



SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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28th March 2025

"An optimist is the human personification of spring."

Dear Parents/Carers,

Spring is definitely in the air, which means sunnier days lie ahead! Don't forget to put your clocks forward 1 hour at 1am on Sunday 30 March, marking the start of British Summer Time (BST) and more daylight in the evenings!

It has certainly been another eventful week in school, and we have continued to celebrate the fabulous achievements of our children, both in and outside of the classroom. We hope you enjoy reading about what the children have been doing in the 'Shobnall Showcase' at the end of the newsletter!



Please don't forget to come along to the PFA Easter Bingo on **Friday 4 April** in the school hall! Doors open from **5.00pm** with 'eyes-down' at **5.30pm**. A big thank you as well to everyone who supported our 'red-to-toe' non-uniform day last week in support of **Comic Relief**. You will be pleased to know that we managed to raise a total of **£130.30!**

In addition to wishing everyone a very restful, relaxing and enjoyable weekend, we would also like to take this opportunity to wish all of our Muslim families a very happy, peaceful and prosperous Eid, which is due to be celebrated very early next week. Eid Mubarak!

A final, special mention must go to all the mums and special caregivers, who we are expecting to be spoilt rotten by their children on Sunday! Whatever it is you have planned for the weekend, we hope that you are able to rest, relax and spend quality time together as families. As always, we look forward to seeing you all again on Monday. Enjoy!





Class Teacher Vacancy

We are currently recruiting for a class teacher to join our team in September 2025!

If you or someone you know may be interested in this opportunity, we would love to hear from you!

For more details and to apply, please click [here](#), or feel free to enquire via the school office for further information.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Year 5 Trip to Hampton Court Palace

Year 5 had a wonderful day yesterday at Hampton Court Palace, home of Henry VIII in Surrey. We were fortunate enough to travel to such a fantastic place after receiving a generous subsidy from Historic Royal Palaces, which significantly reduced the cost for us.

Hampton Court Palace is a place of great historical significance, offering a unique glimpse into the past. It is renowned for its stunning architecture, beautiful gardens, and captivating displays, all of which captivated the children during our visit. The children have been learning about the Tudors this year and the trip allowed them to immerse themselves further in the rich history of this incredible place and learn more about important events that have shaped our country.

We're sure that you saw much of what we got up to during the day on Instagram and X but in case you didn't, please scroll down to the Shobnall Showcase...



HAF fun this Easter

Holiday Activities and Food funded for children and young people aged 5-16 who get free school meals*. Paid places also available.



SCAN ME!



visit staffordshire.gov.uk/holidayactivities

Eid al-Fitr

Eid al-Fitr, also known as “Festival of Breaking the Fast,” is the most prominent Islamic festival celebrated by 1.8 billion Muslims all over the world that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Here are some other interesting facts about this holy festival:



- ★ Eid al-Fitr is the day of celebrating the happy end of Ramadan. Many sweet treats and delicacies are consumed to celebrate the sweet end of this holy month.
- ★ The festival traditionally holds a three-day celebration which involves praying, feasting, family gatherings, exchanging gifts and helping the needy.
- ★ Eid al-Fitr is a day of thanksgiving to Allah for showering the eternal blessings and giving all a chance to enjoy the blessings of the month of Ramadan.
- ★ Zakat al-Fitr is a kind of donation where you lend a hand to the poor and needy conducting the charity at the end of the fasting month, Ramadan. Such a practice is done to cleanse a Muslim soul from any sins, committed during the month of Ramadan as well as for inner peace and happiness. This is the most beautiful part of this festival which is done with great love. Muslims shower the needy with great gifts, sweets, clothes and food items and bless their day with eternal joys.
- ★ Like many festivals, Eid al-Fitr involves the practice of gifting. As we all know, gifts act as a perfect medium for expressing your emotions. Be it expressing the feelings of the heart or conveying the best wishes of the occasion; they are often given to increase the charm of the moment.
- ★ Hillary Clinton hosted the first Eid al-Fitr at White House in 1996. Later, the Clintons continued the tradition every year after. The dinner was attended by the prominent members of the Muslim American community, including politicians, leaders and students. With the passage of time, the Eid al-Fitr dinner tradition has continued with every president. George W Bush and Barack Obama hosted the Ramadan dinner every year of their presidency.

