE ROAD

Traffic-related incidents are a significant risk for young pedestrians and cyclists, so understanding road safety is crucial for children's wellbeing. While all road users share responsibility for keeping one another safe, this guide offers strategies for empowering young people to navigate the roads confidently and responsibly.

### 1 TAKE PRACTICE JOURNEYS

Making 'practice' journeys with children is a great way to help them stay safe, thereby modelling responsible behaviours and having road safety conversations as they prepare to travel independently. Add hazard perception activities like spotting electric vehicles – which may have a green number plate – and point out how quiet they are. Children learn by watching others; remind them that their peers might not always be the best role models.

### 2 BE BRIGHT, BE SEEN

Visibility is lower during darker winter days, and drivers need to take extra care to look out for pedestrians. Wearing bright and reflective clothing can help make children more visible to drivers near roads. In poor daylight conditions, encourage children to wear light, bright or fluorescent clothing. When it's dark, wear reflective clothing or materials such as a reflective armband or jacket.

### 3 EYES UP

Encourage children to look up and keep their eyes on the road. Teach them to constantly watch for traffic and practise double-checking the road before crossing – looking right, left and then right again.

### 4 LIMIT DISTRACTIONS

Where possible, devices like phones should be kept away from children while out and about near roads. If they're carrying devices, these should be put away until they've reached their destination. Children must also avoid playing with toys or being distracted by friends. If a friend wants to show them something funny on their phone, there'll be time for that once they've safely arrived.

### 5 SLOW DOWN

Discuss the importance of waiting instead of crossing immediately. It can be tricky to judge the speed of traffic and spot obstacles that could cause a trip or a fall. For safety, children must stop and think before they get to the kerb and should always walk – not run – when crossing the road. They should avoid crossing until they're certain they have plenty of time. Even if traffic seems a long way off, it could still be approaching very quickly.

### 6 STOP BEFORE THE KERB

Teach children to stop before reaching the kerb – not right at the edge of it. Halting before they get to the kerb allows them to see if anything's coming, whereas getting too close to traffic is dangerous. If there's no pavement, children should stand back from the road's edge but ensure they can still see approaching traffic.

### 7 CROSS SAFELY

Children should always find a safe spot to cross the road, prioritising zebra crossings or pelican crossings, footbridges and subways. Find a place where they can see traffic coming from both directions. Avoid crossing near junctions, bends in the road, or obstacles that block their view, instead moving to somewhere they can see and be seen. Remind them to use their eyes and ears together when checking the road, as sometimes they can hear traffic before they can see it. Looking and listening while crossing helps them quickly spot traffic, including cyclists and motorcyclists driving between other vehicles.

### 8 PARKED VEHICLES

Crossing between parked vehicles is very dangerous. Teach children to use extra caution if crossing in this way, and, ideally, avoid it altogether. They should use the outside edge of a vehicle as if it were the kerb, waiting and checking for traffic before moving. They should ensure vehicles aren't about to move, by looking for drivers in the vehicles and listening for engines running – but remember that electric vehicles may move off silently. They should always make sure there is a gap between any parked vehicles on the other side, so they can reach the pavement.

### 9 REVERSING VEHICLES

Children must never cross behind a reversing vehicle – it's extremely dangerous. Remind them to look for white reversing lights and listen out for warning sounds. Can they hear the engine sound or a radio playing inside the vehicle?

### 10 WAIT FOR THE BUS TO LEAVE

When getting off a bus, children must wait for it to leave before crossing so they can have a clear view of the road in both directions. This also allows them to see and be seen by other road users. Crossing near large vehicles is particularly dangerous and should be avoided.

## Meet Our Expert

THINK! is a year-round national campaign that aims to encourage safe road behaviours – whether we're driving, cycling, horse riding or walking – with the aim of reducing the number of people killed and injured on the UK's roads each year. Find out more at: <https://www.think.gov.uk/education-resources/>



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MAKING FRIENDS ONLINE

In today's digital world, it's increasingly common for children to form friendships with people they've never met in person. While online connections can offer children a sense of belonging, they also carry significant risks. Around 19% of children aged 10 to 15 in England and Wales have chatted online with someone they've never met face to face. This guide offers expert advice for parents and educators on helping children navigate online friendships safely.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### ONLINE GROOMING THREATS

Predators can use games, chat apps or social media platforms to build relationships with children and gain their trust. This may quickly develop into grooming or exploitation. Between April 2017 and March 2023, UK police recorded nearly 34,000 online grooming offences – an 82% increase in just five years.

### EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Children may encounter distressing or explicit material while interacting with online contacts – especially via TikTok, Instagram or Snapchat. This is evidenced in a survey by the Children's Commissioner for England, which found that 45% of children aged 8 to 17 had seen content online that made them feel uncomfortable, worried or upset.

### PRIVACY AND DATA RISKS

Children and young people often overshare personal details – such as where they live or go to school – without understanding the consequences. In fact, 4.4% of 10 to 15-year-olds in the UK have met up in real life with someone they'd only spoken to online.

