

28/02/2020



VLT Photography Competition

Many thanks to all of the families and staff members who have contributed to the Trust's first photography competition.

This year's theme is 'New Beginnings' and we have seen a wide range of photos from new born lambs, early morning sunrises, through to blossoming trees.

The images will be sent over to Vyners where a panel of teachers and students will judge the entries.

The deadline is today but entries can still be sent in to ryefield.enquiries@ryefieldprimary.org.uk

World Book Day

This is the 23rd year there's been a **World Book Day**, and on **5th March 2020**, children of all ages will come together to appreciate reading.

However we do realise that fancy dress costumes can be an expensive way to celebrate books and it is becoming quite a cottage industry for retailers. We would rather the money being spent on an expensive costume was spent on a book for your child to read at home.

We cannot stress that daily reading is **THE** most important thing you can do to ensure that your child makes the most of their education. Xbox, Playstation, YouTube and mobile devices are a huge distraction to the importance of embedding the basics into our children: reading, spellings and fluency in the multiplication tables.



So we are suggesting something different for 2020. If children want to dress up they do so by decorating an old or new white t-shirt in the style of their favourite book. For example a white cotton t-shirt can be bought from H&M for around £2.99.

Here is an example to get you inspired!

We look forward to seeing your creations - who knows there may even be a prize or two for the best examples!



Pepper

Children and staff are very excited about Pepper - our school dog - joining us next week (05/03/2020). As stated in last week's newsletter, she will have a phased introduction into the school and will spend the majority of her first few weeks based solely around Mr Tucker's office and the Admin office. Studies have shown that the presence of companion animals can improve the well-being of children and lower the rate of anxiety, simply by making the environment happier, more enjoyable and less forbidding.

This week pupils in Key Stage 2 were visited by Rosie Ellis from our local Dogs Trust centre in Harefield. She taught the children how to be Dog Smart:



1. Be Calm
2. Give an animal space
3. Play fairly
4. Don't disturb a dog
5. Keep your hands away
6. Remember that we respect and behave kindly around animals.

The school has a comprehensive policy and control measures which are expanded upon in the School Dog policy (available on the school website).

It is accepted that interacting with animals is not appropriate for all children but that for some it has the potential to provide many positive benefits. Any parent who does not wish their child to interact with the dog is invited to write to inform Mr Tucker of their wishes - stating whether the reason is due to allergies or a specific phobia or anxiety.



Winning!

This week Ryefield pupils have been involved in many successes! The highlights are as follows:

Urban Debating League

After our success in Round 1 (5 out of 8 wins) the school has qualified for Round 2 - which gives our children the chance to visit a University campus! Further to this we were delighted to know that Ryefield is also ranked as one of the Top 50 schools in the country for debating!

Road Safety

Our pupil Road Safety Officers (JRSOs and MRSOs) were successful in securing a £500 grant from the local authority. This money will go towards banners and signage to prevent drivers from parking and dropping off on the white zig-zag lines which are located at the front of the school. One of the local councillors was so impressed with our proposal he also gave us additional funding to support the school in providing First Aid training for pupils.

TAG Rugby

Mrs Donoghue took a selected group of pupils from Lower Key Stage 2 to attend a local TAG Rugby festival and we were delighted to come away victorious. These children will now be part of a larger event which will be held in March. Congratulations - they have clearly been inspired by the England team's recent performance.





TikTok is a video-sharing social media app available on iOS and Android which lets users create, share, and view user created videos much in a similar manner to Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Its main draw, however, is that users can record and upload bite-sized looping videos of themselves lip-syncing and dancing to popular music or soundbites, often for comedic effect, which can then be further enhanced with filters, emojis and stickers. TikTok has been designed with the young user in mind and has a very addictive appeal. At the beginning of 2019 it skyrocketed in popularity to become the iOS store's most downloaded app with over 33 million downloads. Estimates suggest that it now has anything between 500 million and over 1 billion monthly active users worldwide.



What parents need to know about TIKTOK



MATURE CONTENT

On the iOS store, TikTok is listed as 12+. On the Google Play Store it is rated as 'Parental guidance recommended'. When signing up for the app, it's possible to lie about your age without any form of verification. As children scroll through their feed, most of the videos they're likely to come across are lighthearted or funny takes on dance routines which are designed to make people laugh. However there has been a slew of videos which have been reported for featuring drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and sexual content, including young teens dressing overly sexually and behaving suggestively. Given the deluge of material uploaded to TikTok every day, it's impossible to moderate everything and it can be quite common to come across explicit content on the 'for you' feed when logging into the platform.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC

TikTok revolves around creating music videos through lip-syncing and dancing. Inevitably, some of the music featured by users will contain explicit or suggestive lyrics. Given the undeniably young user base, there is a risk that children may look to imitate the explicit language they hear or the suggestive actions they see when viewing other user's videos on the app.