Eid Celebration – Friday 4 April 2025

On Friday 4 April 2025, we will be having our own celebration in school to mark the Islamic celebration of ‘Eid al-Fitr.’ We are sure you will agree with the importance of supporting children in developing their understanding of a variety of cultures and beliefs in a world that is so diverse and vibrant.

So, on Friday the children are invited to come dressed to school in non-uniform. We encourage those that are celebrating Eid al-Fitr to wear traditional festive clothing to embrace their culture. Alternatively, please could your child dress in bright colours or party clothes.

As always, many thanks for your continued support. We look forward to the celebration next week!



PFA Easter Bingo – Friday 4 April 2025

We would love to see as many of you as possible attend our Easter Bingo as there is a chance you could win chocolate eggs and other Easter themed prizes! This will be held on **Friday 4 April** in the school hall. Doors open from 5.00pm with 'eyes-down' at 5.30pm. Mr Adams is bingo caller once again and tea, coffee, cold drinks, hotdogs, vegetable pakoras, and other snacks will be on sale. The bingo books will be available to purchase at £1 per book on arrival and we kindly ask that you bring your own 'dabber' or pen.



So that the hall can be set up in time, After School Club will move to the year 2 classroom on this night only.

The PFA do need chocolate prizes to award on the night and have asked if all pupils are able to bring in a chocolate item to be given as a prize at the bingo – an Easter egg would be great! Please could we ask that these are received by Wednesday 2 April just so that the PFA can check there are prizes a plentiful!

We do hope that you are able to come and support this event, which is always tremendous fun!

Mother's Day

The children have been preparing some lovely surprises this week in preparation for Mothering Sunday on 10 March. We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our mums and special caregivers a very, "*Happy Mother's Day!*" Reverend Simon Archer joined us for assembly on Tuesday and shared with us some interesting information and facts about this very special day:

- ✚ Although Laetare Sunday – the fourth Sunday of Lent – had been associated with mothers and family since medieval times, it wasn't until the beginning of the 20th century that a push towards an official day celebrating mothers in England was started. **Constance Smith**, a vicar's daughter from Nottinghamshire, was inspired to start the Mothering Day Movement after reading an article on Anna Jarvis and her campaign for an official day to honour mothers in the US. Constance Smith was a High Anglican and believed that the liturgy of the Church of England for the fourth Sunday of Lent truly captured the idea of a day honouring mothers. So, when choosing the date for Mothering Sunday in England, she went back to the Laetare Sunday, which was when children who worked away from home received a day off to visit their mothers and the mother church or cathedral.
- ✚ In the 18th century, in addition to picking flowers to hand to their mothers at home, young girls working as domestic servants also brought products from their masters' larders to bake a special Mothering cake or Simnel cake – a fruit dessert topped with marzipan and decorated with flowers, either fresh or crystallised.
- ✚ Mother's Day is the biggest flower buying day of the year in **Britain**.
- ✚ More phone calls are made on Mother's Day than any other day of the year!
- ✚ One of the earliest Mother's Day celebrations was in Ancient Greece. The Greeks would have spring celebrations in honour of Rhea, the goddess of fertility, motherhood, and generation.
- ✚ In the USA, Mother's Day was founded in 1908, and is held in May. An American woman named Anna Jarvis wanted to remember her mother, who had died. She asked her friends to wear white carnations to church.



