



Friday 20th October 2023  
Volume 1, Issue 7

Another half term over—we are officially 1/6th of a way through the school year. Unfortunately, we have seen an increase in children being late for school. Can I ask that you remember after half term that the south site closes the gates at 8.45am and the north site is 9am. If you are after that your child will get a late mark.

Aneesa, from the 2s, has started her maternity leave today. Miss Karima will be joining the team after the holidays. She has previously worked on the south site. We wish Aneesa all the very best and look forward to hearing about her news. It is with sadness that we do not have Miss Conroy at the school currently. I will be writing to Skylark parents in the new half term to inform them about what is happening. Again I know you will join me in wishing Miss Conroy all the best.

An update from Mr Darling—he is recuperating well at home and sends his best wishes to everyone. Unfortunately, he will still not be back after half term.

Request for donations—we need wool, any colour but if you have any lying around please send into school. Also, the cardboard tube from kitchen rolls. Please either give to your child's class teacher or the offices.

Parent helpers at the disco—We have had enquires about joining your child at the Spooky Discos—unfortunately, the only parents who can be there are the ones who are with the PTA and helping set up and supervise and run games, not being with their child. Please contact the friends@missiongrove.org.uk if you are interested.

Mobile phone use.

Some parents have brought it to my attention that some students are using the app discord, I have attached a safety sheet from the National College online safety resources. Please monitor your child's social media usage and the appropriateness of the content. I can talk to the children and inform parents but this is all happening outside of school. We teach the children about online bullying and online safety in their computing and PSHE classes.

In school we also talk to the children about what is happening in the world today—sometimes this is through an assembly, a class discussion or via newsbites—a computing site we use. At the moment we are not doing any fundraising for what is happening around the world but we will inform you if we do.

Have a great half term and I look forward to seeing you all promptly on Monday 30th October.

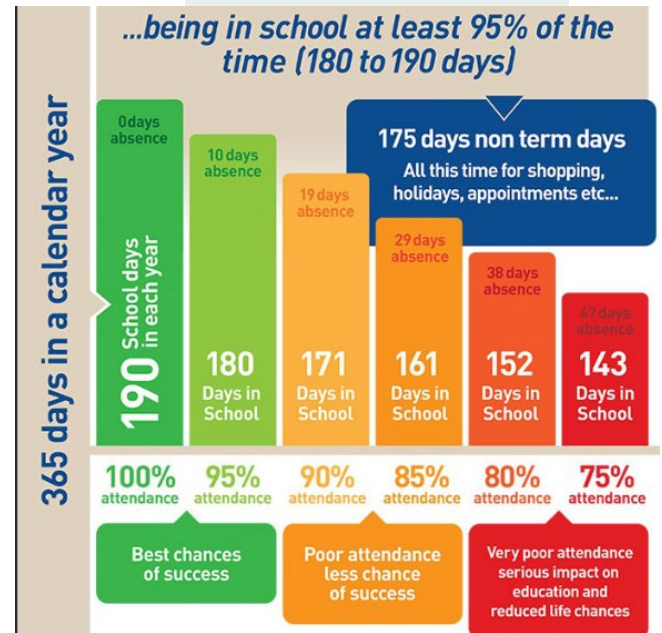
Miss Katie Jennings

Headteacher

Speak to your children as if they are the wisest, kindest, most beautiful and magical humans on earth, for what they believe is what they will become.

Brooke Hampton

GABAGAP.NET



### SCIENCE-BACKED BENEFITS OF READING

- ENHANCES BRAIN FUNCTION**  
Reading books trains the brain and enhances neural functions through a process similar to muscle memory.
- REDUCES STRESS LEVELS**  
30 minutes of reading can lower blood pressure and heart rate, reducing stress level factors by 68%.
- PREVENTS COGNITIVE DECLINE**  
Reading keeps your mind stimulated as you grow older and can ward off mental conditions like dementia.
- BOOSTS SLEEP**  
A sleep-inducing bedtime ritual like reading tells your body it's time to go to sleep. It also gets you away from your sleep-disrupting devices.
- IMPROVES GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**  
Having knowledge on a broad range of subjects translates into being better-equipped at tackling challenges.
- EXPANDS YOUR VOCABULARY**  
People who read books regularly develop larger vocabularies, which can influence in a positive way many aspects of adult life.

## SPECIAL DATES

### Year 6 Secondary school

It is already that time of year when parents of children in year 6 need to start looking at secondary schools.

**The deadline for applications is the 31st October 2023.**

Please can I ask that you make sure that you go and visit the secondaries, and complete the form on time. If you need help with completing the form please ask at the office and we will book a slot for someone to help you.

There is more information on the council website and on our website. Please click [here](#) to go to the

23rd—27th Half term  
 30th Children return to school  
 31st Phonics workshop  
     Spooky Disco—tickets on sale now  
 1st November—Flu Vaccinations  
 3rd swimming festival named students  
 7th Individual & sibling photos  
 8th 9.30am & 5.30pm Open day North Reception 2024 parents  
     Year 3 & 5 Intofilm Festival trip—Stratford  
 9th 9.30am & 5.30pm Open Day South Reception 2024 parents  
     Reception Intofilm Festival Trip—Stratford  
     Book fair on North until the 15th  
 10th **Poppy Day wear it Red.**  
     Year 1 Intofilm festival Stratford  
 13th Year 5 swimming—2 weeks  
     Anti-Bullying week

### Attendance

|                   |                         |        |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------|
|                   | 4 Barn Owl              | 95.12% |
| Well done         | 1 Kestrel               | 95.14% |
| Sparrow for       | 2 Wagtail               | 95.24% |
| topping the       | 2 Waxwing               | 95.45% |
| leader board this | Nursery South Full Time | 95.52% |
| half term.        | 3 Swallow               | 95.79% |
|                   | 4 Buzzard               | 96.04% |
|                   | 6 Chaffinch             | 96.06% |
| Theses are the    | 2 Wren                  | 96.40% |
| only classes that | 2yr North PM            | 96.68% |
| have had over     | 4 Blackbird             | 96.83% |
| 95%               | Nursery North PM        | 97.10% |
|                   | 2yr North AM            | 97.62% |
| attendance.       | Nursery South AM        | 97.73% |
|                   | 6 Crow                  | 97.77% |
|                   | 3 Sparrow               | 97.81% |

A child needs encouragement like a flower needs water. It is essential to healthy growth and development.



