



# SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

TELEPHONE: 01283 247410

TWITTER: @shobnallprimary

E-MAIL: [shb-office@shb.itmat.co.uk](mailto:shb-office@shb.itmat.co.uk)

10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

*"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted."*



Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to formally welcome you back after the half-term break! I hope you managed to spend some quality time with your families and have had a restful and relaxing week. The children have settled well into their routines again and are putting the finishing touches to some of the work each class will be displaying at our **Open Evening on Wednesday 15 November 2023** in our 'Museum of Wonder.' Please do try and pop along between **4.30pm and 6.00pm** for an opportunity to see the work that all classes have been creating along with a chance to speak to all staff informally. I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage all families to take extra care on their journey to and from school as we are now approaching the winter. The dark mornings and dark nights are upon us, and it is imperative to remember, especially with Shobnall Road being so busy, that you need to be seen to be safe!



In addition to this, we held a two-minute silence today to mark Armistice Day in school. This is to mark the end of the four-year conflict in 1918 where an agreement between Germany and the Allies was made "on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month". We remember all those who have lost their lives in conflict exactly 105 years after the end of the First World War.

Whatever it is you have planned for the weekend, we hope that it is a good one. We look forward to seeing everyone again on Monday! Enjoy!



## Anti-Bullying Week – Monday 13 November 2023 to Friday 17 November 2023

Anti-Bullying Week 2023 is taking place from Monday 13 – Friday 17 November and has the theme 'Make a Noise.' It is coordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance, which is based at leading children's charity the National Children's Bureau. Our school will be promoting this message through our curriculum and the children will be involved in a series of reflective and essential activities. On Monday (13 November) of Anti-Bullying Week, we will be holding an Odd Socks Day with the support of Andy Day, CBeebies star and front man of Andy and the Odd Socks. Therefore, we would like all of the children and staff to come to school wearing odd socks on that day in support of the event!

## Online Safety Workshop for Parents – Thursday 16 November 2023, 7pm – 8pm

In keeping with the theme for next week, we informed all parents before half-term about a workshop we have organised for you on Thursday 16 November! The online world is an important part of children's lives nowadays. It's an exciting place for them to explore, with all sorts of fun and educational stuff to discover, but there can be some risks too. This can be really overwhelming for parents, so we wanted to organise a workshop for you that highlights not only the benefits of your child being online, but the dangers as well.

'Keeping children safe online' will teach you how to help your children explore their favourite apps, games and sites safely. The workshop, which is being delivered by an expert from the NSPCC will:

- help you understand how children experience the online world
- show you resources and tools that could help keep them safe
- empower you to guide them on their journey.

We really hope that as many of you as possible are able to attend! The workshop is being held virtually on **Zoom** on **Thursday 16 November 2023, 7pm to 8pm**. The details for joining the workshop are:

**Meeting:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82699496839?pwd=aVpEZE8zaFhkNzNsaTV6OGFEMIRRUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 826 9949 6839

**Passcode:** 506746

## Shobnall PFA Christmas Market – Friday 1 December 2023, 3.30pm – 5.30pm

With only 45 sleeps until Christmas, the day is very quickly creeping up on us, which I was reminded about quite sharply with the launch of the John Lewis Christmas advert this week! As you know, the PFA are busy behind the scenes, sorting out the organisation of this year's Christmas Market. A separate letter will be issued very shortly outlining the plans and requests in more detail but in the interim, the PFA would still like to reach out to you to outline a few requests for help in preparation for the event.





- 🌲 The PFA will be running a 'street food' stall at the Christmas Market. If you can donate any cakes or Asian food, the PFA would be very grateful if this could be labelled with ingredients to support those with allergies. Also, if possible, please could you indicate if it is suitable for vegetarians or not? They ask that these are donated on the morning of the Market, so that all food products are as fresh as possible and will ensure that any containers are returned to you the following week via your child. Also, you are more than welcome to bring your own containers along to the event should you wish to have a 'takeaway' option!
- 🌲 If you have any unwanted items for the bric-a-brac stall (i.e. toys, books, games etc.) that are in good condition, the PFA are happy to start accepting these donations in school.