HAPPY
Mother's Day

Eco-friendly Easter

The days are getting longer and brighter, which means that Easter is approaching. Easter can create a lot of unnecessary excess waste, so check out these top tips:

- Look for recyclable, compostable packaging.
- If you can't avoid the plastic, make sure you recycle it afterwards.
- Recycle the foil! Did you know you can recycle foil in your kerbside recycling? Or take it to your nearest recycling centre.
- Shop local and Fairtrade.
- Get creative - make decorations from things you already have in the house.
- Use natural dye for your eggs - things like purple cabbage, beetroot and turmeric will work well.
- Compost your eggshells.



Online Safety Tips

Bluesky social app is a microblogging social media platform that gained popularity after separating from Twitter in 2021.

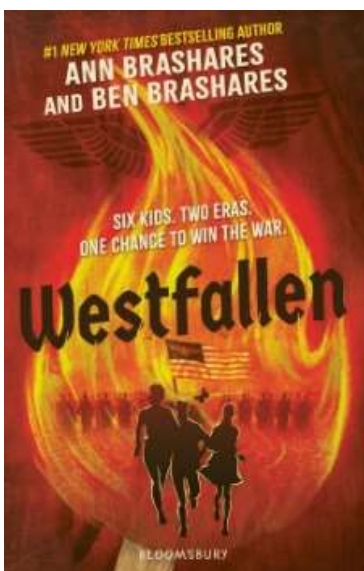
It's more than doubled its user numbers in the past six months alone, from 14.5 million in October 2024 to 32 million at present.

Since accounts must be public, this opens the door to potential trolling, cyberbullying and the spread of misinformation.

This free guide – also available in podcast format – offers parents and educators advice and guidance on the tools available to keep children safe while using the popular social media platform Bluesky.

FREE Uniform!

We continue to accept donations of old uniform via the box situated outside the school office for any parents who wish to donate. Please could we ask that these are cleaned and in good condition before placing in the box outside the school office. If you need any uniform, you will need to pop down to the **Family Hub** on Waterloo Street, DE14 2NJ. The Family Hub do not have the capacity to reply to emails but do have uniform on site all year round and are open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.00pm.



Reading Corner

This week's recommended read is for children aged 9+...

Westfallen

Written by Ann Brashares and Ben Brashares

"When this started, we were regular seventh graders, living in a regular town in suburban New Jersey, worrying about the regular dumb stuff". So shares Alice, one of the six kids who stars in Ann and Ben Brashares' *Westfallen* – a gripping thriller that sees two sets of 12-year-olds communicate through a radio and wind up sharing a dialogue (and a Mars bar!) between 1944 and 2023.

Propelled by peril and urgency, *Westfallen* is often funny, thanks to the splendid cast of characters and their wildly inventive action movie-inspired scheming to put things right, and to be on the right side of history.

Attendance

Please read the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) which has further information if you are unsure whether to send your child to school or not. We are always happy to advise in line with this guidance, so if you are still in doubt, please contact the school office if your child develops any symptoms and we can discuss this further with you.



Children can come to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This includes general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

Please note, we can only accept and administer **prescribed medicines** that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration and dosage.

If your child arrives late, it is the responsibility of the adult to report to the school office and sign the "Late Book", giving a reason for lateness. This is important so that the school office knows your child is in school and can mark your child in in the class register. The class registers in the classrooms close at 8.55am when lessons start.

When reporting an absence, please could we ask that parents contact the school office before 9.30am and state clearly reasons for absence.

Let's keep working together to ensure attendance is as good as it can be! Remember, **every pupil, every day!** Thank you for your support. This week's Attendance Champions are **Year 4!** Here are the latest figures...