- Rudolf Dreikurs



Year 3 had a fantastic time at KEW gardens—even the weather didn't dampen their mood.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about DISCORD

AGE RATING

13+

Servers and channels marked as 'NSFW' require users to be 18 or older to join.

Discord is a free app which allows users to communicate in real time via text, video or voice chat. Available on desktop and mobile devices, it was originally designed to help gamers cooperate – but has evolved into a more general networking platform for a range of online communities, discussing topics like TV series, music, Web3 and more. Discord is organised around closed groups, referred to as 'servers'. To join a server, users must be invited or provided with a unique link. It's a space for users to interact with friends, meet others with shared interests and collaborate privately online – but it's also a place where young people can be exposed to risks if the right precautions aren't taken.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### CYBERBULLYING

Discord's easy accessibility and connectivity, unfortunately, makes it an ideal place for cyberbullying to occur – especially as audio and video streams disappear once they've ended, meaning that bullying could take place without leaving any evidence. Closed groups can also be created, giving young people the opportunity to exclude their peers or send cruel messages without adult oversight.

### DIFFICULT TO MODERATE

Like many private communication apps, Discord's real-time messaging can be difficult to control. The system enables content moderation through each individual server – so different groups can set their own rules for what's acceptable, and some groups may not monitor for unsuitable content. Anything that happens in an audio or video stream is also virtually untraceable once the stream has concluded.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Discord mainly hosts private groups, making it easier for unsuitable or explicit content to be shared on channels. Pornography, racism and inappropriate language can be found in some groups. Server owners are required to add an age-restriction gate to channels where 18+ content is being shared – but this solution isn't foolproof, as the platform doesn't always verify users' ages when they sign up.

### ACCESSIBLE TO PREDATORS

On many chat platforms, users can lie about their age or true identity – and Discord is no exception. Predators have attempted to abuse the platform by using it to contact and communicate with underage users – by initially chatting with a child on an age-appropriate channel, for example. While Discord has improved its safety settings, some users will still try to bypass them for malicious reasons.

### CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Discord does have strict Terms of Service and Community Guidelines to protect its users – but, sadly, not everyone adheres to them. Criminal activity including grooming, hate speech, harassment, exploitative content, doxing and extremist or violent material have all been found on Discord servers over the last two years. In 2020, Discord received almost 27,000 reports of illegal activity on the platform.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### REVIEW SAFETY SETTINGS

Discord has a series of safety settings, enabling users to choose who can direct message them or send them friend requests. Your child's experience on Discord will be much safer if the app's privacy and safety settings are configured to only allow messages or friend requests from server members. This will minimise the chances of potential predators from outside the group contacting them.

### EXPLAIN AGE FILTERING

While Discord requires users to be at least 13 to sign up, many servers geared towards older users are flagged as NSFW (not safe for work), which indicates they probably contain material that's inappropriate for children. It can be easy to click through settings without properly reviewing them, so ensure your child understands why age filtering is important and that it's there to protect them.

### SCREEN OUT EXPLICIT CONTENT

In the privacy and safety settings, Discord users are offered the ability to filter direct messages for inappropriate content; a setting that should be enabled if your child uses the platform. Discord automatically tries to flag images that are explicit, but the setting must be manually enabled for text. If a young user is sent explicit content in a direct message, Discord will scan and (if necessary) delete it.

### MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY

It's wise to regularly review your child's activity on Discord. This can include checking their safety settings to ensure they're correctly enabled, talking about which servers they've joined and reviewing some of their friends and direct messages. Ask if anything has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Things can change quickly online, so plan routine check-ins and follow up frequently.

### DISCUSS GOOD ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

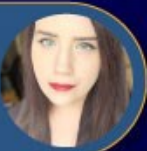
The anonymity offered by the internet often leads people to communicate more openly online and behave differently than they would at school or home. It's crucial to bear in mind, though, that every internet user is still a real person. Talk to your child about the severe and lasting consequences that cyberbullying or exchanging inappropriate material online can have in the real world.

### HAVE CANDID CONVERSATIONS

It can sometimes be awkward to discuss topics like grooming, pornography, racism or explicit content with your child – but it's important to ensure they're aware of the harms these things can pose. Talking openly about these subjects is a great way to help your child feel more comfortable about coming to you if they experience an unwanted encounter on Discord (or anywhere else online).

## Meet Our Expert

Coral Cripps is a Canadian-born, London-based tech journalist at [gmw3.com](http://gmw3.com): a website specialising in all things Web3, gaming and XR (extended reality). With a focus on brands and culture, she researches and writes about the ways that our current innovations – including the metaverse and Web3 – are impacting people, places and things.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://www.kitteryoungruntings.com/parents-of-discord-6-steps-safeguarding-teen-on-popular-chat-app/> <https://support.discord.com/hc/en-us/articles/360039183191-discord-is-a-haven-for-gamers-and-sexual-exploiters/> <https://today.com/discord-deleted-thousands-of-violent-extremist-and-otm-184923264>



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