

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Dear Families

It's been a fantastic half-term in school, but based on many of the comments on the morning gate, it's clearly time for a break. I'm not sure why but there is a general feeling, in our school and in others, that this has felt like the longest of half-terms. I hope that, whatever you have planned, the children get a chance to recharge their batteries ready for the second half...and the very exciting run up to Christmas.

In this newsletter (and emailed out already) is a poster for something new; the Christmas Jumper Swap Shop - we think that this fits perfectly in to our message of sustainability, and we are all too aware of the cost of living challenges that families face. If it's successful then it could become another regular event in the school calendar...and there are more details to come out soon!

Clearly the weather has taken a dramatic turn recently, so please help the children be ready for the colder weather. We love to have them enjoy the outdoors as much as possible, and wouldn't want children to miss out because they don't have a coat with them.

Kind regards

Mr Geraghty

Important Safeguarding Notice

We have been informed of a Nationwide Whatsapp group called 'Add as many people as you can'. This contains inappropriate content and images. Although we don't believe any of our pupils are members of this group, please could we ask you check your child's phone/tablet just to be sure.

Anxiety Workshop

Thank you to everyone who attended the recent morning session with the Primary Behaviour Service - we hope that you found it useful. If you were unable to attend, but have concerns about changes in behaviour, do come and talk to us.

SEE IT, SAY IT, SORTED - SPEAKING OUT AT SCHOOL

This is the message I heard over and over again on a train to London recently, and it feels appropriate for school too. As our children grow and develop, they face challenges in and around school, and undoubtedly outside of school too, and we want to do everything we can to support them at these times. Sadly, a recurring theme is that many of our children, especially in the upper years, are not sharing their concerns and it is hard to fix something we don't know about. We need to break down the barriers that prevent them from speaking out - and we can only do this with your help.

We often remind the children about who they can come and talk to about any issues they face whilst at school, and there is a 'Help' box available at all times if children want to discretely let us know about something they need to discuss.

Could you please talk to your children at home about this to encourage them to speak to any of the adults on duty at break or lunch if they are upset or concerned about anything that occurs in those times; also, they can always speak directly to a class teacher, and of course, they can come to any member of the leadership team at any time too (myself, Miss Reid, Miss Whitbread or Mrs Davenport).

Our message to the children is that they are not yet old enough or experienced enough to cope with all friendship challenges themselves and that we are here to help with that as much as their classroom learning. Please help by talking to your children, reinforcing that message, and maybe feeding back if you feel there is more that we can do.

Parent coffee morning at the Church Room.

Monday 20th November, from 9am.

Please come and join us for friendly conversation, the opportunity to meet other parents at the school and to enjoy a cuppa and cake.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CREATED THEIR MASTERPIECE FOR THE ART EXHIBITION.

It really was an outstanding collection of work; the children should be incredibly proud of themselves. Much of the work is now displayed across the school for everyone to enjoy for some time to come.

Christmas Jumper Swap Shop!

Did you know that 1 in 4 Christmas jumpers are only ever worn once?

This year, in our efforts to be more sustainable and eco-friendly across the school, we are holding a swap shop!

What to do:

- Have a clear out of your festive clothing during half term
- Bring them to school in the first week back
- Come to our Advent Event on Friday 1st December at 3.30pm (more info to follow!)
- Buy a Christmas jumper for a suggested donation £2.

Festive and holiday themed adult, child and infant clothing will be accepted.





The Big Ambition – Have your say!

The Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has launched **The Big Ambition**, a national survey of children and young people across England.

The Big Ambition aims to hear from children across England on what they think is important! In the lead up to the next General Election, the Children's Commissioner wants to take children's thoughts, opinions and ideas to decision-makers, to make sure that the Government hears young people's voices on what they think needs to be done to make children's lives better in England.

The Big Ambition survey will be open until Friday 15th December.