Reception	96.0%	Target
Year 1	96.7%	97%
Year 2	97.0%	
Year 3	97.8%	
Year 4	98.8%	Overall (to date)
Year 5	95.8%	96.2%
Year 6	97.8%	
Overall	97.3%	

Head Teacher's Awards

Reception	Kethana R	Simeon B-C
Year 1	Cooper Z	Adam J
Year 2	Mustafa A	Riley T-F
Year 3	Evie J	Jacob S
Year 4	Ethan G	Aiza L
Year 5	Afra M	Charlie W
Year 6	Angelo M	Kian S








Lunchtime Star Awards


Reception	Mohammed-S R
Year 1	Harvey K
Year 2	Aminah K
Year 3	Hassnain Q
Year 4	Aiza L
Year 5	Seb J
Year 6	Innayah K

Team Points





Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 28.03.25)	94	41	60	137
Position	2 nd – 3 Points	4 th – 1 Point	3 rd – 2 Points	1 st – 4 Points
Running Total	12	9	14	15


Hot Lunch Options 31st – 4th April, 2025

WEEK 3	 MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main dish	Margherita pizza with baked potato wedges	Chicken tikka masala served with rice	Roast beef, with Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes & gravy	  Chicken & tomato pasta bake	Crispy battered fish & chunky chips
Vegetarian Main dish	Roasted vegetable pizza	  Vegetable tikka masala with 50/50 rice	 Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Macaroni cheese	 Quorn™ nuggets with chunky chips
Accompaniments	Peas & baked beans Salad bar	Sweetcorn & carrots Salad bar	Carrots & cauliflower Salad bar	Broccoli & green beans Salad bar	Peas & baked beans Salad bar
Desserts	Fruit flapjack	Marble sponge & custard	Lemon cake	Shortbread	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



KEY

-  1 OF YOUR 5 A DAY
-  MEAT FREE MONDAY
-  CHEF'S CHOICE
-  PLANT-BASED (VEGAN)



"Allergens and Intolerances"
 All of our food is lovingly hand crafted and prepared on site daily. We have an allergen procedure in place, so please ensure you make our catering team aware of your allergens/ your child's allergens prior to using the restaurant. Our kitchens are used for multi-purpose production so we cannot guarantee the above dishes are completely free from allergenic ingredients or traces of these.

SHOBNALL SHOWCASE!

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

Nursery

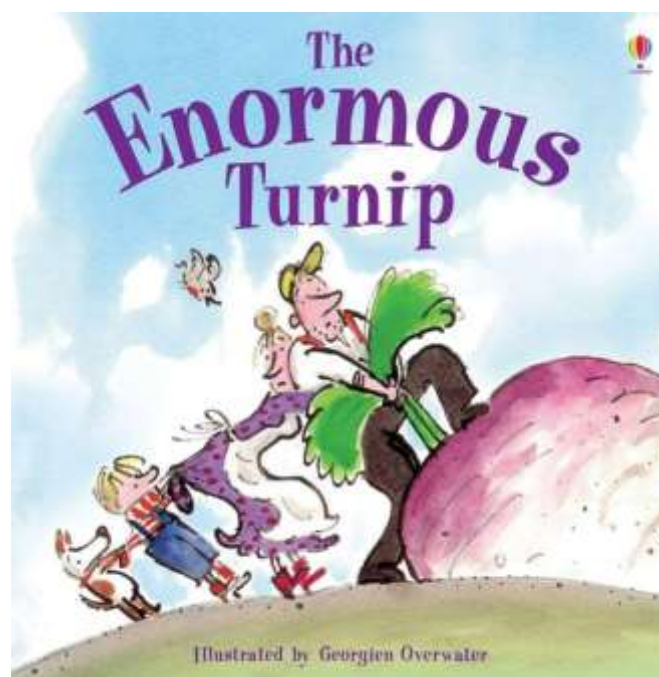
Our adventures in Nursery this week...

The Nursery children have had another exciting week. They have been enjoying our new class focus book 'The Enormous Turnip.' We had lots of fun acting out parts of the story by taking on the role of the characters to pull out the enormous turnip.

Our exploration of turnips continued as we drew some fantastic turnips in drawing club and carried out a variety of activities including painting our own turnips and making our own enormous turnips from play dough.