### COMPROMISED PERSONAL SAFETY

Meeting an online 'friend' in real life risks placing a child in serious danger. From abduction to coercion, the consequences can be devastating. Reports of children being harmed after such meetings are becoming increasingly common in the UK, highlighting the need for safeguarding intervention.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS

Online harm – such as cyberbullying, grooming or exposure to disturbing content – can lead to long-term emotional issues, including anxiety, depression and PTSD. 'Sextortion' gangs, who threaten to release sexual information about a person unless they pay them money, have reportedly targeted children as young as 11, leaving them traumatised and ashamed.

### LONG-TERM REPERCUSSIONS

Children exposed to harmful online relationships early on may develop unhealthy beliefs about relationships, consent, or self-worth. In a recent case, a 26-year-old posed as a girl on Snapchat to befriend children aged 10 to 16, manipulating them into sexual activity and causing profound emotional distress. One 12-year-old tragically died by suicide, highlighting the long-term psychological harm online friendships with strangers can cause.

26 FRIENDS ONLINE NOW

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### TEACH SAFE ONLINE HABITS

Help children understand how to use privacy settings, protect their personal information, spot fake profiles, and report anything suspicious or concerning, like pressure tactics. Encourage them to think critically about what they share – and whom they're talking to.

### KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Let children know they can talk to you about their online life. Avoid reacting with anger or judgement, as this may prevent them from opening up in the future. A child who feels listened to is more likely to disclose problems before they escalate.

### ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

Support children in building friendships through school, clubs, hobbies and activities in the real world. Strong offline relationships help reduce children's reliance on online platforms for social interaction, and can help them develop resilience and social confidence.

### USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Parental control settings on devices, games and apps can help manage screen time, filter out inappropriate content, and monitor activity. While no system is perfect, they provide a valuable layer of protection as children explore digital spaces.

## Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with over 30 years' experience in supporting children, families, and adults across education, local authority, and mental health settings – both in the UK (including at Parliamentary level) and internationally.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ZEPETO

AGE RESTRICTION  
**14+**

FOR SALE

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ZEPETO is a fast-growing app blending social networking with a virtual world experience – attracting around 20 million monthly users, with 15% from Europe. Players create 3D avatars to explore immersive environments, play games and interact with others; however, with minimal safety controls, anonymous chat and monetised content, ZEPETO poses a number of online safety concerns that parents and educators should be aware of.

### NO PARENTAL CONTROLS



Although ZEPETO is intended for users aged 14 and up, it lacks built-in parental controls or age verification, instead relying on safety features on the device it's played on. This lack of a parental controls feature raises concerns about whom children may be interacting with on the platform.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT



As a mix between a virtual world and a social media platform, ZEPETO features a wide range of user-generated content. Some areas may reference mature themes, such as TV series aimed at adults, or include inappropriate material created by other users – all of which children may stumble across without warning.

### STRANGER DANGER



By default, users can message and interact with anyone else. This open communication creates an environment where predatory individuals can pose as peers to gain trust, potentially leading to grooming, scams, and exploitation, such as blackmail.

Hi there...



### CYBERBULLYING RISKS



As with many social platforms, children can be targeted for bullying, harassment or exclusion by both strangers and their peers. Unfiltered chat and avatar-based interaction can allow bullying and other forms of harassment to continue, impacting children's wellbeing and mental health.

### ADDICTIVE GAMEPLAY



Daily log-in rewards, such as coins, and in-game incentives can encourage compulsive behaviour, with some users feeling pressure to check in constantly to avoid missing out. This can lead to excessive screen time and conflict with schoolwork or offline hobbies or commitments.

### SPENDING REAL MONEY



While the game is free to play, ZEPETO includes a store offering virtual clothing and accessories for avatars. These items are bought with 'ZEMs' – a paid currency – and the appeal of exclusive items or branded collaborations can make it easy for children to overspend.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENABLE PRIVACY SETTINGS



Visit the child's profile settings to restrict who can send messages – options include Everyone, Followers Only, or No-one. Encourage children to avoid sharing any personal information on their profile, as this is visible even on private accounts.

### CONTROL SPENDING

To prevent accidental purchases, set up purchase approval systems such as Apple's Ask to Buy or Google's Purchase Approvals. Alternatively, consider removing payment methods or using pre-paid cards with set budgets.

### LIMIT IN-APP TIME



Use parental controls on Android (Google Family Link) or iOS (Screen Time) to restrict app usage by setting hours or daily limits. Encouraging breaks can help children develop healthier habits and reduce app dependency.

### HAVE REGULAR CONVERSATIONS



Talk openly with children about whom they interact with online and the kinds of things they see or experience. Encourage them to speak up if someone makes them uncomfortable or if they come across inappropriate content. Teach them how to recognise red-flag behaviours such as asking for secrets, giving gifts, or requesting personal information.

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.

