Newsletter 9 – 2nd November 2026

Knowledge begins with respect for God (Proverbs 1:7)

This half-term's value is 'Friendship' (Ecclesiastes 4:10)

School Holiday Dates 2027-2028

Attached to this newsletter are the school holiday dates for the school year September 2027 – July 2028. Please make sure that you refer to these dates when booking holidays to make sure you avoid taking your children out of school during term time.

Friendship – this half term's value

This half term we will be focusing on the value of friendship. We will be thinking about how to be a good friend - someone who can be trusted and is loyal. We will be thinking about how friends come in all shapes and sizes - some are young, some are old, some are always there, some we see only occasionally. We will also talk about how we choose our friends and how we can develop our friendships and make them stronger. This is what the Bible says about friendship:



'Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, there is no one to help him.'

Important Dates

Please note the following events taking place this term:



- School photographer: class photographs – Thursday 19th November
- Parents' & Carers' Evening – Tuesday 8th December
- Christmas Lunch – Friday 11th December
- Christmas Parties – week commencing 14th December
- Last day of term – Friday 18th December (school closes at 3.00pm)

Attached to this newsletter:

- November's online safety newsletter
- School holiday dates for 2027-2028

Best wishes

Julian Rogers
Headteacher

November's Online Safety Video

This month's theme is Online Grooming. This video provides a short overview explaining what Online Grooming is, spotting the warning signs and what actions you should take if this is happening to your child.

https://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/online-safety-monthly-videos/

Recent Amazing Achievers!

You've Been Spotted!

Children who have been spotted demonstrating one of our school values:

Humna Hussain – Woodpeckers
Aliza Chaudry – Kingfishers
Rocco Smith – Swallows
Adil Abdrabou – Doves
Aariz Hussain – Owls
Jack Jackson – Kestrels
Bilal Badat – Hawks
Awais Mehboob – Falcons
Sara Slomka – Eagles

Headteacher's Award

Children chosen for a special achievement:

Sami Abdrabou – Woodpeckers
Adam Sabir – Kingfishers
Zayn Bhojani – Swallows
Aliza Shah – Doves
Bushra Kousar – Owls
Ahmed Hassan – Kestrels
Yousuf Iqbal – Hawks
Aliyah Malik – Falcons
Sara Slonka – Eagles

Recent Reading Badges

Doves
Mustakim Akonjee & Adeeba Mulla – Topaz, Shehryar Ahmed - Emerald

Mrs Martin's Class of the Week:

Woodpeckers

Mr Ulhaq's Ultimate Achiever:

Umair Fulat (Owls)

Mr Richardson's Lunchtime Awards:

Nina Hasan (Swallows) & Laraib Hussain (Kestrels)

Last Week's Attendance

	Best attendance	Best punctuality
Infants	Swallows	Woodpeckers
Juniors	Owls & Kestrels	Kestrels/Hawks

Online Safety Newsletter Nov 2026

Spotify Parental Controls

Spotify is a music streaming service. You must be aged over 13 to access it. If under 18, parent/guardian consent is required. However, under-13s can access Spotify through a **managed account** set up by a parent or legal guardian.

Since July 2026, Spotify has provided parental controls for managed accounts on both free and premium plans. These controls:

- turn messaging off.
- turn explicit content off.
- turn videos and canvas off.
- allow you to block specific artists or tracks.

Further information

Read the news announcement here: https://newsroom.spotify.com/2026-05-13/managed-accounts-free-tier-expansion/

Spotify have produced this Parental Guide to assist you with further information: https://www.spotify.com/us/safetyanddprivacy/parental-guide

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translation tool on our web version: https://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/november-2026-primary/

Online Grooming



What is Online Grooming?

Online Grooming is when an adult builds a relationship online with a child to manipulate, exploit, or abuse them.

How does Grooming take place?

Groomers often use fake profiles to pretend they are someone they are not, for example they may claim to be younger than they really are or pretend to be a person of influence. They will use flattery and attention to build trust and friendship. They may use online games or social media to initiate contact but then encourage your child to switch to a different app to chat with privately - usually on an app that offers limited or no parental controls and/or encrypts messages.

What can I do?

- Use appropriate parental controls.
- Set privacy settings.
- Show them how to use any blocking or reporting tools.
- Chat to your child regularly about what they do online and who they communicate with. Remind them that people online may not always be who they say they are.

What are the signs that my child is being groomed?

- Being **secretive** about who they are talking to.
- They become **withdrawn** from family and friends.
- Appearing **anxious or upset** after receiving messages.
- Receiving unexpected **gifts**.

Find out more here: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/offender-gaining-trust

What should I do if my child is being groomed?

- If you think your child is in immediate danger, contact the police.
- Stay calm and reassure your child that they are not to blame.
- If you are worried about online abuse or the way somebody has been communicating with your child online, report it to CEOP: (https://www.ceop.police.uk).

