



# SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

*"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."*

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have been incredibly proud of our year 6 pupils this week, who have been undertaking their SATs. They have shown considerable effort, and we have all been impressed with their attitude and the positivity they have displayed throughout the week. Whatever the outcome, it certainly won't be because of a lack of effort. I would like to thank all the staff involved in ensuring that the tests have run smoothly and in turn, the many parents who have supported their children during this period. I hope that everyone involved has a very relaxing time over the weekend! All our other year groups have been just as busy though, and I hope you enjoy reading about what they have been up to in this week's 'Shobnall Showcase' further on in the newsletter.



There is a lot planned in the upcoming weeks, so please keep your eye on the diary dates at the end of each newsletter and ensure that you keep checking your inbox for any important information that is sent to you by email. I am meeting with Mr Bishop, Mrs Welch and Mr Attwood next week to finalise plans for Sports Day in June and Year 4, 5 and 6 will soon be informed of the arrangements and information on how to purchase tickets for their performance of 'Oliver with a Twist' at the Brewhouse.

Whatever it is that you are doing this weekend, we hope that you have a great and relaxing one and look forward to seeing you again on Monday! Enjoy!



## World Bee Day – 20 May 2025

Bees are so important to the health of our planet that they have their own special day. The event takes place on 20 May each year, to spread awareness of **the significance of bees**. Bee campaigners are also asking people everywhere to do more **to help and protect the special insects**.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) is urging everyone including governments, companies, researchers and consumers to take action to help save the **popular pollinators**. Did you know that it is estimated that one in every three mouthfuls of food we eat is a result of bees and pollination.

To show our appreciation for their key role as pollinators not only of the flowers we see, but also the food we eat, we would like the whole school to take part in a non-uniform day. As the theme is bees, children should

come to school dressed in black and/or yellow. On this occasion, we would like to ask for a small donation of £1 to support the future of bees, as sadly they are under the threat of extinction. Funds raised will support us in developing a bee friendly area on our school field, as well as a donation to the UK Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Throughout the day, the children will engage in various activities linked to this year's theme, *"Bee inspired by nature to nourish us all."*

### Miss Martin-Mills

At the end of this academic year, we will be saying goodbye to Miss Martin-Mills as she embarks on a new career outside of teaching. We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for the incredible contribution she has made to Shobnall over the past seven years. Miss Martin-Mills has worn many hats during her time with us, including serving as our Music Lead, English Lead, and for her outstanding work in leading the JTMAT Christmas Concert and supporting English across the Trust. Her passion, dedication, and commitment have had a lasting impact on both pupils and staff alike. We have already recruited her replacement, who will be introduced once next year's staffing structure has been finalised. In the meantime, we wish Miss Martin-Mills every success in her future endeavours and extend our heartfelt thanks for everything she has done for our school community.



### Walk to School Week – 19 to 23 May 2025

**Walk to School Week** takes place on **Monday 19 May** and will run until **Friday 23 May 2025**. This Walk to School Week primary school pupils across Staffordshire are invited to become Walking Warriors!

Pupils who walk to school will earn special walking warrior stickers and bookmarks and we will also receive Walking Warrior-themed resources to keep pupils engaged.





Walking to school is a great way to start the day! It keeps children active, helps the environment, and even boosts concentration in the classroom. Whether you walk the whole way or park and stride (parking a short distance from school and walking the rest), every step makes a difference.

### **PFA Midsummer Film Night – Tuesday 20 May 2025, 3.30 – 5.15pm**



Tickets are still on sale for the PFA Midsummer Film Night on Tuesday 20 May 2025, 3.30pm – 5.15pm for children in Reception to Year 6. They are priced at £3, which includes a drink and sweets. Popcorn will also be available so children in attendance may wish to bring a small amount of change on the night if they wish to purchase any.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms (collection from the junior playground) and Key Stage 2 will be in the hall (collection from the infant playground). Shobnall Stars Night Owls will be held in the Year 2 classroom on this night. We do hope that you are able to support this event!

### **Ice Lolly Sale**

We're excited to announce an ice lolly sale to raise money for OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning)! Delicious ice lollies will be on sale for £1 or 50p each on the KS1 playground from 3.20pm on: 6 June, 13 June, 27 June, and 11 July. This is a fantastic way to support our school's outdoor play initiatives while treating the children to a refreshing snack. Cash only, please. We hope to see you there, thank you for your support!



