April / May 2024 Newsletter

Marldon C of E Primary School

'Within the love of God, working together, growing together, for all to flourish.'

Dates for the diary:

Thursday 9th May:
Class photographs.

Friday 10th May:
Year 3 Swimming.

Monday 13th May - Friday 17th May:
Year 6 SATs Week 2024.

Friday 17th May:
Year 3 Swimming.
Year 6 Bear Trail.

Friday 24th May:
Year 3 Swimming.
Last day of Summer Half Term 1.

Tuesday 4th June:
First day of Summer Half Term 2.

Friday 7th June:
Year 3 Swimming.

Friday 14th June:
Year 4 Swimming.

Thursday 20th June:
Sports Day.

Friday 21st June:
Year 4 Swimming.

Wednesday 26th June:
Y1 trip to Lupton House Forest School.

Friday 28th June:
Y4 Swimming.
Y2 Camp.

With the sun finally shining down on us I would like to start this newsletter with a reminder for all children to please come to school with a sun hat (named) and sun cream (already applied) to help ensure they can enjoy their school day and stay safe and well.

Christian Value:
This half term our focus value is compassion. In worship and in class the children will be learning about what compassion is and how it is used to ensure we can flourish in our lives. As always, each week classes will nominate 2 compassion champions to be celebrated in our values worship each Monday.

Right of the Month:
Each month we focus on a different article from the UNICEF Rights For Children charter. This month we will explore Article 23 - children with disabilities have the right to special care and education to help them develop and live full lives.

School Trips and Visitors:
What a busy start to the summer term we have had with trips and visitors taking place all through school.

Mars and Mercury classes have enjoyed visits from Rev. Chris and Rev. Jane to support their learning in their Religion and World View Topics. While Neptune class where joined by Year 5 from Ipplepen to help solve a crime as part of their CSI topic - devleoping their scientific understanding and skills through the day.

Earth and Mercury classes have enjoyed visits out. With our Year 4s exploring Ancient Egypt in their visit to Torquay Museum while our Year 2's spent the day learning about the food we eat at Occombe Farm.

Outdoor Club:

Children from Year 5 and 6 have had an adventurous start to our summer term enjoying our Outdoor Club.

Year 5s have had the opportunity to tackle high ropes and crate stacking at Colhayes and despite the wet weather had a great time working together to overcome their fears as well as the obstacles in their way.

While Year 6's have the opportunity to experience scuba diving at Kingsteignton swimming pool. The introductory session allows them to experience scuba in a controlled environment while introducing them to the skills and knowldege needed to scuba safely.

Our Year 6 children are soon to take their SATS.

It is natural to feel nervous and anxious when facing tests and assessments and we will be doing everything we can to alleviate any anxiety and negative impact on our children's mental health.

To aid this, we will be sharing self-care and coping strategies for children so that they are less likely to feel overwhelmed. The following link offers support for self-care and an opportunity to create an individual self-care plan for children, as self-care looks different for each unique person.

https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/myself-care-plan-primary/

Please remember that if you have any concerns around your child's mental health, we are here to help.

Please use our tier system and speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

Online Safety:

Keeping children safe online is a challenge especially with the pace of change within the world of technology. One of the most popular gaming sites that we hear children of all ages talking about is Roblox. Attached to this newsletter is some useful information about the site to help you ensure that you have all of the controls in place to keep your children safe when they are enjoying this game online.

Planned Absence:

Please remember that you must notify school of any period of planned absence. This needs to be done through collecting and completing an S2 request form from the school office. At this time, can I also remind you that we are only able to authorise requests if there are 'exceptional circumstances.'Devon County Council's advice is that we must be extremely cautious about approving any requests if a pupil's education is likely to be significantly impacted upon.
It is important that these forms are handed in with adequate time to respond as any unauthorised absence will likely result in a penalty notice or court summons being issued to each parent for each pupil affected.

As always if I can be of any help please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Jon Arnold
Head of School

ARTICLE 28 - Every child has the right to an education

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalcollege.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about ROBLOX

AGE RATING PEGI 7

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market. By 2020, the game's makers were claiming that more than half of children in the USA play it. As a 'sandbox' title, Roblox offers a huge amount of creative freedom: it lets players create their own gaming experiences with the Roblox Studio to build custom levels and games, which can then be shared with other players online. Roblox fosters creative thinking and enjoys a robust online community of fans.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Roblox encourages players to communicate online (including a group chat facility). This could expose children to risks such as scammers, online predators, harassment, griefers and more. The in-game chat has some filters, but isn't perfect: players can still send harmful messages to others – such as general hostility – while predators can reach out to children directly.

ONLINE DATERS

These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODer is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this usually doesn't deter ODers. Some player-built Roblox game worlds have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind.

PUBLIC SERVERS

Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some games and servers, therefore, will put children more at risk of contact from strangers than others.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Roblox is actually free to download and play, but bear in mind that there *are* some hidden costs. Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game, for example, using real money. People can also buy extra Robux (the in-game currency) to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and some private or VIP servers also have a cost.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for your child, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply the appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING

Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. The game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your child's account.

PRIVATE SERVERS

If your child has genuine friends who they play Roblox online with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, some players could invite other people – who might not necessarily be child friendly – into the private server. If your child is a Roblox fan, it's important to talk with them regularly about who they are playing the game with.

MONITOR SPENDING

If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that you have two-factor authentication on your payment accounts also makes it harder for your child to spend money inadvertently.

DEALING WITH STRANGERS

At some point in their development, your child will need to learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's OK to discuss – and what they should *never* tell a stranger online – will help them understand how to communicate with others safely in the digital world.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

Sources: https://www.theverge.com/2021/7/21/22583431/roblox-over-half-of-us-kids-playing-virtual-parties-fortnite https://corp.roblox.com/parents/

National Online Safety #WakeUpWednesday

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