The PFA would like to thank you in advance for your support with all their requests and for your attendance at the Market! More information will follow in the forthcoming weeks.



### Children in Need – Friday 17 November 2023

Please be aware that it is Children in Need on Friday 17 November. We are aware that we are asking for other donations but, as a school, we feel it would be wrong to ignore such an initiative. So, we will be keeping things simple and having a 'spotty' non-uniform day! Donations are voluntary but we recommend a minimum of 50p, which will go

towards Children in Need. Should you wish to donate more, you will be very welcome to do so! Thank you for your support!

### Remembrance Day

In the UK, Remembrance Day honours the men and women who have died in conflicts since the First World War. It takes place every year on 11<sup>th</sup> November and is marked by a two minutes' silence at 11am. Remembrance Sunday falls on the second Sunday of November. We thought you would enjoy reading these facts about this very special occasion:



- On Remembrance Day, local ceremonies take place in small villages and major cities alike — a reminder of how many people sacrificed their lives for the country. A televised event takes place on Remembrance Sunday at the Cenotaph in London.
- On the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month, the guns fell silent. The 1918 armistice of the First World War marked the end of one of the deadliest conflicts in human history.

- To commemorate the anniversary of the peace in 1919, King George V dedicated November 11th as Armistice Day and requested the nation pause for two minutes' silence. In 1939, the main commemorations were moved to a Sunday.
- The government renamed Armistice Day as Remembrance Day as a way to honour those who had fought and died in the Second World War. Today, the event is a way to commemorate those who have died in any war — not just the First and Second World Wars.
- In the lead up to Remembrance Day and during the event itself, millions of people wear poppies on their clothing and lay wreaths on memorials. But why poppies? Poppies grew in many First World War battlefields. For soldiers, their growth was in stark contrast to the death and destruction they saw in the trenches (to put this in context, over 150,000 people died in the Battle of Passchendaele in Flanders, Belgium). These poignantly featured in John McCrae's iconic war poem, *In Flanders Fields*.
- Poppies remained an enduring symbol of the war even after it had ended. Silk poppies were first used to raise money for the Royal British Legion in 1921. They later switched to the paper poppies familiar today. But though the material has changed, poppies have been made in the same factory since the 1920s — and still employs a workforce made up of former soldiers with health conditions.
- Speeches, poetry, and literature are an important part of the way Britons reflect on conflict. In the First World War, poets like Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen helped shine a light on the suffering in the trenches. In the Second World War, Winston Churchill built morale with his eloquent, powerful wireless broadcasts.

### Kate Kniveton Christmas Card Competition!

Kate Kniveton, the MP for Burton & Uttoxeter, is holding a competition for primary and pre-school school children to design her official Christmas Card for 2023.

The winning design will be used to send Christmas wishes by Kate across Burton and Uttoxeter, with the winner's name and school printed at the bottom.

As many pictures as possible from all entries received will be published on Kate's website and social media for all her constituents to enjoy. You may remember that one of our pupils was selected as a runner-up last year, so it would be fabulous if one of our pupils were chosen as the winner this year!

In order to enter, Kate has outlined a few rules that entries must comply with:

- Entries must be A4 and coloured in pencil, pen or paint (no glitter!)
- Entrants must live in or attend school in the Burton and Uttoxeter constituency and have been born on or after 1 September 2012.
- Please send your design to Kate Kniveton MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA with your name, address, school year and school clearly marked.
- Please also provide an email address for your school or parent/carer.
- All entries must arrive by 17 November 2023.

Please email [kate.kniveton.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:kate.kniveton.mp@parliament.uk) for any further details and please note that no taxpayer's money will be used in the production of this Christmas card. This would be a great activity to do over half-term and we hope that many of our pupils are able to enter!





## Reception Application Process

The application process for a reception place for September 2024 will open on 1 November 2023.

The easiest way for parents to apply is online. Further information can be found on [Staffordshire County Council Website](#). The closing date is 15 January 2024.

The school office has a letter informing parents about the process, which we are happy to distribute to prospective families. If you would like a copy of this, please contact us.