[Click here take the survey](#)

or scan the QR code to complete the survey by Friday 15th December and make your voice heard!



https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/the-big-ambition/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

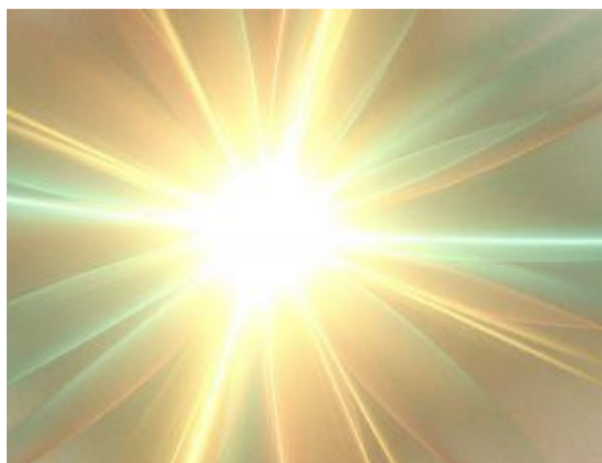
IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The impact of the lockdown is still being felt in schools across the country, and there is now a nationwide focus on improving attendance, as well as supporting families who are still finding it challenging. We will continue to include appropriate information in the newsletter (and email), but please come and talk to me if you think your child might need additional support.

Here is some useful guidance related to attending school if ill:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

BE BRIGHT, BE SEEN



FRIDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

As your Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO's), we need to inform you about 'Be Bright, Be Seen Day' on Friday 3rd November.

You will need to dress up in bright colours- we will judge for the most colourful person in each year group. There will be prizes for the winners in:

- Year R
- Year 1/2
- Year 3/4
- Year 5/6

As the winter months are approaching fast, if you are walking or cycling to school then you will need to be seen: the perfect way is to dress **radiantly!**

We hope to see you all in your vivid clothes.

Alex and Percy (your JRSO's)





**Want to know
more about
sleep?**

ASK US THE
QUESTIONS YOU
WANT ANSWERS TO

 **03303 530 541**

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 7pm - 9pm
Monday & Wednesday 9am - 11am

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AMONG US

A multiplayer 'social deduction' game set in outer space, Among Us enjoyed a surge in popularity in 2020, and has since maintained a dedicated fan-base (globally, around 60 million regular players each month) thanks to its unique nature, simple premise and ease of access across numerous platforms. The game's on-screen action revolves around danger, disguise and deception – and there are certain parallels to be drawn with some of the real-life risks that parents and carers of young Among Us players need to be aware of.



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SENSITIVE PREMISE

In Among Us, up to three players are secretly assigned to be alien imposters, tasked with murdering their colleagues while the survivors try to unmask them. While the concept's not far removed from traditional games like Wink Murder or TV shows such as *The Traitors*, some parents may feel uncomfortable about their child playing a video game in which deception and killing are prioritised.

VIRTUAL VIOLENCE

The on-screen death of characters may be fundamental to the gameplay of Among Us, but the majority of the animations depicting this are deliberately cartoonish and only appear very briefly. However, it is worth bearing in mind that the game has a PEGI age rating of 7 – meaning that certain elements (however heavily stylised they may be) could still upset some younger players.

CHAT BETWEEN PLAYERS

With up to 15 people participating in each game online, a large part of Among Us' appeal is speculating with fellow players who the imposters might be and making accusations. This dialogue through the in-game text chat can occasionally become heated – and could, of course, involve your child being put into contact with people (including adults) who they don't know in real life.

GOING OFF PLATFORM

While Among Us provides basic ways to communicate, many gamers prefer to use external services such as Discord: a popular app which offers voice and video chat functions. These undeniably make cooperation easier, but also create a potential route for children to hear inappropriate language – or for strangers to message them privately in an environment which isn't regulated by the game itself.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

Among Us is free to download on mobile devices, and costs less than £5 to obtain on console and PC. A related longer-term pitfall, though, is that the game also includes options to pay for upgrades such as removing ads on the mobile version or adding cosmetic touches to characters (such as different costumes). It's certainly possible that a child could spend a significant sum without realising it.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER SOFTER ALTERNATIVES

Although Among Us is hugely popular with young gamers, it's possible that some children might find the murder themes unsettling. If so, plenty of similar social deduction games are available (in both digital and traditional board game formats) which downplay the potentially grislier elements: some centre around undercover spies, for instance, and there's even a Marvel superhero-themed variant.