### **Shobnall Stars Booking Forms**

Please don't forget to book your places a week in advance for **Shobnall Stars Early Birds**, or **Shobnall Stars Night Owls** which is our after-school club.

You will need to complete one form per child, on a weekly basis. Forms will need to be submitted by 12noon the Friday before you wish to book. Please also select your breakfast options in advance to assist with catering, specifying dietary requirements if necessary. You can book your place by accessing the information booklets [here](#) or by scanning the QR codes below.



## The 5p Challenge is Back!

The 5p Challenge has started and will run up until 6 June! We challenge each class from Nursery to Year 6 to fill a 2-litre bottle with 5ps.

Each 2-litre bottle can hold over £100 so raid your money boxes, save your change, look down the back of the sofa, ask family members for help and join us to help us raise funds for the school.



Each class has their own bottle collecting 5p coins.

Once each class has completed the challenge, the coins in each bottle will be counted and the class with the most 5p coins will win a treat!

Raid your money boxes, save your change, look down the back of the sofa and help your class fill their bottle.

A fun challenge for the whole class to join together and help raise funds for the school.

**CHALLENGE RUNS FROM FRIDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY  
- FRIDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE.**



## Green Libraries Month

We are excited to be celebrating Green Libraries Month again this May!

This annual event highlights the importance of sustainability and environmental responsibility within our local libraries.

There will be a range of activities happening in the libraries across the whole month such as story time, crafts and scavenger hunts.

[See what's happening in your local library here.](#)



### Online Safety Tips

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft has hundreds of millions of players, making it more important than ever to stay informed. With its vibrant worlds and endless potential for creativity it's no wonder Minecraft continues to capture young imaginations!

With the Minecraft movie hitting cinemas in April, interest in the game has remained strong. But whether they're mining resources or building digital castles, children could also encounter strangers, scary content or bullying behaviour online.

This free guide offers parents and educators the latest top tips on how to keep children safe from issues like griefing, chat risks, and unintended purchases, while still embracing the game's educational and creative benefits

### 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 7+...

#### Ripening Time

*Written by Patrice Gopo*

Mama steers the cart toward the produce section of the grocery store and picks up a bunch of green plantains. Thus begins a week of anxious anticipation as a young girl waits for mustard yellows to seep onto the unripe green peels. *Creep. Creep. Seep.* Green begins to turn to yellow. *Creep. Creep. Seep.* Black streaks appear. And finally, on Sunday, the frying pan sizzles and hisses, as Mama serves up the warm, sugary slices the young girl has waited for so long.

Much like there is sweet treasure hidden beneath the skin of a plantain, this beautifully written and evocative story reaches far beyond the act of preparing a favourite food. *Ripening Time* celebrates the way food and family entwine to connect us across generations-and serves as a touching reminder that some of the sweetest rewards in life are worth the wait.

## 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 5**! Here are the latest figures...

Reception	93.8%	Target
Year 1	93.3%	97%
Year 2	95.8%	
Year 3	96.5%	
Year 4	98.4%	
Year 5	99.2%	Overall (to date)
Year 6	96.1%	95.9%
Overall	96.6%	

## Head Teacher's Awards

## OPAL Play Awards

Reception	Gianna R	Mohammed-S
Year 1	Harvey K	Muhammed-Y
Year 2	Jakub K	Astrid R
Year 3	Reggie P	Zayn C
Year 4	Daniel L	Musa H
Year 5	Zain A	Anthony D
Year 6	EVERYONE!	

Reception	Kethana R
Year 1	Harvey K
Year 2	Alfie T
Year 3	Kaleb G
Year 4	Amara I
Year 5	Kristers K
Year 6	Bonnie H

## Team Points

Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 16.05.25)	51	142	88	43
Position	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 Points	1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 Points	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 Points	4 <sup>th</sup> – 1 point
Running Total	7	10	9	4



## Hot Lunch Options 19.05.25 – 23.05.25

WEEK 3	MEAT FREE 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	5 Chicken & tomato pasta bake	Crispy battered fish & chunky chips
Vegetarian Main dish	Roasted vegetable pizza	5 Vegetable tikka masala with 50/50 rice	Pb Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Macaroni cheese	Pb 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

**"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 week started with the excitement of exploring our new book, 'The Little Red Hen'! Having read the story, we have been busy exploring a range of farm-based learning and activities. We have also had fun baking bread like The Little Red Hen which went down a treat by all!

