

# FOCUS

on

ST MARY & ST THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
[www.stmaryandthomasaquinas.co.uk](http://www.stmaryandthomasaquinas.co.uk)



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*'Together we strive for excellence, inspired by the joy of the Gospel'.*

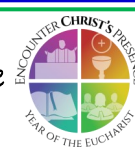


10th June 2022



## Year of The Eucharist

Go out and serve the world through the nourishment of the Eucharist.



## Our School Prayer

*Father in heaven, bless our school, the teachers, children and all who work within these walls. Dear Holy Spirit stay here with us, so that we may always be wise and good, always doing our best, doing harm to no-one and respecting everyone.*

*Dear Jesus, when we are happy share our joy, when we are sad comfort us. Father, Son and Holy Spirit make our school your home. Amen*



## First Holy Communion

Please keep the following children in your prayers as they make their First Holy Communion at church tomorrow.

Carter Bainbridge  
Oliver Flamson  
Aiden Gray  
Aoife Loughran  
Luke Rosa  
Ellie Smith  
Jose Thevar

Lucy Bicchiri  
Sophie Goodall  
Elliot Grimes  
Alice Martin  
Ella Rowe  
Kourtney Tang  
Henry Thomson  
Ethan Woroniak

Emily Carver  
Sam Graham  
Alexander Kimmitt  
Harriet Pickering  
Declan Russell  
Charlie Tarbitt  
Jacob Winter

## Queen's Jubilee Day

Everyone had a super day on Tuesday celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Make sure you click on our school website to see the photographs.



## Crama

Please note that there will be **NO** crama after school next week as the staff will be on Holy Island



## Holy Island

Our Year 6 children will be spending all of next week on Holy Island. We hope they have lovely weather.

## Bamburgh

Year 2 children will be spending Tuesday 14th June at Bamburgh and Seahouses as part of their class topic.



## Year 1 Coffee Morning

We would like to invite Year 1 parents to our informal coffee and chat morning on Friday 17th June. The hall doors will be open from 8.30 a.m. - 9.30 a.m. and we would love to see you all there.

## Dance Festival

The children in Year 1 have been working extremely hard with Miss Wilson and Mrs Bowden and will be taking part in the Gateshead Dance Festival on Wednesday 15th June.



## Year 4 Mass

Children in Year 4 will be leading the Parish Mass on Thursday 23rd June at 9.10 a.m. All are welcome to attend.

## School closed

A reminder that school will be closed on Friday 1st July and Monday 11th July.

Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6

Please tick the above box to indicate which year group your child is currently in.



Name of parent completing survey.....

## Questionnaire for parents - May 2022

Please read the following statements and tick the answer which best fits what you think about the school. Please only tick one box per statement. If you cannot answer leave it blank.

	(Please tick.)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	My child is happy at school				
2	My child feels safe at school				
3	The school makes sure its pupils are well behaved				
4	The school keeps me updated about what my child will learn during the year				
5	If your child has SEND, does school give them the support they need to succeed?				
6	When I have raised concerns with the school, they have been dealt with properly.				
7	The school has high expectations for my child				
8	The school lets me know how my child is doing				
9	My child does well at school				
10	There is a good range of subjects available to my child				
11	The school supports my child's wider personal development				
12	If you have ticked either the disagree or strongly disagree box could you please briefly explain your reasons. It is important that we continue to improve as a school and appreciate your views on what you would like to see improved.				
13	Any other comments				

Thank you for taking time to comment.  
Please return this completed survey as soon as possible

## Spotlight on.....

### Blaydon Races

Well done to everyone who took part in the Blaydon Races. Children and parents had a great time. As you can see Fearne and her brother rode their bikes alongside the adults race.



**Apologies** - Last weeks football article was about Max Malia and not Max Robinson. Sorry Max.

### Dates for your diary so far:

- 14th June - Year 2 visiting Seahouses and Bamburgh
- 20th/23rd June - Year 6 at Newburn Activity Centre
- 23rd June - Year 4 Mass
- 24th June - Year 6 Transition day at St Thomas More
- 24th June - Cycling Skills Year 5
- 28th June - Year 6 visiting Emmaus Youth Village
- 29th June - Whole class photographs
- 30th June - Theatre group for KS 1 - 'The Jungle Book'
- 4th July - Reception Welcome Evening for new parents
- 5th July - Nursery Welcome Evening for new parents
- 8th July - KS2 Athletics Festival at Gateshead Stadium
- 11th July - Inset Day - School closed to children**
- 14th July - Year 4 Mass
- 20th July - Leavers Assembly
- 21st July - Leavers Mass

### Summertime

Now that the sun has started to shine, can I please remind parents about a few seasonal issues. Children must remember to bring a water bottle into school each day to keep hydrated in the warm weather and during P.E. lessons. They may bring in sunscreen if they are able to apply it themselves, but they must be aware that they can NOT share it as some children have allergies to sunscreen. For smaller children an all day cream applied at home before they come into school is advised.