On Wednesday, we had another brilliant session down at Forest School along with the sunshine. The children enjoyed learning a new skill of how to use a hammer, transferring the dye from the flowers onto a piece of cloth. The children showed great care and control when using the hammers and loved seeing the different colours and patterns appear on the fabric.

Well done Nursery on a great week!



Reception

Our adventures in Reception this week...

This week we have had a wonderful time exploring Spring flowers. We have used various materials to create a variety of representations including some fantastic observational drawings of daffodils.

We have been taking care of the primroses we planted last week by carefully watering them. We are excited to share these for a special gift at the weekend.

Our growing theme has continued as we planted grass seeds in recycled milk cartons. We can't wait for the grass to grow and celebrate our new hairstyles!

During My Happy Mind we explored how to be a good friend and thought carefully about the different qualities we think a friend should have.

"Sharing and caring." (Ava)

"Giving good hugs is a good friend." (M-Suleymaan)

"To make someone feel happy." (Yusuf)

"Helping building with the construction." (Mustafa)

"Being kind and listening when they are blue." (Minnie)

We were super excited to share our fantastic pizza homework, we certainly have some chefs in the making! We carried on our love of pizza to create some very special cards for our very special mummies!

Year 1

This week in maths, the children finished their learning regarding numbers to 50 and were blessed to successfully find one more or one less than any given number before moving onto our new unit, which is measurement. The children enjoyed being able to find items that were shorter, longer, thinner and wider. In English, the children have been introduced to our traditional tale 'Jack and the Beanstalk' where they have been using lots of adjectives to describe the different settings in the story as well as Jack. In PSHE, we have been learning all about how to keep safe and healthy with regards to items kept in the kitchen and bathroom. In RE, we have been learning all about Palm Sunday and its importance to Christians. During our Art lesson, we have begun constructing our class sculpture and are looking forward to showing you the final piece soon. A great week Year 1!

Year 2

This week in Year 2 has been truly wonderful! We kicked off our exploration of non-chronological reports about kings, diving into fascinating facts and stories that have captured the students' imaginations. The children are particularly excited about discovering the different roles and responsibilities of a king, and they're eager to share their findings with one another.

In Maths, we've started our unit on measurement. The students have been measuring lengths and comparing sizes, and I'm thrilled to see how quickly they are grasping these concepts. They've enjoyed hands-on activities using rulers and measuring tapes, which has made learning both fun and practical.

In RE, we had a delightful session creating Eid and Easter cards. The children expressed their creativity beautifully, incorporating vibrant colours and thoughtful messages to share the joy of these celebrations.

In Music, the students had a fantastic time making their own music stories. They composed melodies and added lyrics, allowing them to express their ideas in a fun and engaging way. It was wonderful to see their creativity come to life!



Year 3

This week in Year 3, the children have been busy with a variety of exciting activities! In English, they have started working on a persuasive text, encouraging both parents and children to join our school. In maths, they've been focusing on adding and subtracting fractions, building their confidence with this important skill. In geography, they've been learning about earthquakes and even had the chance to create structures using spaghetti and plasticine to see if they could withstand tremors. Lastly, in Forest School, the children enjoyed building dens using ropes and tarp, developing teamwork and problem-solving skills in the great outdoors. It's been a fun and productive week!

Year 4

This week in Maths, we've been exploring the world of decimals, focusing on identifying hundredths using a place value grid. We also tackled dividing 2-digit numbers by 10, developing a deeper understanding of place value and division. In English, we've been crafting the thrilling conclusion to our Viking myths. The children have shown incredible creativity and storytelling skills, bringing their characters to life and delivering dramatic endings worthy of any saga! Our art lessons have been all about composition. We've been studying how artists arrange elements in their work and experimenting with our own compositions to create visually stunning pieces. In Geography, we've dived into rivers, identifying their key features and understanding the different stages of their journey from source to mouth. It's been fascinating to learn how rivers shape the landscape around us! Finally, Thursday morning was a highlight for everyone as we participated in a PE SCITT session with trainee teachers. The children had a fantastic time trying out new activities and showcasing their energy and enthusiasm. A great week year 4!