If you are interested in applying for a place in our own reception class for September 2024, we are holding an **Open Evening** on **Wednesday 15 November 2023, 4.30pm to 6.00pm**. This is a great opportunity to meet the staff and see for yourselves all that our setting has to offer! We look forward to seeing you there!



The poster features a collage of images showing school children in various activities: playing in a field, sitting at tables, and participating in a 'Lap Hunt' game. The school's logo, a stylized 'M' with 'MAT' inside, is on the right. The text 'Happy Children, Inspired Learners' is visible in the background image.

SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

PROUDLY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND OUR

**OPEN EVENING**

**WEDNESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER**  
**4.30pm – 6.00pm**

*Please join us as we showcase our school, our vision, our values, our philosophy and our approaches. You will meet our staff and our children and get to see first-hand our incredible Museum of Wonder. We look forward to seeing you there!*

## Online Safety Tips

Microtransactions figure in the business model of many game and app developers, allowing them to bring in ongoing revenue as users continue to pay for extra features and content; even software that's initially free to download can be monetised in this way.

It's a system which has featured in many of younger gamers' perennial favourite franchises, from Fortnite to FIFA.

As well as encouraging regular spending, however, microtransactions – especially the increasingly common use of loot boxes – have also been scrutinised for what many argue is a resemblance to gambling, with the potential to foster addictive behaviours.

This guide tells parents and carers what they need to know about microtransactions.



## FREE Uniform!

Please don't forget that we have free uniform available! There is a box situated outside the school office for any parents who have items they wish to donate. Please could we ask that these are cleaned and in good condition before placing in the box! Amy Roobottom continues sorting and collating this. As previously stated, if you wish to contact Amy to ask what is available that you might be in need of, please contact the school office via [shb-office@shb.itmat.co.uk](mailto:shb-office@shb.itmat.co.uk) and we will ensure this is forwarded to her.



## Hot Lunch Options – 13 to 17 November 2023

W/c 16.10.23, 13.11.23, 4.12.23, 8.1.24, 29.1.24

WEEK 1	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>Main dish</b>	Margherita pizza with baked potato wedges	Pork sausage with creamy mash potato & gravy	Roast turkey with potato of the day & gravy	Chicken chow mein	Crispy fish fingers with chunky chips
<b>Vegetarian Main dish</b>	Roasted vegetable pizza	Vegan sausage & mash potato with gravy	Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Vegetable stir fry with chicken style pieces and noodles	Crispy vegetable fingers with chunky chips
<b>Accompaniments</b>	Peas & baked beans Salad bar	Peas & carrots Salad bar	Broccoli & green beans Salad bar	Sweetcorn & broccoli Salad bar	Peas & baked beans Salad bar
<b>Desserts</b>	Chocolate & pear sponge with custard	Shortbread	Flapjack	Jam & coconut sponge	Ice cream
Fresh fruit or yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt
Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection



# SHOBNALL SHOWCASE!



Let's have a sneaky peek as to what has been going on in our classrooms this week...

## Nursery

Our adventures this week in nursery...

We have had a spectacular start to the second half of the autumn term for Nursery!

The fun began on Monday as the children joined in with various activities linked with Bonfire night. Creating firework pictures was a huge favourite and the children enjoyed sharing their firework experiences.

We have also been focusing on our new book 'Elmer' and have been busy identifying colours. The children have had great fun sorting the different objects for Mr Red, Mr Blue and Mr Yellow!

On Thursday, we had lots of fun in science, drawing around each other's bodies and learning about the body parts: arms, legs and chest. The children have absolutely impressed us with their lovely statements about what we use our arms, legs and chest for.

"The chest keeps our heart safe."  
(Mustafa).

"We do walking, jumping, running with our legs. (Minahil).

"Stretch with our arms." (Jaheem).

## Reception

It has been a fabulous week back at school for reception. We have had lots of fun sharing our half term news and we were very excited to show how we used pumpkins for our pumpkin challenge homework- Miss Alexander was very impressed!

It was great to learn more about bonfire night by learning about Guy Fawkes and the important story about how we celebrate it. We had fun creating a big firework display using chalks and lots of shiny materials.

