

Information Bulletin for Parents and Carers

Friday 24th March



St. Wilfrid's
R.C. College

Excellence through Faith, Learning and Support

Faith:



Throughout Lent we will be sharing the Youth Ministry Team's 'Wait a minute, it's Lent' videos with our students. If you would like to watch the videos as part of your faith journey this Lent, you may access them here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL_whhZ8gzYZ2dRYstN34mfbtaJOuOdgWL

Ramadan

Many of our Muslim students are currently observing Ramadan - a very important time in the Islamic calendar. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam - the fundamental rules worshippers must follow. Normally, during Ramadan, people will make a special effort to connect with their communities and reach out to people who need help. Likewise, if any parents would like to make us aware that their children are observing Ramadan and wish for us to support them further during this period, please contact us and we will be delighted to do so.

Learning:

Students of the Week

The following students have been awarded 'Students of the Week'.

Headteacher's Award: Lacy Duffield 7MC2

Tutor Group of the Week: 7MC2

Aidan: Ben Patterson 8A1 and Brendan Alecho 11A1

Bede: Mason Callaghan 7B1 and Kai Allcoat 11B1

Cuthbert: Sophia Ambler 7C1 and Spencer Pollard 9C1

Hilda: Emily Stobbs 9H1 and Skye Young 11H1

Margaret Clitherow: Kaisan Kamruzzaman 8C1 and Raisha Rahman 9C2

Congratulations to you all, we are incredibly proud of you.

Year 11

Next week we will discuss with Year 11 that *'This is the week to...'* **develop an Easter routine.**

Students have been provided with a preparation planner with a set number of 30 minute revision slots to complete for each of their subjects over the Easter holidays. Next week students should accumulate revision resources from each of their subjects to support their independent study. Whilst developing this routine, we would also encourage students to organise their breaks from revision, in order to rest and spend time with friends and family after a challenging term. With just four weeks to go until the first exam when we return after Easter, it is vital that our students develop a routine that works for them to enable them to fulfil their potential whilst looking after their mental well-being.

Support:

Sixth Form Taster Evening for Year 11 Students: Thursday 30th March 2023 4.30-6.30pm

We are delighted to offer Year 11 students an additional opportunity to attend a Taster Evening at St Wilfrid's R.C. College Sixth Form. The purpose of this evening is to allow students to experience what studying will be like in Sixth Form and allow them to make the right subject choices when they leave Year 11. This follows on from the Taster Day in November 2022 and students are encouraged to try a different route or set of subjects to experience this time. Those that attended the college taster session should attend this evening to get a taste of what a mixture of A Levels and Vocational courses would be like at either a Sixth Form or College.

The evening will begin at 4.30pm with a short presentation in Nichol's Hall and then will be followed by three, 30-minute taster sessions in the subjects of their choice. There are no dress code expectations for this evening, students can attend in their casual clothes if they prefer to.

Students should select their subjects using the google form that can be found: <https://forms.gle/ybxKjkn4NY3iwzmT6> or by clicking the link on their google classroom. Further information about each of the subjects on offer at Sixth Form can be found: [Key Stage 5 Subjects - St. Wilfrid's R.C. College \(st-wilfrids.org\)](https://www.st-wilfrids.org/Key-Stage-5-Subjects)

Support will be available in the evening for any students who wish to discuss their Post-16 options and who are still to complete their Sixth Form application.

Online Chat / Social Media Safety

We are part of the South Tyneside Designated Safeguarding Lead Forum. At the latest meeting, the three documents (attached at the end of this bulletin) were shared - they advise how to keep children safe on Whatsapp, NGL and Likee. Whatsapp was familiar to us but the other two we had never heard of. Please look at all three documents and check your children's phones to ensure you're aware of the apps they're using and the safety mechanisms to protect them from harm.

Careers Guidance

Work Experience Reminder

- Year 10 Work Experience will take place from Monday 17th July to Friday 21st July.
- Pupil Placement form to be returned to Mrs Hillcoat on reception before Friday 28th April.

Key dates / upcoming events:

- **Wednesday 29 March:** Y8 Knife Crime awareness sessions
- **Thursday 30 March:** Sixth Form Taster Evening - 4.30pm to 6.30pm.
- **Friday 31 March:** Prizegiving, Recognition and Rewards
- **Friday 31 March:** End of term @ 12.10pm.

Sixth Form

Year 12 Employability Week

Employability Week gives Year 12 students the opportunity of completing one week in the world of work. This will take place from Monday 12th June to Friday 16th June 2023.

All pupils are expected to return completed Personal Placement forms from employers offering Work Experience by Friday 21st April

All pupils should have contacted the employers by telephone to confirm the arrangements for their placement by Friday 12th May.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about



WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers



CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.

EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.

REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.

LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.

THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.

DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone'. However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.

CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.

Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.



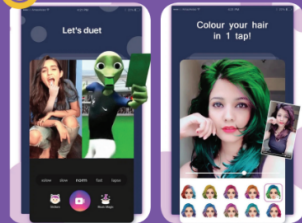
National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday



LIKEE (formerly known as LIKE) is a free video creation and editing app similar to TikTok. It has a global community of over 200 million users who can create any type of video, add their own special effects and then upload and share them with the world. The app is largely used to create short music videos which users can star in and edit anyway they want using the "Magic Video Maker." Users share their videos on the platform as well as having the option to share across other social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram. Due to the suggestive content that is available on the app, it has a recommended age of 16+, although the app store rate it as 17+.

AGE RESTRICTION
16+



What parents need to know about **LIKEE**



ALL VIDEOS ARE PUBLIC

All user profiles on LIKEE are public which means that every video that is uploaded can be viewed by anyone. This is a privacy setting which can't be changed. In addition, on creating an account, anybody who views your child's video can also download, save and share them, albeit this is a feature which can be turned off. Nonetheless, this places your child's privacy at risk given they can't control who is viewing their videos and potentially sharing them elsewhere.

SEXUAL PREDATORS AND BULLYING

Once a video has been uploaded and shared on LIKEE, anybody can comment on it. There have been reports of sexually suggestive comments made towards children, opening the door to potential child grooming and/or child sexual exploitation risks. Similarly, children may be vulnerable to derogatory or abusive language which could escalate into harassment or bullying.

ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

In a Facebook post from April 2019, LIKEE admitted to banning over 400 accounts during a 6 day period due to matters relating to harassment, fraud, pornographic material, violence, gambling and terrorism. There are no safe search features on the app which means there is a chance your child could potentially watch mature or inappropriate content with relative ease.

EASY FOR MINORS TO SET-UP

Despite the recommended age limit of 16, there are no verification measures in place to help restrict access. Setting up a profile is extremely easy and all that is required is access to a mobile phone. This is a concern for young children who have limited knowledge of how to stay safe online.

PRIVATE MESSAGING

As well as being able to comment publicly, LIKEE also allows users to private message one another. This again opens the door for strangers to contact your child online and build a relationship, this time without being seen. There have been reported cases of sexual grooming and children receiving requests to send inappropriate images via direct message.

DESIGNS TO INCREASE APP USAGE

The more your child engages with the app, the more 'Exp.' they can earn. This in turn can help them achieve higher levels and unlock Privileges to enhance their videos. Similarly, the Leaderboard feature within the app rewards users that receive the most likes every day, again encouraging children to produce more content. Both of these features could contribute towards increased screen time for your child.

ABILITY TO STREAM VIDEOS LIVE

Once a user has achieved a certain level, LIKEE grants them access to stream their videos live with viewers able to engage and post comments as the video is running. This means your child could receive harmful or upsetting comments during a live recording with no filter, as well as viewing other users live streams, which may contain inappropriate or disturbing content.

IN-APP PURCHASES

LIKEE also has a Wallet feature in which users can earn beans during special LIVE events or during their own live streams. They can also purchase diamonds directly from the app for anything between 99p and £99.99, with one tap and one confirmation screen, potentially costing the bill payer a lot of money.

Top Tips For Parents

1 DISABLE OR RESTRICT PRIVATE MESSAGING

The ability to private message one another on LIKEE means that your child could receive messages or media from complete strangers and potentially engage in conversations with people they don't know. In the privacy settings, this feature can be disabled or set to just friends allowing a degree of control over who can privately contact your child.

2 DISABLE ABILITY FOR OTHERS TO SAVE YOUR VIDEOS

Saving and sharing your child's videos to their own device means that anyone could upload and share those videos whenever and wherever they like, without your permission. You can disable this feature in your child's profile settings via the privacy tab.

3 TURN OFF COMMENTS IN PRIVACY SETTINGS

The public nature of LIKEE means that anybody can comment on your child's videos. Whilst many users may be positive and supportive of what your child is doing online, others may be critical or quite nasty. If you are worried about other users and what they may say, you can completely disable comments within the app's privacy settings.

4 BLOCK USERS WHO HARASS, BULLY AND OFFEND

If you are concerned about your child being harassed, bullied or receiving persistent offensive comments from specific users, you can 'block' these individuals. This can be done on the offenders users profile page. Once blocked, the ability to comment on your child's video or private message will be removed although videos will still remain visible.