Further information

- https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/11_18/lets-talk-about/sexual-abuse/online-grooming/

COM Networks

COM Networks are online communities where harmful and deeply disturbing behaviour occurs, including child sexual abuse, cybercrime and extremism. These networks operate on mainstream messaging apps, gaming platforms and through social media. **It is important to be aware that such networks exist and understand the risks they can pose to children.** Introductions to COM Networks can begin with harmless conversations on a game or social media platform, but then as trust builds, groups will gradually introduce harmful content, extreme challenges and pressure to prove loyalty. Some groups use threats, humiliation or the threat of exposing private information to control members. Images, messages or personal details may be used to blackmail victims.

What should I look out for?

- **Increased secrecy**
- **Emotional or behavioural changes**
- **Unfamiliar language:** using new expressions or discussing extreme content, opinions or beliefs.
- **Unexpected gifts**

Sky News investigation into COM Networks (and links on popular sites such as Roblox and Discord)

You may have seen Sky News' investigation into COM networks. The report highlights findings from a six-month investigation that found self-harm-themed avatars, clothing and related content available on the gaming platform Roblox, including items that could be **accessed by children as young as five years old**. The report can be viewed here, **please be aware that it contains upsetting content**:
https://news.sky.com/video/inside-robloxs-dark-side-sky-news-finds-self-harm-avatars-available-to-young-children-13592551

How can I protect my child?

- Have regular and open conversations with your child. Ask your child what they do online and who they communicate with.
- Reassure them that they can always ask for help, even if they have shared something personal or broken a family rule.
- It is important to remember that threatening to confiscate their devices may make them less likely to talk to you when something goes wrong.
- Regularly review privacy settings and set up appropriate parental controls on all devices your child is using.
- Ensure your child understands the risks of sharing personal information or intimate images online.

Further information

- https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gscp/professional-resources/sadistic-online-exploitation/
- https://saferschoolsni.co.uk/understanding-com-networks/

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WhatsApp Channels and Parental Controls

Users must be at least 13 years old to use WhatsApp. Children under 13 can access WhatsApp through a **parent-managed account.**

WhatsApp Channels

WhatsApp Channels are a one-way broadcast tool to send updates to followers. Channels can be found in the Updates tab. From here you can view a whole host of channels, including channels that will **not be age appropriate and may include adult content.** If your child has their own WhatsApp channel, then you need to be aware that they are **public. Anyone can view and follow a channel and anything you share on your channel is public.** We would recommend that parental controls are used to prevent children creating and accessing WhatsApp channels.

Parent Managed accounts

Parent managed accounts are required for those under 13. These accounts have additional safety restrictions and do not allow access to features such as Channels, Meta AI and location sharing. You also have control over which groups they can join.

Parental Controls for Teenagers

For users aged 13 to 17, WhatsApp offers parental control settings to limit access to certain features such as Channels.

For more information, visit:
https://www.whatsapp.com/parentalcontrols

Rage Bait

Have you heard of this term? Rage bait is when somebody deliberately posts online content to make people feel angry or frustrated to generate views and engagement. Find out more here: https://findmykids.org/blog/en/rage-baiting

ST. MATTHEW'S C. OF E. PRIMARY SCHOOL with BRUNEL NURSERY SCHOOL

SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY PATTERN 2027/2028

PARENT/CARER COPY

AUTUMN TERM 2027

INSET - school closed to children	**Wednesday 1st September 2027**
INSET - school closed to children	**Thursday 2nd September 2027**
INSET - school closed to children	**Friday 3rd September 2027**
Re-open on:	Monday 6th September 2027
Mid-term closure	Monday 25th October - Friday 29th October 2027
Closure after school on	Friday 17th December 2027
Number of openings	**70**

SPRING TERM 2028

Re-open on:	Tuesday 4th January 2028
Mid-term closure	Monday 14th February - Friday 18th February 2028
Closure after school on	Friday 31st March 2028
Number of openings	**68**

SUMMER TERM 2028

Re-open on:	Tuesday 18th April 2028
May Day closure	Monday 1st May 2028
Mid-term closure:	Monday 29th May - Friday 2nd June 2028
Closure after school on	Wednesday 19th July 2028
INSET - school closed to children	**Thursday 20th July 2028**
INSET - school closed to children	**Friday 21st July 2028**
Number of openings	**52**

TOTAL NUMBER OF OPENINGS FOR CHILDREN - 190

Eid Ul Fitr – Tuesday 9th March 2027 – Approx Date

Eid Al Adha – Monday 17th May 2027 – Approx Date

CLOSURE AFTER SCHOOL ON THE LAST DAY OF EACH TERM

ALL CHILDREN AT ST. MATTHEW'S SCHOOL FINISH AT THE USUAL TIME OF 3.00PM
BRUNEL NURSERY SESSIONS FINISH AT THE USUAL TIME {Morning session: 8.30am-11.30am and afternoon session: 12.00noon-3.00pm}