Later in the week we explored the exciting Hindu festival of Diwali and how this is celebrated in different ways. We really enjoyed the story of Rama and Sita and know that good choices always triumph over bad.

On Thursday we had a fantastic time during our craft session. Our grownups joined us in school, and we created different types of homes. There was lots of fun, laughter and creativity and the finished homes are amazing, we do hope you will attend our open evening next Wednesday to see our magnificent work displayed!

On Friday, we discussed Remembrance Day and took part in a 2-minute silence in respect of all of those who fought in the wars. We then completed some wonderful craft activities which included a red and purple poppy wreath! Did you know you can also wear a purple poppy to remember all of the wonderful service animals that supported the soldiers during the wars?



## **Year 1**

A lovely first week back in Year 1. In Maths, we have begun learning about subtracting numbers to 10. The children persevered with this trickier concept and have all done exceptionally well. In English, we have been beginning to learn about how to write a recount about our own lives. We have looked closely at the model text and key vocabulary as well as bringing in pictures from home to see how we have changed over time. The children loved being able to look at pictures of Miss Barker and Mrs Sadiya. Our afternoon sessions have consisted of the children constructing and creating their windmills, learning to use keyboard skills to type key words and vocabulary as well as thinking about how we should best treat the world.

## **Year 2**

Year 2 have had an exciting week back! They have been continuing their learning about Ferris Wheels and have been creating fact files about the inventor. The children have worked hard in gathering information and using these facts to apply to their fact files. In maths the children have been continuing their learning within addition and subtraction and how they can use their number bonds to support them. The children have been exploring adding to the next 10 and adding across a 10 – lots of practical resources have been used to support their learning. This week in RE we have been exploring the different qualities of people and how they are celebrated. The children have also been looking at why Christians use advent calendars for the lead up to Christmas. Well done Year 2 on a great week of learning!

## **Year 3**

What a great start back to school! Year 3 have worked very hard this week. We started a new English topic, where we are learning about reports. The report we are looking at this week is called 'The Beautiful Game', which is all about football! They have been discussing belonging to a group in RE. In French we have learned how to speak about feelings, and we have learned a short song too. Well done for a great week!

## **Year 4**

We have had a brilliant first week back after the half term. In maths, the children have been applying their knowledge of column addition and subtraction to solve two-step multiplication problems and I have been so impressed with this! In English, the children have started their latest English unit looking at how to build a Roman



road and this will once again link in perfectly into our history topic. We also enjoyed our first session of Forest School this week! The children had the opportunity to build Roman houses or dens, which looked incredible! Also, the children used conkers to create Roman artefacts including different types of jewellery. With Remembrance Day coming up, the children had the opportunity to create wood cookies to represent a poppy and decorated that with wonderful colours. A brilliant first week, Year 4!





## Year 5

Year 5 have had a brilliant first week back. In English, the children have started a new narrative unit called 'A Chilli Day'. Year 5 have read the story, found the key features of the text and learnt about the meanings of new Tier 2 words, such as; alienate, apologise and notify. In Maths, the children have learnt about factors, common factors and prime numbers. On Thursday afternoon, Mrs Wilkinson (our student teacher) delivered an interesting history lesson about the similarities and differences between the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. The children

couldn't believe that prior to Henry VIII's reign, anyone could be a 'doctor' and they didn't have to go to university to be one. Luckily, Henry VIII created the Royal College of Physicians which raised the standards of public health.

## Year 6

A great first week back for the Year 6 children. In English, we have been revising different structures of poems and deciding which would be best suited to show our own ideas. The children have produced a range of fantastic poems all about their own steady hand games that they have finally finished constructing. We cannot wait to show them off at our Open Evening next week. In maths, we have looked at comparing and ordering fractions and at the end of the week we learnt how to add and subtract any fraction including mixed numbers. We remembered the rule: the denominators must be the same before any addition and subtraction can take place. In RE we looked at different religious celebrations ready to move onto our investigations step of our RE work where we will consider if Christmas celebrations and traditions help Christians understand who Jesus was and why He was born. We were so lucky on Wednesday to have an Art Day with Mrs Taylor, who gave up her time to support us to make our own interpretations of Paul Nash's Battle of Britain painting. What the children have created is beautiful and really portrays the message about England's aerial victory over Germany.

