



Newsletter 24 – 10th March 2025

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

This half-term's value is 'Service' (Mark 10:35)

Children's Safety after School

Please could all parents and carers make sure that their children stay on the paths around school, particularly in the car park. Some members of staff finish at 3.00pm and they are often driving out of the car park at the same time as the children finish school and leave the school grounds. We want to make sure that all children are safe.



Class Assemblies

A reminder that there will be two class assemblies taking place this half term:

Kestrels – this Wednesday, 12th March

Doves – Wednesday 26th March

Both assemblies will start at 8.40am and the parents/carers of children in these classes are very welcome to come along and support their children.

Online Safety Newsletter

This month's online safety newsletter is now available on the school website (Parents/Online Safety). I've also attached it to this newsletter for your convenience. It includes information on AI, the impact of smartphones, TikTok and LEGO Arcade.



School Photographer

A reminder that the school photographer will be in school this Thursday, 13th March to take photographs of individual children and family groups. As usual, there will be the opportunity for parents to bring pre-school brothers and sisters in between 8.00 – 8.30am to be included in family group photos. For safeguarding purposes, **parents need to report to the main office**, not through the breakfast club or classroom doors.

Please note that this is ONLY for pre-school brothers and sisters.

Free E-Learning for Parents and Carers

I've attached to this week's newsletter some information about free e-learning opportunities from Lancashire Mind for parents on the topic of mental wellbeing and how you can support your child.



Best wishes

Julian Rogers
Headteacher

This week's Amazing Achievers!

You've Been Spotted!

Children who have been demonstrating one of our school values:

Abdullah Hassan – Robins Blue
 Eesha Hussain – Robins Green
 Mohammed Bhamji – Woodpeckers
 M. Arham Atiq – Kingfishers
 Rayah Firfire – Swallows
 Zakariya Faqir – Doves
 Nathan Szileczki – Owls
 Max Jackson – Kestrels
 Amina Thazhathethil – Hawks
 Subhan Atiq – Falcons
 Alisha Shaikh – Eagles

Headteacher's Award

Children chosen for a special achievement:

Daniel Malik – Robins Blue
 Zakariya Latif – Robins Green
 Idrees Chothia – Woodpeckers
 Yusuf Mangera – Kingfishers
 Rayah Firfire – Swallows
 Aayza Farooq – Doves
 Abdul Rehman – Owls
 Adam Chopdat – Kestrels
 Shan Akhtar – Hawks
 Fatima Aziz – Falcons
 Tahmeed Hussain – Eagles

Recent Reading Badges

Doves
 Aaisha Sidat - Silver

Authors of the Week

Key Stage 2 children who have excelled in their writing recently:

Doves – Aleena Bhamji
Owls – Hawa Atif
Kestrels – Ahmed Mulla
Hawks – Ali Abdullah
Falcons – Aliyah Patel
Eagles – Sarrin

Mrs Martin's Class of the Week:
Doves

Mrs Fenton's Star:
Max Jackson (Kestrels)

Mr Richardson's Lunchtime Awards:
 M. Zohaib Latif (Kingfishers) & Fatima Hussain (Kestrels)

Last Week's Attendance

	Best attendance	Best punctuality
Infants	Robins Blue (100%)	Kingfishers
Juniors	Owls	Falcons

WOW – the Walk to School Challenge

A big well done and thank you to all the teachers, children and families and thank you to all the teachers and pupils for helping St Matthew's to top the latest Blackburn with Darwen WOW leaderboard!

Another big thank you to Miss Ashton and the School Council for organising our involvement in this very worthwhile initiative.

The Wow walking is a big success and it's great to hear and see the children so motivated to achieve the badges and help others achieve. Miss Ashton will be printing off certificates to the monthly winners so far in recognition of their extra efforts to help the class and school achieve.



The graphic features a pink background with various celebratory elements: a yellow trophy, stars, and a sunburst. Text includes 'LIVING STREETS', 'LET'S WALK TO SCHOOL', 'WOW the WALK TO SCHOOL challenge', and 'TOP TEN'. A yellow banner at the top right reads 'Blackburn with Darwen Leaderboard'. A list of ten schools is provided, followed by 'SPRING 2025' and the hashtag '#WOWTopTen'.