We have continued with our Concept Cat learning and have been exploring the concept 'straight.' We have had lots of fun drawing straight and not straight patterns on the whiteboards and going on a hunt looking for objects that are straight and not straight.

We finished our week with some excellent work in the creative area, making handprint hens and painting a farm scene.



### Reception

It has been another super week continuing our 'It's a Bug's Life,' theme!

This week we focused on ladybirds and learnt lots of exciting facts...

"A group of ladybirds is a loveliness." (Mustafa)

"They can fly!" (Ethan)

"Some ladybirds are yellow." (Azaan)

"They eat the bugs and stop them spoiling the plants." (Fred)

Our indoor and outdoor adventures included creating our own ladybirds using craft and construction materials, making ladybird juice, playing double ladybird dominoes and re-telling the story, 'What the Ladybird Heard,' by Julia Donaldson.

The theme continued at Forest School as we used natural materials to create minibeast homes, stone bugs and a lovely loveliness of ladybirds with mud and clay. Some of us designed a brilliant obstacle course and showed fantastic team working skills when faced with challenges.

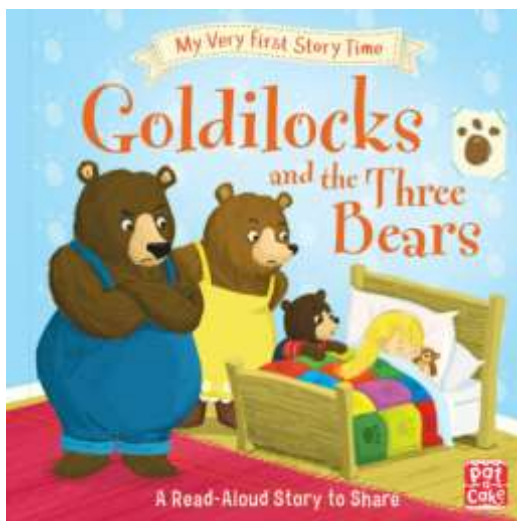
Thankfully the sun was kind to us again this week and we got stuck into some more gardening. We added bulbs and plants into our planters and pots and carefully watered them. We are very excited to see what happens when the grass starts to grow in our recycled milk cartons. Miss Alexander also brought a new plant in on Thursday and told us it is called a Flamingo plant. We think she's tricking us because, even though it's pink we don't think Flamingos are really going to grow from it!

## Year 1

We've had a wonderfully busy and exciting time in Year 1 as we continue our learning across the curriculum. In English, we've started exploring information texts, using the lifecycle of a sunflower as our main focus. The children are learning how to organise facts and present them clearly. As part of our hook lesson, we planted our very own sunflower seeds! We'll be tracking their growth carefully over the coming weeks. Our Science topic ties in beautifully with our English. We're learning



about the parts of a plant and what each part does to help the plant grow. The children have really enjoyed getting hands-on with real plants and using their sunflower as a live example! In Maths, we've been diving into the concepts of equal groups and doubling. The children are developing a strong understanding of sharing and arrays. In RE, we've been learning about Shabbat, the Jewish day of rest. The children explored the traditions of a Shabbat meal and discovered the significance of key items such as the challah bread, grape juice, and candles. In art, we have experimented with printing techniques using LEGO bricks. The children loved exploring patterns and colours in this imaginative way. Another superb week!



## Year 2

This week in Year 2, we've had a fantastic time exploring lots of exciting topics. In Maths, the children have been learning about fractions, focusing on finding halves, quarters, and thirds of shapes and amounts – something they've really enjoyed. In English, we've started writing our own instructions on how to make a jam or cheese sandwich. The children are very excited to finish their writing so they can follow their own steps to make a real sandwich in class! In Design and Technology, we looked at Baby Bear's chair from the story of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, and the children have been thinking carefully about which materials would be strong and durable enough to make a suitable chair. In PSHE, we've been talking about families – discussing how all families are different and special in their own ways.



In Science, we've been learning about animals and their habitats. The children have really enjoyed researching different environments and discovering how animals are suited to where they live. We've even created our own habitats in boxes, including a desert, a rainforest, and an underwater scene. I am so proud of the children for how beautifully these turned out – they put so much thought and creativity into each one, and they look absolutely lovely!