Year 5

As always, Year 5 have worked very hard – despite a very busy week! In science, Year 5 learnt about the moon phases,



and were able to use this new information when they were looking at the Astronomical Clock at Hampton Court Palace.

Of course, the highlight of the week was the trip to Hampton Court Palace, which supported the children's previous learning on Henry VIII. Here is what some of the children had to say about the extraordinary trip:

'I loved going into William III's room and seeing all of the canopies with the chairs underneath' – Elliot M

'My favourite part of Hampton Court was the kitchens. I loved learning about the foods that they did and did not have in Tudor Times. They didn't have chocolate, tomatoes or potatoes, but they did have onions!' – Aminah A

'Did you know that Hampton Court Palace was also used in the Georgian times, not just the Tudors!' – Inam U

Have a look on Instagram and X to see the amazing photos and to learn more interesting facts from our trip!



Year 6

This week, Year 6 tackled their mock SATs with incredible effort and determination – I'm so proud of how hard they worked and the progress they've made! In maths, we focused on revising the area of triangles, strengthening our understanding of this key concept.

In science, we explored the different animal kingdoms, learning about their key features and how they fit into *MRS GREN*—the seven life processes that define living organisms.

In English, we started an exciting new unit on recounts, looking at a video clip and how to use powerful adjectives and show not tell to describe effectively. Another fantastic week – well done, Year 6!

Diary Dates 2024-2025

Event	Date/Time
Year 3 Class Assembly	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 28 th April 2025
County Council Elections – School Closed	Thursday 1 st May 2025
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed	Monday 5 th May 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Week	Monday 12 th May 2025 to Friday 16 th May 2025
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 23 rd May 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 2 nd June 2025
Reception Class Assembly	Thursday 5 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 19 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 5 Class Assembly	Thursday 3 rd July 2025, 9.00am
JTMAT INSET Day	Friday 4 th July 2025
School Closes for Summer	Friday 18 th July 2025, 2.00pm
INSET Day	Monday 21 st July 2025

Spring Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
Eid al-Fitr	Sunday 30 th March 2025/Monday 31 st March 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Reception	Tuesday 1 st April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 1	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Meeting for Parents	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025, 3.30pm, Year 6 Classroom
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 2	Thursday 3 rd April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 3	Friday 4 th April 2025
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 4 th April 2025, 5.00pm
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 4	Monday 7 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 5	Tuesday 8 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 6	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
Year 3 Class Assembly	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm



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ATTENDANCE

WHY IT MATTERS



Persistent absence means pupils who miss more than **10% of school** every year.

-£750

For each additional day of absence between years 7 to 11, the typical pupil could miss out on an average of **£750** in future lifetime earnings

-£10,000

Persistently absent pupils in year 10 and 11 could earn **£10,000 less** on average at age 28, compared to pupils with near perfect attendance

This **risks to almost £20k less** on average at age 28 for those who are **severely absent**

-£20k

For **employability over a sustained period**, people age 28 were around:



Less likely to be employed when **persistently absent***



Less likely to be employed when **severely absent***

*Compared to their peers with near perfect attendance



HOLIDAY SPORTS CAMP



Have fun in the school holidays with your friends!