Blackburn with Darwen Leaderboard	
1.	St Matthew's Church of England Primary School
2.	Darwen, St Barnabas CofE Primary Academy
3.	Wensley Fold CofE Primary Academy
4.	Audley Junior School
5.	St Luke and St Philips C of E Primary School
6.	Cedars Primary School
7.	St Barnabas and St Paul's C of E VA Primary School
8.	Shadsworth Infant School
9.	St Stephen's Church of England Primary School
10.	St James' C of E Primary School Blackburn

SPRING 2025 [#WOWTopTen](#)

Supporting Your Child



For Parents & Carers:

Learn practical strategies and approaches to support your child.

Access a downloadable support pack full of approaches and activities.

Learn where to go for further support via the downloadable signposting guide.

Access the eLearning anytime and anywhere via PC, smartphone or tablet.

Parent & Carer e-Learning

No Charge & Access Any Time

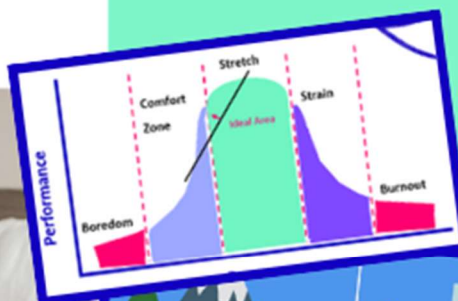
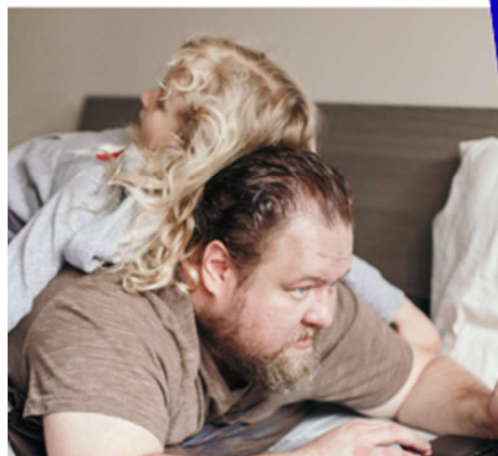
Optional support pack and signposting are available.

Neuro-Inclusive Mental Wellbeing Training

Aimed at parents and carers of young people who struggle with their mental health and wellbeing.

Young people with specific challenges linked to mental health and neurodiversity / neurodivergence (autism, ADHD, dyslexia etc) are also included in the course. It is neuroaffirming, meaning it does not treat these kinds of differences as only negative.

Includes true lived experience stories from parents, people who struggled with their mental health as children & comments from young people themselves, as well as information from specialists.



Scan the QR code to access





Additional Support

Also available for parents & carers:

Virtual Together Workshops

No cost neurodiversity inclusive mental health and wellbeing workshops, delivered live via Zoom. Current workshops include “You and Your Young Person” which covers how to support your child & yourself with mental wellbeing, and “Understanding Self Harm” which covers responding to self harm as a parent or carer.

Wellbeing Coaching

Young people age 10-25 or their caregivers can access up to 6 (no cost) wellbeing coaching sessions, following a parent/carer having attended a workshop.

Learning objectives

- Improve basic knowledge of neurodiversity
- Understand the importance of mental health
- Learn tools and techniques to support emotional wellbeing and self esteem
- Recognition of the importance of communication and family cohesion

“I feel much more comfortable in having a conversation without saying the wrong thing. I feel validated in how I’m dealing with the current situation.”

Parent feedback
Understanding Self-Harm workshop

lancashiremind.arlo.co
training@lancashiremind.org.uk



Lancashire Mind
80-82 Devonshire Road
Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 2DR
01257 231660
admin@lancashiremind.org.uk

Registered Charity 1081427

 **mind**
Lancashire

The impact of smartphones



There is a growing concern on how excessive use of smartphones can affect our children.

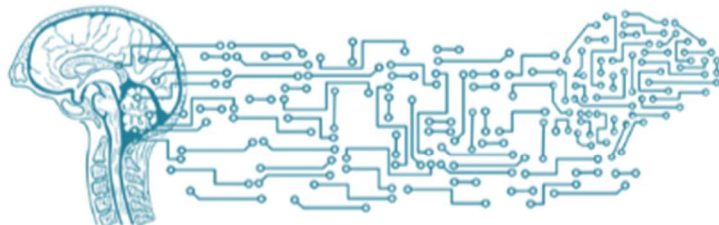
In addition to the effects of seeing inappropriate content online, the risk of cyberbullying and grooming, it is important that we also highlight the effects of smartphone use on our children's mental health.

If your child is using a smartphone then please try to ensure they maintain a healthy screentime limit.