We have also noticed that the pollen count is high lately, could we recommend that children take medication before they come into school. Any medication that needs to be taken throughout the day must be in a named container and parents need to fill in a medicine form at the office.

### The Chorister Experience - Sunday 3rd July

A free opportunity for boys and girls in Years 2 - 6 to experience being a Cathedral Chorister for an afternoon. To book a place for your child please email : [music@newcastlecathedral.org.uk](mailto:music@newcastlecathedral.org.uk)

### Spotlight on.....

Would you like to celebrate and share the talents and achievements of your child? Please click on the link below that will take you to a form to complete.

<https://forms.gle/9cWTqxTKghhtYsit5>

### Pay 360 Maintenance

Please note that on Thursday 16th June from 1.00 p.m. till 5.00 p.m. Pay 360 will be offline due to essential maintenance.

### Missing P.E. kit

Can you please check your child has brought home the correct P.E. bag. It is easily done as they all look the same. If you do discover a different bag under the stairs, in the car or in 'the bedroom' can you please return to the school office. Thank you.


### Sports Days

Unfortunately we are unable to host our traditional sports afternoons this year. Following a risk assessment of our field, it has come to our attention that the terrain on the field prevents us from hosting competitive sports.

We will be organising in-house, fun sporting activities throughout the day so children can still have a 'fun afternoon'. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and will re-address this in readiness for next year.



## WEDNESDAY WORDSEARCH



Cross out the letters **u c h** in the 4 bold words to find 4 real words.

**SMARTSEARCHERS** FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

☒  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

**HOLY SPIRIT**

**HEARS TELLS**

**GUIDE TRUTH**

**JESUS FATHER**

☒  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

**SUPERSEARCHERS** FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**

T	H	T	U	R	T	L	A	F	P	H
H	O	P	S	U	S	E	J	A	S	R
R	L	H	G	P	H	U	H	T	P	T
E	Y	Z	G	U	I	D	E	H	I	E
H	R	G	H	Y	I	R	J	E	R	L
T	H	P	U	E	H	L	I	R	I	L
A	E	G	U	I	A	L	E	T	T	S
F	A	L	P	H	D	R	A	R	H	T
H	R	S	L	R	J	E	S	U	S	H
U	S	J	E	S	S	T	O	T	G	E
Z	X	L	L	S	Y	L	O	H	T	R

**Meusscaghe tucelhling macukeh gulhoryc**

"The Spirit will \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_ known, by receiving my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ it to you."

## REDUCE WASTE SAVE MONEY

We accept donations of good quality school uniform and related items

Markets held every second Saturday and last Monday of the month, as well as pop up markets. Follow us on Facebook to find out where we'll be

Get good quality preloved uniform at a "pay as you feel" price. Primary and High Schools covered

gwuniformscheme@gmail.com  
paypal.me/GWestUniform




[www.facebook.com/gatesheadwestprelovedschooluniform](https://www.facebook.com/gatesheadwestprelovedschooluniform)  
[www.gatesheadprelovedschooluniform.com](http://www.gatesheadprelovedschooluniform.com)

**GATESHEAD WEST  
PRELOVED  
UNIFORM  
SCHEME**



## Coffee and Chat Mornings

Before the end of this academic year, we would like to invite all parents into school for a coffee and chat. This will be an opportunity for you to meet your child's current class teacher as well as their new teacher for the next academic year.



**Coffee & Conversation**

Percolate  
Caffeinate  
Participate



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

Snapchat is a photo- and video-sharing app which also allows users to chat with friends via text or audio. Users can share images and videos with specific friends, or through a 'story' (documenting the previous 24 hours) visible to their entire friend list. Snapchat usage rose during the pandemic, with many young people utilising it to connect with their peers. The app continues to develop features to engage an even larger audience and emulate current trends, rivaling platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

## CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects on the app with people they know, they may still receive friend requests from strangers. Snapchat's links with apps such as Wink and Hoop have increased this possibility. Accepting a request means that children are then disclosing personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features. This could allow predators to gain their trust for sinister purposes.