TIKTOK FAME

TikTok is very image focused and there is a notable preoccupation with appearing cool and attractive. Many teenagers now attempt to go viral and become what's known in-app as 'TikTok famous'. TikTok (and its predecessor musical.ly) has spawned its own celebrities - social media stars Loren Gray and Jacob Sartorius have been catapulted to fame through their initial exposure on the app. Obviously, most budding influencers looking to become the next big thing will be disappointed, but this may have the knock-on effect of making them go to more and more drastic lengths to get noticed.

ONLINE PREDATORS

As a social network, TikTok makes it easy to connect with other users. This includes the ability to comment on and react to other user's videos, follow their profile and download their content. Be aware that by default, any user can comment on your child's video if their account is set to public. Most interactions are harmless enough but as an app, TikTok is prone to predators because of the abundance of younger users.



ADDICTIVE NATURE

Social media is designed to be addictive and TikTok is no different. It can be fun and hugely entertaining. However, it is also because of this that it can be hard to put down. In addition to the short, punchy nature of the looping video format, the app's ability to keep you guessing what will come on screen next makes it easy to turn a five-minute visit into 45-minute visit.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Aside from the content, there's also the option to purchase in-app extras called 'TikTok coins'. Prices range from £0.99 for 100 coins to an eye-watering £93.99 for 10,000 coins. TikTok coins are used to purchase different emojis to reward content creators that a user finds funny or entertaining. In the iOS version of the app you can disable the option to buy TikTok coins but this sadly doesn't seem to be a feature in the Android version.



Safety Tips For Parents

TALK ABOUT ONLINE DANGERS

Assuming your child is above the age limit to use the app, make sure you take the time to talk to them about what they are seeing on the app. Have a dialogue, get them to give you their opinion on what is appropriate and model the correct behaviour for them. Go over why they shouldn't give out private information or identifiable photos and be positive and understanding of them. In the long run, getting them to think critically about what they're seeing goes a long way to keeping them social media savvy.



USE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Undoubtedly, the easiest way to safeguard your child on TikTok is to make sure their account is set to private. This means only those users your child approves can view, like, and follow their content. Setting the account to private may clash with your child's goal of social media superstardom, but it will keep their account secure from strangers. This setting can be enabled under the privacy and safety menu by pressing the ellipsis in the 'me' tab of the app. To be extra safe, there are additional controls available to toggle such as who can send comments and messages, among other options.



ENABLE RESTRICTED MODE

In the digital wellbeing section there's the ability to turn on restricted mode using a PIN. Restricted mode filters out content that is not age appropriate although it should be noted that this isn't always 100% fool proof. When enabling restricted mode, parents should still be vigilant to what their child is watching and take note that the algorithm moderating content is not infallible.



EXPLORE AND LEARN YOURSELF

Understanding and learning the app yourself is a great way to get to grips with TikTok. You could then even use the app with your child and watch some videos with them. If you are the parent of a teen, even if it does not make you popular, keep a close eye on what they're viewing and sharing. That said, it's a brilliant chance to turn it into a bonding opportunity with your child also. You could even unleash your inner performer and make videos with them while (more importantly) keeping them safe online.



LEARN HOW TO REPORT AND BLOCK INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

With the proper privacy settings in place, TikTok can be a safe space for your child to express themselves. However, just in case something does manage to slip through, make sure your child knows how to recognise and report content that isn't appropriate and get them to come to you about what they have seen. TikTok allows users to report offenders and comments within the app. You can also block individual users by going on their profile.



MODERATE SCREEN TIME

As entertaining as TikTok is, you can help your child moderate their time on the app by making use of the digital wellbeing section. Under the screen time management option, you can limit the daily allotted time allowed on the app in increments ranging from 40 to 120 minutes. You can also lock this preference behind a PIN number which has to be inputted in order to then exceed the daily time limit. This way your child can get their daily dose of memes without wasting away the day.



Meet our expert

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



SOURCES:

www.nationalonlinesafety.com Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety

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Commemorative Badge



Every child in the school will be gifted a commemorative badge which celebrates the school's 60 anniversary. These are limited edition and will be provided free of charge - however the school has limited stock and may not be able to replace any lost or broken badges. We do recommend that they are either named (via Sharpie marker on the back) or given the care and attention they deserve.

PLEASE TREAT HEAD LICE

All hair must be tied up. Please check your child/children's hair regularly as per leaflet sent out via email this week.

Uniform

Please ensure that your child is in the correct school uniform. We have noticed some individuals not conforming to the expectations applied to all pupils - NO nail extensions or dyed hair.

STICK ON YOUR FRIDGE: DATES

Junior Citizens event at Brunel University - 9th March

Parents Evening - 11th and 12th March

Swimming Gala - 12th March

Mothers Day Shop - 20th March

Spring Disco - 27th March

End of Term - Friday 3rd April 2020

School finishes at 1.30pm **Infants**

School finishes at 1.35pm **Juniors**

Term Starts - Monday 20th April 2020

Bank Holiday - Friday 8th May 2020

Half Term - Monday 25th – Friday 29th May 2020

End of Term - Friday 17th July 2020

School finishes at 1.30pm **Infants**

School finishes at 1.35pm **Juniors**