### Head Teacher's Awards

Reception	All Children	All Children
Year 1	Paisley H	Umar Q
Year 2	Kaleb G	Reggie P
Year 3	Olivia K	Harry K
Year 4	Aadil F	Kristers K
Year 5	Angelo M	Tabatha L
Year	Jenson S	Isabelle k

### Lunchtime Star Awards

Reception	Ava C
Year 1	Mariam S
Year 2	Ava O
Year 3	Angus B
Year 4	Eisa L
Year 5	Asra Z
Year 6	Zahra K

## Attendance

This week's Attendance Champions are **Year 2!** Well done! Here are the latest figures...

Reception	94.3%	Target
Year 1	94.7%	97%
Year 2	96.3%	
Year 3	96.2%	
Year 4	95.3%	Overall (to date)
Year 5	96.2%	96.2%
Year 6	94.1%	
Overall	95.5%	

## Team Points

Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 10.11.23)	76	87	36	72
Position	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 points	1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 points	4 <sup>th</sup> – 1 point	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 points
Running Total	3	4	1	2

## Reading Corner

This week's recommended read is for children aged 11+...

### Postcards from Valhalla

by Danny Weston

Viggo is fifteen years old, living in Edinburgh with his mum. He has no plans for the future other than to watch the new Thor movie at his local multiplex. But one morning, he wakes to the news that his older brother, Magnus, has gone missing on Shetland. Mum has already booked tickets to go and search for him.

There's good reason to be worried. Five years ago, Viggo's dad, Jonathan, went 'off grid' in the same location and disappeared. He is now 'missing presumed dead.'

Viggo has no option but to go to Shetland with Mum - but from the moment they set off, he's troubled by strange visions: images of armed warriors, mythical creatures and Viking longships. And then they encounter Leon, a mysterious wandering musician who attaches himself to them and proves impossible to shake off.

Once on Shetland, the search for Magnus begins in earnest and Viggo's troubling visions start to intensify. Soon he is finding it difficult to separate fact from fantasy... and who knows what terrors lie in wait for him deep beneath the ground?



## Diary Dates 2023-2024

Event	Date/Time
Open Evening	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Year 5 Whitemoor Lakes	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> November to Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023
PFA Christmas Market	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023
Whole School Trip to Pantomime – Beauty and the Beast, Lichfield Garrick	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023, 10.00am
School Closes for Christmas	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2023, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Year 6 Laches Wood Meeting for Parents	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2024, Year 6 Classroom
Young Voices 2023	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Year 6 Laches Wood	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> January to Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 2024
PFA Valentine's Disco	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infants: 3.45pm – 5.00pm</li> <li>• Juniors: 5.15pm – 6.30pm</li> </ul>



School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
Year 5 Trip to Hampton Court	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
School Closes for Easter	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2024, 2.00pm
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> April 2024
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
Key Stage 2 SATs Week	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2024 to Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
School Closes for Half-Term	Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024
<b>INSET Day</b>	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> May 2024
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2024
PFA Summer Fair	Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> June 2024
<b>JTMAT INSET Day</b>	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2024
School Closes for Summer	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2024, 2.00pm
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024

### Autumn Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
Odd Socks Day	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Open Evening	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2023, 4.30-6.00pm
Children in Need – Non-Uniform Day	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
Year 5 Whitemoor Lakes	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 to Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 inclusive
Year 6 Class Assembly	Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2023, 9.00am
PFA Christmas Market	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023
Christingle	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Choir Winter Wonderland Concert	Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2023, Hill Street Church, Swadlincote, 7.00-8.00pm
EYFS Nativity	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2023, 9.15am
EYFS Nativity	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023, 9.15am
KS1 Nativity	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2023, 9.15am AND 2.15pm
Year 3 Cosy Christmas Celebration	Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2023, 9.15am
JTMAT Christmas Concert	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Christmas Lunch	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Whole School Trip to Pantomime – Beauty and the Beast, Lichfield Garrick	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023, 10.00am
School Closes for Christmas	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 2023, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024

