



Newsletter 6 – 6th October 2025

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

This half-term's value is 'Thankfulness' (Colossians 2:7)

Diwali Day – Monday 13th October

As part of the school's RE curriculum, Mrs Minoprio-Nicholson, our RE Subject Leader, has arranged a fun day of activities on the theme of Diwali, the Festival of Lights. On Monday 13th October, we will be welcoming a special visitor to school who will speak to the children about why Diwali is important to Hindus and Sikhs around the world. There will be art, music and other activities, all related to Diwali. On this day, your child is very welcome to come dressed in their own clothes – the more colourful the better!



Macmillan Coffee Morning

Last Tuesday's sale added a further £180 to our original total of £440, giving us a total of £620! The bracelets added an extra £30 so altogether we will have raised £650 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Thank you once again for your legendary generosity!

Super Learning Week

The children enjoyed a fantastic week last week – thanks again to Mrs Martin for organising these amazing activities for the children.

Swimming lessons continue this week as follows:

- Tuesday 7th – Swallows & Hawks
- Wednesday 8th – Kingfishers & Kestrels
- Thursday 9th – Owls & Falcons
- Friday 10th – Falcons & Doves
- Monday 13th – Kestrels, Y4 Owls & Eagles



School Holiday Patterns: 2025-26 and 2026-27

The school holiday patterns for 2025-26 and 2026-27 are both now available on the school's website: www.stmatthewsblackburn.com under 'Parents – Term Dates and School Holidays'. Please make sure that you check with these before booking holidays and trips abroad.

It is extremely important to avoid booking holidays and/or extended leave during term time as this can seriously affect your child's learning and progress.

Online Safety Newsletter

October's edition is now available on the school website (Parents/Online Safety) and is also attached to this newsletter.



The deadline for applying for your child's secondary school place is:

**OCTOBER
31**

Parents/Carers of Year 6 children

A reminder that the deadline for secondary school applications is Friday 31st October 2024. If you've missed a school's open evening, don't worry as they will often arrange to give you your own guided tour at a time that suits you.

Best wishes



Julian Rogers
Headteacher

Harvest Festival Donations

Thank you to everyone who has sent in donations of tinned soup for this year's Blackburn Foodbank harvest appeal. Please keep them coming!

Last Week's Attendance

	Best attendance	Best punctuality
Infants	Swallows	Woodpeckers
Juniors	Doves & Falcons (100%)	Hawks & Eagles

Online Safety Newsletter

Oct 2025

Risks of using AI for mental health

AI chatbots and wellness apps are becoming increasingly popular, which may lead to your child accessing them to support their mental health.

What should I be concerned about?

- The information/advice given may not always be accurate.
- Privacy concerns of how data is collected and used.
- Children may use these apps rather than seeking help from an adult.

What can I do?

- Chat to your child regularly about what apps and websites they are using and why.
- Remind them AI is a tool and not a substitute for qualified professionals who provide tailored advice/support.
- Talk to them about how they should fact check information.
- Check age ratings.

Further information

<https://stigmafreementalhealth.com/blog/supporting-youth-mental-health-with-ai-a-guide-for-parents-and-caregivers/>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version: <https://www.knowsleylcs.org.uk/october-2025/>

YouTube

YouTube is one of the most popular platforms, available across many different devices - phones, tablets and Smart TVs etc.

YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13, however, younger children can still access YouTube with consent from a parent/ guardian. There are different options available to access YouTube, depending on your child's age:



1. YouTube Kids – a separate app that includes a smaller selection of videos based on the age category you select: Preschool (ages 4 and under), Younger (ages 5–8) or Older (ages 9–12).

2. Supervised accounts – a parent-managed version of YouTube that allows you to control the content your child can access. You can select one of the following options:

- **Explore** - Generally for viewers aged 9+.
- **Explore more** - Generally for viewers aged 13+
- **Most of YouTube** - This setting includes almost everything except for videos marked as 18+.

Find out more: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10315420>

What do I need to be aware of?

Whilst YouTube can be educational and fun, it is important to be aware of the potential risks, such as:

- **Inappropriate content**
- **Excessive Screen time** – particularly due to the autoplay feature.
- **Unwanted contact / cyberbullying** – particularly via comments if your child is sharing videos.
- **Algorithms** – algorithms influence what we see to keep us engaged. This can lead to a user being exposed to large amounts of content about one topic/theme, which may not be helpful if it is negative.
- **Adverts** that may not be aimed at or suitable for your child's age.

What can I do?

- Set up appropriate parental controls.
- Show your child the reporting and blocking tools available.
- Watch YouTube together or supervise use.

Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/entertainment-search-engines/youtube-app/>

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is incredibly popular with young people and is used for group chats, voice messages and video calls. **Users should be at least 13 years old to use WhatsApp.**

We frequently receive reports of children using WhatsApp inappropriately, such as sharing images to embarrass others, sending hurtful messages, spreading rumours, or excluding people from group chats to make them feel left out. Since WhatsApp lacks parental controls, it is important to think about whether it is really the right platform for your child. For example, you should consider if your child has the critical thinking skills to recognise bullying. Furthermore, do they understand how to manage peer pressure and refrain from joining in on hurtful behaviour?

What should I be aware of if my child is using WhatsApp?

- **Group chats:** Everyone within a group, even if they are not one of your child's contacts, will be able to see all messages within that group. If your child is added to a group with someone that they have previously blocked, that person can still see their messages and send them messages within the group chat.
- **Inappropriate content:** users can be exposed to content that is not suitable for their age.
- **Location sharing:** talk to your child about the potential danger of sharing their location.
- **Chat lock/secret code:** users can lock chats as well as apply a secret code setting so a chat does not appear in the main chat.
- **Screen time due to addictive nature**
- **AI:** WhatsApp includes Meta AI.

What can I do?

- Check privacy settings, for example check who can add them to groups.
- Ensure your child understands that they can leave a chat at any time, Find out more here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/424124173736394>
- Show your child how to block and report other users. Find out how here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/1142481766359885/>
- Use parental controls such as screentime controls or do not disturb to reduce alerts.
- Talk about who they are chatting with, encourage them to think carefully about the messages they send and how they might be received by others. Talk about positivity and not saying anything hurtful. Ask them to think about whether they would say what they are messaging, face to face.
- Chat to your child about the groups that they belong to.

Further information

Find out more here:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zc8vvg8>
- https://faq.whatsapp.com/773166357950949?helpref=faq_content

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Italian Brainrot

Have you heard of Italian Brainrot? It is a viral trend consisting of AI generated characters featuring in memes and videos. It originally started on TikTok but can now be seen on other platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. There are also lots of spinoff content including a game on Roblox.

Whilst the content is generally nonsensical and children will find some of it funny, some content can include inappropriate/offensive language and content that might not be suitable for your child's age.

iOS 26

Apple have released their new operating system – iOS 26. Protect Young Eyes have published an article detailing the changes relating to your child's safety, including content filtering in Safari. Find out more here:

<https://www.protectyoungeyes.com/blog-articles/a-parents-guide-to-ios-26>

Managing Digital Spending

Parent Zone have created a guide to help teach your child how to manage their online spending. You can read it here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/managing-digital-spending-guide-parents>

ADHD, Screen Time, and Healthy Boundaries

Bark have created this guide for parents of children with ADHD to support you in helping your child create a healthy relationship with technology. You can access it here:

<https://www.bark.us/blog/adhd-kid-and-tech/>