5 TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Talking to your child about staying safe online will help them stay alert to any potential dangers and give them a more enjoyable experience. Learning how to report inappropriate content and discussing this with your child may ensure they recognise anything malicious and become more vigilant whilst using the app. Similarly, discussing what is acceptable and setting limits on what can and can't be posted online may help to ensure your child avoids any unwanted pitfalls.

6 STICK TO THE RECOMMENDED AGE LIMIT

LIKEE suggest that the recommended age limit for the app is 16+. Reviews of the app suggest that users may post mature or sexually provocative material which isn't tightly regulated and could be accessed or accidentally viewed by your child. Ensuring you adhere to the age limit and encouraging your child to be open about what they're viewing will help you keep an eye on what content your child is coming across on the app.

NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Meet our expert

Pete Badh is a writer with over 10+ years in research and analysis. Working within a specialist area for West Yorkshire Police, Pete has contributed work which has been pivotal in successfully winning high profile cases in court as well as writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

NGL

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NGL (which stands for 'Not Gonna Lie') is an app through which users share a link to their Instagram story or Twitter account, inviting their followers to give anonymous feedback. The app includes some prewritten questions (such as 'if you could change anything about me, what would it be?'), plus the option to ask followers to simply 'send me anonymous messages'. All replies go into the user's NGL inbox, with the sender remaining anonymous – although subscribers to the app can receive hints about who each message was from.

ANONYMITY AND OVERSHARING

Anonymous messaging gives rise to the 'online disinhibition effect', which causes users to feel detached from their words and actions in the digital world. This can make young people in particular (as they tend to act more impulsively online) far more likely to disclose personal information on the internet, as well as making ill-advised confessions or revealing their fears and insecurities.

PROTECTION FOR BULLIES

Having their identity hidden makes bullies feel safe from repercussions, so anonymous chat sites are a major avenue for cyberbullying. NGL claims to use AI to filter out insulting terms, but our expert sent a range of such phrases (starting with 'cow' and 'ugly', and becoming progressively more offensive) to a 'dummy' account. All of these trial messages were delivered to the recipient's inbox.

COSTLY SUBSCRIPTIONS

NGL offers a subscription where – for a weekly fee – users can unlock hints about who's been messaging them, including the sender's approximate location and which device they used. Young people will naturally be extremely curious about who sent which message (especially if they have a lot of Instagram or Twitter followers) and may be unable to resist spending money to find out.

INFLATED ENGAGEMENT

1K

In June 2022, NGL had to revise its terms of service, informing users if a message was sent by the app's developers as opposed to genuine followers. It emerged that, previously, NGL's makers had attempted to boost engagement with the app (as well as enticing users to pay for subscriptions) by sending fake anonymous messages from bots. This update was rolled out very quietly by the team.

QUESTIONABLE SUPPORT

NGL does have a 'report this message' button for users to flag upsetting content. After sending a message, however, an automated reply arrives stating "NGL is 100% anonymous and we have no way of knowing the identity of the user and would not be able to find out, even if we tried." This did not fill our expert with confidence that the app can address bad behaviour adequately.

ACCIDENTALLY GOING VIRAL

The messages on NGL itself are anonymous, but users can share these messages via their Instagram story or Twitter feed – enabling all their followers (or anyone, if their accounts are set to 'public') to see them. If a young person has disclosed something embarrassing or identifiable on NGL without realising, this information has the potential to be re-shared very quickly to a far wider audience.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY

Blocking another user on NGL will prevent them sending anonymous messages to your child in the short term – although a determined abuser could get around that obstacle simply by setting up a new Instagram account. If your child continually receives negative messages that upset them, it might be worth encouraging them to consider whether they really need to use the app at all.

BLOCK IN-APP PURCHASES

To avoid your child running up an eye-watering bill through an NGL subscription (or indeed any kind of costly in-app purchases), go into the settings on whatever devices they use to go online and either disable the ability to make purchases or protect that function with a password. If those options aren't available, it's prudent to ensure there aren't any payment methods linked to their account.

EXPLAIN ANONYMOUS APPS

We understand that a conversation with your child about the risks of anonymous messaging may seem difficult to initiate (especially if you aren't that comfortable with using social media yourself). It is vital, however, that young people understand that, for some people, having their identity obscured online can make them feel more powerful and less accountable for their actions.

THINK BEFORE SENDING

Regardless of whether a messaging app is anonymous or not, it's a good idea to regularly talk to your child about how it's wise to think through what they're sharing before they post it. Emphasise that nothing is truly private once it's online. If the post is something your child might hesitate to say to someone face to face, then it's probably not the sort of thing they should be writing online either.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sending behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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