## EXCESSIVE USE

There are many features that are attractive to users and keep them excited about the app. Snap streaks encourage users to send snaps daily. Spotlight Challenges give users to the chance to obtain money and online fame, and the Spotlight feature's scroll of videos makes it easy for children to spend hours watching content.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat are not suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's Discover function lets users swipe through snippets of news stories and trending articles that often include adult content. There is currently no way to turn off this feature.

## SEXTING

Sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse. While these pictures do disappear – and the sender is notified if it has been screenshot first – users have found alternative methods to save images, such as taking pictures with a separate device.

## DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE

Snapchat's filters and lenses are a popular way for users to enhance their 'selfie game'. Although many are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' filters on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Comparing themselves unfavourably against other Snapchat users could threaten a child's confidence or sense of self-worth.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

My Places lets users check in and search for popular spots nearby – such as restaurants, parks or shopping centres – and recommend them to their friends. The potential issue with a young person consistently checking into locations on Snapchat is that it allows other users in their friends list (even people they have only ever met online) to see where they currently are and where they regularly go.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add function helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this feature could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).

### CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

Talk to your child about what is and isn't wise to share on Snapchat (e.g. don't post explicit images or videos, or display identifiable details like their school uniform). Remind them that once something is online, the creator loses control over where it might end up – and who with. Additionally, Snapchat's 'Spotlight' feature has a #challenge like TikTok's: it's vital that your child understands the potentially harmful consequences of taking part in these challenges.

### CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

Snapchat has recently announced that it is rolling out a new safety feature: users will receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.

### KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Your child can send Snaps directly to friends, but Stories are visible to everyone they have added, unless they change the settings. If they use SnapMaps, their location is visible unless 'Ghost Mode' is enabled (again via settings). It's prudent to emphasise the importance of not adding people they don't know in real life. This is particularly important with the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchatters to see the places your child regularly visits and checks in: strangers, bullies and groomers could use this information to engage in conversation and arrange to meet in person.

### TALK ABOUT SEXTING

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it is important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Discuss the legal implications of sending, receiving or sharing explicit images, as well as the possible emotional impact. Emphasise that your child should never feel pressured into sexting – and that if they receive unwanted explicit images, they should tell a trusted adult straight away.

### BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending explicit images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and choose report or block. There are options to state why they are reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).

## Meet Our Expert

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



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Sources: Statista; Ofcom; Social media and young people's mental health; UK in a class – Ofcom; Children's Commissioner's Report; <https://support.snapchat.com/en-US>; <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56888888>; <https://www.independent.co.uk>; <https://mailonline.com/links/snapchat-status-snap-maps/huapert-us-safety-commissioners> (2019); Young People and Sexting – Attitudes and Behaviours; Research Findings from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia.



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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Part of our Social Media & Live Streaming Series



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What you need to know about...

# FRIENDS & FOLLOWERS



## What are they?

### 'Friends & Followers'

What makes social media actually 'social' are the connections users make with other users on the platforms. Every social networking site handles these connections differently, calling them 'connections', 'friends' and 'followers', amongst others. Having friends and followers is how we find out what other people say and do. Your friends and followers are much more likely to see your online content than those outside of your network, which is why it's important to be mindful of who you connect with and what you share. On some platforms, if two accounts follow each other, this may allow additional communication channels such as private messaging.



## Know the Risks

### Access to private information

This may include your child's home address, school, date of birth, names of siblings or other relations, as well as seeing photos that inadvertently contain sensitive information. This is completely harmless information for genuine friends or family but could cause issues in the hands of a criminal.



### Catfishing

'Catfishing' is the common name given to an individual posing as someone else on social media. They do this to try and befriend typically young and vulnerable people who they look to then take advantage of. Unfortunately, there are many examples of this happening across the world that have had real-life consequences.

### Online bullying

Once a connection is made on social media, there is the potential to send private messages between individuals. It is difficult for social networks and other users to see what is being said between accounts. This provides an opportunity for bullies to victimise individuals and can create a dangerous spiral of online activity.

## Safety Tips

### Check privacy settings

Platforms such as Facebook allow users to modify their privacy settings, which means people who are not friends can't see all your profile information. It's also possible to hide this information for some or all of your connections. Always make sure your child's accounts are set to private.



### Talk about strangers

Make sure children understand that they should only connect with people that they know or can completely trust. They should be wary of anyone messaging them frequently who they don't know in real life or have never spoken to or actually seen online. Catfishing will stick to text-based messaging only, to keep their identity secret.