William Shrewsbury



Mosley Academy

Thomas Russell Infants

William Shrewsbury (DE13 0HE)
April 14th - 25th
Thomas Russell (DE13 8DS)
April 14th - 25th
Mosley Academy (DE13 9QD)
April 14th - 17th

Camp info

Times: 8.30am - 3.15pm
Ages: 4-13
What to bring:
Packed lunch
snack plenty to drink,
Late collection option
4.15pm

Featuring

- Dodgeball
- Football
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Movies at lunchtime
- Easter Activities
- Street dance
- Nerf wars
- Zorb football
- Capture the flag
- Gymnastics
- Axe throwing

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If you receive this flyer you will be within 15 minutes drive of one of our venues



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about BLUESKY SOCIAL APP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

With an App Store rating of 17+ & Google Play rating Mature

While Bluesky has been around since 2019, it's suddenly taken off in a big way thanks to a significant exodus from X (formerly Twitter). Indeed, it looks and behaves a lot like Twitter before Elon Musk bought the platform. Bluesky has been touted in recent months as a safer, more open-minded alternative to X – but like any social media site, it still has its share of risks.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NO PRIVATE ACCOUNTS

While most social networks allow accounts to be private, at the time of writing, all Bluesky accounts must be public. The development team has indicated this might change in the future, but the app is built on a public-first protocol. If private accounts are ever introduced, it may only be in a limited way – such as through the implementation of group chats.

INTERACTIONS WITH STRANGERS

Every account being public means that anyone can be contacted by anyone else. While users don't have to respond and can easily block people and move on, it does mean that youngsters are at particular risk of being conned by scammers, messaged by predatory adults or exposed to others with ill intentions. These hazards can be compounded by the fact that Bluesky doesn't require its users to provide their real name.

TROLLING AND BULLYING

While Bluesky currently feels a lot friendlier than X seems to have become, its lack of private accounts means that there's nothing to stop users from trolling and cyberbullying younger people. While accounts can be blocked and reported, a persistent bully could simply create a new profile, potentially making their victims feel unsafe in continuing to use the app.

DANGEROUS MISINFORMATION

Established news organisations have fact-checking and editing processes, but social networks have no such controls and can often serve as breeding grounds for misinformation and disinformation. Bluesky will possibly be no different once it reaches a certain size, and children may not have the critical thinking skills to tell fact from fiction – or to discern an informative, honest user from a malicious one.

ADULT TARGET AUDIENCE

Bluesky isn't designed with children in mind, and there aren't many parental controls on the platform. In an interview with the BBC, Bluesky's CEO originally said that the app would only allow users aged 18 and above to sign up, but a spokesperson later clarified its age restriction as 13+. This could imply the app was originally meant for an adult audience and suggests that making the platform more child-friendly might not currently be a priority.

RAPID GROWTH

At the time of writing, Bluesky seems calm in comparison with other social networks where moderation is lax and the atmosphere toxic – but that's due at least in part to its smaller community. The app has recently been adding as many as a million users per day, and if that continues, there'll be more unpleasant users to handle, and moderators could struggle to maintain the pleasant environment Bluesky is currently known for.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE THE ADULT CONTENT FILTER

Bluesky doesn't have much in the way of parental controls, but there are content filters which can hide sexual and graphic imagery. These are enabled by default for underage accounts but can be manually turned on in the 'Moderation' section of the app's settings. The 'advanced' Bluesky Moderation Service lets you restrict content even further, hiding – for example – self-harm content, extremist rhetoric, and even rude posts.

ENCOURAGE BLOCKING AND REPORTING

Another tool that Bluesky uses to ensure a decent experience is muting and blocking accounts. The former prevents you from seeing a specific user's content, while the latter stops them from seeing yours. If a child is encountering trolls or bullies on the platform, encourage them to use this function, while also reporting the offenders to help make the platform a nicer place for everyone.

LOOK OUT FOR FAKES

Impersonation is a problem on all social networks. While the consequences are usually benign, imposters sometimes attempt to scam or groom children by pretending to be a popular influencer or online personality. Bluesky is unique in that it can be connected to official domains, with users' handles linking to other sites; while this isn't widely used right now, it could be a reliable way to verify celebrities and public figures in future.

KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

As with all social media platforms, moderation and content filters can only do so much; it's highly likely that a child will eventually face something unsavoury. For that reason, it's important to make sure that young people are aware of the risks and know how to handle the technology if anything they see on the app makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College