# Working in partnership with



The John Taylor SCITT





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about MICROTRANSACTIONS

Microtransactions (often abbreviated as "MTX") are digital purchases made within an app or game to unlock extra features or additional content such as new levels. A popular sub-set of these are loot boxes, which contain a selection (usually random) of virtual items: from character skins to game-changing equipment like better weapons. Microtransactions (and loot boxes in particular) are now widespread in apps and games, but concerns persist that they normalise gambling and can foster addictive behaviours – especially among younger players.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### GATEWAY TO GAMBLING?

Microtransactions have been criticised for promoting gambling-adjacent behaviour in children. Research has also suggested that exposure to the loot box system could affect the likelihood of a young person suffering gambling harms later in life: children who purchased or used loot boxes in the last 12 months were found to be more likely to have gambled during the same period, as well.

### ADDICTIVE NATURE

Microtransactions (and loot boxes especially) could lead to young people displaying compulsive behaviours. Loot boxes are designed to be addictive, and the sought-after prizes they contain are dispensed at random. This means that young gamers might not get what they want straight away, causing them to spend more money as well as additional time gaming.

### PAYING TO WIN

In many popular games (the FIFA series being a notable example), microtransactions make it far easier to succeed – which is a concern because children can often find it difficult to keep track of their spending. Once a child starts making in-game purchases, they may continue buying to keep up with their friends and other players – sometimes without recognising the mounting real-world cost.

## EXCLUSIVE CONTENT

### DATA COLLECTION

To allow a young person to complete microtransactions, many app and game developers collect personal data such as their name, address, email, geolocation information, photos, payment details and so on. Even if this data remains secure (which is by no means guaranteed), there's always the chance that it will be used – and possibly sold on to third parties – for marketing purposes.

### AFFECTING DAILY ROUTINE

Online games tend to revolve around repeated loops of activity that can affect purchasing decisions and potentially influence children's spending patterns. This could lead to your child not only handing over more money but also adjusting their daily routine to match the game's schedule – potentially impacting more important elements of their day, such as homework and family time.

### SATELLITE SPENDING

If you've linked a payment method like a debit card or a PayPal account to your child's game or app, it's wise to keep a close eye on their microtransactions to ensure they aren't racking up a large bill. Letting a child have access to your card (if they're still too young to have their own) or other means of payment could also lead to them spending beyond the apps and games they normally use.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### DO YOUR RESEARCH

It's important to have a serviceable idea of whether the games your child plays use the loot box system (even if it goes by a different name) or include the option of buying items, equipment and so forth. If so, it's crucial to help your child understand that this costs actual money, and that they shouldn't feel pressured into making any purchases.

### CHAT ABOUT 'CHANCE'

It may help to explain to your child that many microtransactions involve an element of chance: they could pay money and *still* not get what they want in return. Emphasise that – while not usually costing much individually – these in-app and in-game purchases can soon add up. Talk to your child about how spending their money in a game or app means they have less to use in the real world.

### (GIFT) CARDS ON THE TABLE

Investing in an in-game currency gift card can be a useful way of helping your child get to grips with budgeting. If you buy, say, a £10 V-bucks Fortnite gift card, monitor how long it takes them to spend it. When they come to you asking for more, you could make it the starting point for a conversation about how quickly that money went and how they could earn their next gift card.

### STOP SPENDING AT SOURCE

You might decide that the wisest strategy is to remove the potential for spending money on microtransactions. If so, most games, apps and devices have options in their settings to help you manage what your child can spend – or to disable that function altogether, preventing them from buying additional items for their games or boosted functionality for certain apps.

### WATCH FOR THE SIGNS

If you're worried that your child's passion for a particular game or app may tempt them into habitual spending on microtransactions, it's important to remember the indicators of addictive behaviour. Irritability, a lack of concentration and prioritising recreational screen time ahead of homework or mealtimes could all be signs that you need to have a conversation about a more balanced routine.

## Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid *The Inquirer*, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



National  
Online  
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#WakeUpWednesday