It's been a busy and exciting week in Year 2!

### Year 3

This week in Year 3, the children have been busy exploring new skills across the curriculum! In English, they investigated the features of the narrative *Mystery Rucksack* and expanded their vocabulary with exciting new words. Maths lessons focused on telling the time to 5 minutes and converting between digital and analogue clocks. These are practical skills they've been practising daily. In Science, the class had fun experimenting with reflective materials, discovering how light bounces off different surfaces. DT brought out their creativity as they designed and built castles inspired by the beautiful curves and patterns of Art Nouveau. It's been another fantastic week of learning and creativity, well done, Year 3!



### Year 4

This week in maths, we've been diving into the world of money! The children have been working hard on adding, subtracting, and calculating change, and they've found using physical resources such as coins and notes particularly helpful in building their confidence and understanding. In English we've been planning and starting to write our balanced arguments about the enigmatic artist, Banksy. The children have enjoyed exploring different perspectives and are developing their skills in presenting well-rounded, thoughtful arguments. In RE, we've been learning about Buddhism and focusing on the Noble Eightfold Path. The children have been exploring how these principles guide Buddhists in their daily lives and reflecting on how they relate to their own values. In Science the children have been creating their own classification keys to sort and group animals based on their characteristics. In PSHE, we've had thoughtful discussions about how friendships can change over time. Finally, to end the week, the children went on a lovely wellbeing walk, as part of Mental Health Awareness Week! A great week Year 4!

### Year 5

This week has been full of creativity, curiosity, and hands-on learning! In Maths, the children confidently tackled adding and subtracting decimals, finding the concept straightforward and enjoying great success. In English, they began exploring Haiku poems, choosing their own themes and building a rich bank of vocabulary and sentences, including personification, to support their writing. They have now drafted their ideas and are excited to develop them further next week. Monday was dedicated to Art, where the children explored self-portraiture by tracing their features and adding descriptive words that reflect who they are. At Forest School, they embraced the outdoors, designing and testing improved rope swings, learning to tie tension knots for shelter building, and safely using a bill hook to cut wood. In Science, they investigated foetal development and created clear, informative graphs to show their findings. It's been a fantastic week of learning and discovery!





## Year 6

WOW, what a week! I am so proud of each and every one of Year 6. Their attitude and determination to the SATs have been commendable. They have worked so hard completing the assessments and preparing for them in the afternoons. It has given them an opportunity to show off what they know and put their knowledge to the test. We finished the week with a well-deserved party on Thursday and had some great time in the outdoors where we went on a wellbeing walk as part of mental health week. A great week had by all!

## Diary Dates 2024-2025

Event	Date/Time
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025
Reception Class Assembly	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
Year 5 Class Assembly	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2025, 9.00am
<b>JTMAT INSET Day</b>	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
School Closes for Summer	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, 2.00pm
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2025

## Summer Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025
Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2025 – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Reception Class Assembly	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
New Parents Meeting for Nursery & Reception Parents	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 5.00pm
Year 1 Phonics Screening	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Reception	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Year 1	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Year 2	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Mental Health Support Team (MHST) Parent Coffee Morning	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 8.45am – 9.45am
Father's Day Lunches – Year 3	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Year 4	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Sports Day – EYFS/KS1 AM & KS2 PM	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Year 5	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Father's Day Lunches – Year 6	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Reserve Sports Day – EYFS/KS1 AM & KS2 PM	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
Year 4 Bikeability	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2025, 9.00am
Year 5 Bikeability	Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2025
Year 5 Class Assembly	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2025, 9.00am
<b>JTMAT INSET Day – School Closed</b>	Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
Year 6 Leavers' Disco	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, 6.00pm – 7.30pm
Year 4, 5 & 6 Brewhouse Performance – Oliver with a Twist	Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, 1.30pm and 6.00pm
Nursery Graduation	Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, 9.00am
Year 6 Leavers' Assembly	Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2025, 9.00am
School Closes for Summer	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> July 2024, 2.00pm
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2025





# 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



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

### SCARY ELEMENTS




While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

### GRIEFING



Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

### ADDICTIVENESS



Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

### PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS



With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.


### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES



Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.


## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE




Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

### HOST A PRIVATE SERVER



The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

### TALK ABOUT STRANGERS



At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

### RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS



Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

### PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD



As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.