### Delete old connections

Children should be mindful that everything they share will probably exist online forever and that they shouldn't share anything that gives too much information away. Every now and again, they should delete old connections that they no longer spend time with. Old accounts can easily be hacked, exposing personal information to strangers.



## Further Support

### Encourage an open dialogue

It's really important that your children knows that they can speak to someone about anything they're not sure of online. It's crucial that they know they won't be judged or told off for anything they've done; it's far more important to know if they're in danger or worried about something.

### Seek additional guidance

If your child wants to spend a lot of time online and is displaying compulsive or addictive behaviour, is negative, struggles with schoolwork and reduces real-life interactions or has frequent changes in mood, they could be experiencing negative interactions online. Speak to them and seek support from their school or your local safeguarding team if you think your child has been affected.

## Our Expert

Emma Davis



Emma Davis is a cyber security expert and former ICT teacher. She delivers cyber awareness training to organisations nationally and has extensive knowledge and experience of managing how children access services and apps online.







National  
Online  
Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

# 12 Social Media Online Safety Tips FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

With Christmas only a few weeks away, many of you will be using social media to share your excitement with friends and family. Being active on social media is a great way to show others how much fun you're having, but it's important that you know how to use these apps safely and securely so that bad things don't happen. By following our safety tips below, you can make sure that your personal information stays private, your postings are positive and that your social media use overall is responsible, healthy and most of all enjoyable.

## 1 DON'T ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS FROM STRANGERS



Make sure that you set your profile to private so that people you don't know can't find you online. Always tell a trusted adult if a stranger or somebody you don't know sends you a message or a friend request.

## 2 NEVER SHARE YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW

Keep your personal information personal. Sometime people online aren't always who they say they are and might ask you to share things that you don't feel comfortable sharing.

## 3 DON'T SHARE EMBARRASSING PHOTOS OR VIDEOS OF OTHERS ONLINE



This could really upset them and could get you into a lot of trouble. Always think twice before posting anything on social media and treat people online as you would in real-life.

## 4 NEVER SEND NAKED PICTURES OF YOURSELF TO OTHERS



This is illegal if you are under 18 and you could get into trouble with the Police. If you are being pressured by someone, always say no and tell a trusted adult. Even if you think it is innocent fun, the photo could be shared with other people and you won't be able to control who else sees it.

## 5 CREATE A POSITIVE ONLINE REPUTATION



Always be kind and polite when posting comments on social media and only upload pictures and videos of things you are proud of. This forms part of your digital footprint. Everything you do online can be tracked and monitored and could affect what people think of you in real-life if it is negative.

## 6 LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME



Social media can be addictive, and it is easy to keep checking newsfeeds or your notifications every 5 minutes which can affect your behaviour and stop you from doing other things. Remember to only use your phone at certain times of the day, turn notifications off at bedtime and go out and have as fun as much as possible. This will keep you fit and healthy and make you appreciate there's more to life than just what's on social media.

## 7 BLOCK ONLINE BULLIES



Sometimes people might say nasty things to you online or post offensive comments on your pictures or videos. If this happens, always tell a trusted adult who will help you block them from your profile and support you in taking further action.

## 8 REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT



If you see something on social media that you don't like, offends you or upsets you, you should always report it to a trusted adult. You should also report it to the social media app who will be able to remove the content if it is against their user policy and can block the person who posted it.

## 9 ONLY USE APPS WHICH YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO USE



Before downloading any new social media app, always check the age-rating. If you need help, ask your parent or carer to make sure that the app is safe for you to use and never download anything which you are too young for as it may contain content that isn't safe for you to see.

## 10 ALWAYS SECURE ALL YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES WITH A PASSWORD



This will help to keep your private information safe and won't allow others to access your profiles without your permission. Make sure your passwords are memorable and personal to you but something which other people can't guess, and always share them with your parents just in case you forget them.

## 11 ASK PARENTS TO SET-UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS' FOR SOCIAL MEDIA



When you download a social media app, you should always ask a trusted adult to help you set it up for the first time. This will help you control who sees what you post, who can contact you and make sure you are able to enjoy using the app safely and securely.

## 12 ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR TRUSTED ADULT IF SOCIAL MEDIA IS MAKING YOU UNHAPPY



Sometimes, social media can make us feel bad about ourselves or sad that we aren't the same as someone else or doing the same things as someone else. Remember, if you ever feel this way, it's really important to talk to your trusted adult(s) like your parents, carers, other adult family members or a teacher, all of whom will be able to support you and discuss your feelings with you to help make you feel better.