According to King's College London, "two new studies of smartphone habits in teenagers have identified links between problematic smartphone use and depression, anxiety and insomnia." You can read more about these studies here: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/teens-with-problematic-smartphone-use-are-twice-as-likely-to-have-anxiety-and-many-are-eager-to-cut-down>

Compass have published an article as well on what effects mobile phones have on children here: <https://www.compass-uk.org/services/compass-changing-lives/what-effects-do-mobile-phones-have-on-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health/>

Artificial Intelligence (AI)



What is AI?

AI is when a computer/machine can learn and perform tasks like a human. Its popularity continues to increase, and examples include:

- **Virtual assistants** like Alexa and Siri.
- **Chatbots** such as ChatGPT and My AI from Snapchat

Potential Risks of AI?

- **Chat apps** - A simple search of "AI Chat" within the App store highlights the number of apps already available and just scrolling through, you can see that they are not suitable for children with many rated as 17+.
- **Image manipulation** - there are AI tools that can be used to digitally remove clothes from photos, which clearly raises serious safeguarding and privacy concerns.
- **Deepfakes** - there are also AI tools that create realistic, fake videos which can be used to spread misinformation or cause harm.

Child Rescue Coalition discuss the dangers in more detail here:

<https://childrescuecoalition.org/educations/the-dark-side-of-ai-risks-to-children/>

How can I protect my child?

As always, to keep your child safe online, it is important to:

- Develop your child's digital literacy by highlighting the risks of AI and showing them how important it is to verify what they see online.
- Set up appropriate parental controls on their devices/ broadband.
- Chat to your child regularly and ensure your child knows that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if anything concerns them.

Further information

For further information, the NSPCC and Internet Matters provide useful guides on their websites:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2025/artificial-intelligence-safety-tips-for-parents>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/parent-guide-to-artificial-intelligence-ai-tools/>

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TikTok

You must be over 13 years of age to use TikTok. TikTok is a social media platform for sharing and watching short video clips. Some of the videos may not be appropriate for your child to view and there is also the risk of strangers contacting your child. If your child is using TikTok then make sure appropriate security/privacy settings are applied.



Account set up

It is important that when setting up an account, your child enters their real date of birth as accounts are tailored by age e.g., Direct Messaging is disabled for accounts aged 13-15. In addition, advertisements are tailored by age. By default, accounts for people under 16 are set to private and we would recommend keeping it as this. This means your child must approve follower requests. You can read more about the other settings available, such as switching off comments and restricted mode here: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/account-privacy-settings/privacy-and-safety-settings-for-users-under-age-18>

Family Pairing

This allows you to link your own account to your child's account. You can then set controls such as restricted mode. You can find out more here: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/family-pairing>

Inappropriate content, themes and challenges on TikTok

Whilst against TikTok's guidelines, explicit and inappropriate content can be found on this platform, for example nudity/sexual content and hate speech. Some of the songs available to lip sync to may contain inappropriate lyrics or adult themes. We often see viral challenges on social media, some of which can be dangerous. If your child is using TikTok, chat to them regularly about what they are viewing.

Stranger contact

Talk to your child about who is following them online and ensure that they understand that people may not be who they say they are when online. It is important that children understand not to share personal information.

Refresh your feed

You can refresh your "For You" feed to update the content recommended: <https://support.tiktok.com/en/account-and-privacy/account-privacy-settings/refresh-your-for-you-feed>

Blocking and Reporting

Ensure your child knows how to use the safety features available to them, including how to report comments, direct messages and another user.

Further information

- <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok>
- <https://safeguarding.thekeysupport.com/factsheets-and-briefings/child-safety-tiktok-parent-factsheet/>

Talk PANTS with the NSPCC

Talk PANTS was developed to help you have conversations with your child to help them understand that their body belongs to them.

You can find out more here as well as a further link to helpful questions:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/pants-underwear-rule/>

LEGO Arcade

Are you looking for games for your child to play online? LEGO have a selection of fun games including Lego Ninjago and Lego Friends:

<https://kids.lego.com/en-gb/arcade>

Stars Messenger App

The Stars Messenger App is rated as 4+ on the App store. It is a free messaging and video app designed for children to use. Users need their friend's username as well as their unique private Friend Code to add each other. There is also an optional Parent View available for a monthly charge.

South West Grid for Learning provide a full guide to staying safe on this app as well as safety considerations:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/a-guide-to-staying-safe-with-the-stars-messaging-app/>