CHAT ABOUT CHATTING

You might feel it's prudent to talk to your child about the risks associated with voice chat while gaming, explaining in particular that strangers online aren't always who they claim to be. Keeping the conversation relaxed will reinforce your child's confidence that they can always come to you with any online concerns – not just about Among Us, but any potential future issues as well.

DISCUSS DISCORD

In general, Discord is an excellent app for keeping online communities together because of its use of dedicated individual servers, which allow comprehensive control over who can join – and who can't. Once you're familiar with the platform, you could set up a secure server for your child and their friends to communicate during games of Among Us, with no access for people they don't know.

AMONG US, AMONG FRIENDS

When your child and their friends get together, they can enjoy a private game of Among Us by choosing a 'local' lobby – that is, only people connected to the same WiFi (your home network, for example) can enter. This prevents any random online users – who may be total strangers – from joining and removes the need for voice chat, as the players are all physically in the same location.

STOP SURPRISE SPENDING

If you're concerned about the possibility of your child racking up an unexpected bill on Among Us' microtransactions, you could consider using a prepaid card with a set limit. Likewise, you could specify in the game's options that adult authorisation is required for every purchase – or you could make sure that no payment methods are enabled on the device that your child plays the game on.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site *GORcon* and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent who understands the value of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including *IGN* and *TechRadar*.





October 2023

Newsletter

LET'S FACE SOME ISSUES!

Wednesday
18th Oct
18:30 - 19:30
FREE



FREE SESSION
Family Meetings:
Why and How

Monday
2nd Oct
18:30 - 20:30
£24



**Understanding
the Teenage Brain**
Why teens think, feel and behave
differently from adults

Monday
23rd Oct
18:30 - 20:30
£24



Understanding Anger
Yours and theirs - what is anger, why
do we feel it and how can we manage
it?

Thursday
26th Oct
18:30 - 20:30
£24



Supporting a Child with ADHD
interactive session explaining what ADHD is
and offering a range of interventions that can
make lasting differences.

facefamilyadvice.co.uk

info@facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Friends of Otterbourne

Our amazing PTA in action!

PLEASE REMEMBER:



The Friends of Otterbourne School have arranged for our school to be part of "Stronger Starts", the in-store voting programme at Tesco, to support further improvements for SEN Children, including new phonics books, Numicon resources for maths and therapy resources.

There are a number of stores running with this until the middle of January:

Eastleigh - The Swan Centre

Chandler's Ford - Ashdown Road

Fair Oak - Winchester Road

Southampton - Valley Park

Eastleigh - Twyford Road

Eastleigh - Bishopstoke Road

To check the location of any of the above stores, please go to the Tesco website here: <http://www.tesco.com/store-locator/uk>

To vote, you will need to make a purchase within store of any value. You will receive one token (the little blue one) per transaction and it's not necessary to purchase a carrier bag in order to receive a token.

Please help support our school and share this with friends and family so that we can give our children a Stronger Start with Tesco. And dare I say it, but every little helps

Starring one of our former pupils:

Spot On Productions
EST. 2015

This amateur production is presented
by arrangement with
Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are
also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk

Based on the Disney film written by Jennifer Lee
and directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee

Disney
FROZEN JR

Music By
Kristen Anderson-Lopez
& Robert Lopez

Book By
Jennifer Lee

26th - 29th October 2023
19:30 w/ 14:30 Sat Matinee

Rose Theatre, Barton Peveril,
Eastleigh

Tickets from £14.00
[www.ticketsource.co.uk/
spot-on-productions](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/spot-on-productions)



@SpotOn2016



@Spot_On2016



@SpotOn2016

ST MATTHEW'S
**CHRISTMAS
FAIR**

SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

12PM TO 3PM

OTTERBOURNE VILLAGE HALL



**ENTRY £1
CHILDREN
FREE**

- LOCAL CRAFTS AND GIFTS • CHILDREN'S STALLS
- REFRESHMENTS • SANTA'S GROTTO • HAMPER RAFFLE

St Matthew's Church, Otterbourne

www.chobenefice.co.uk

ST MATTHEW'S QUIZ NIGHT



- TEAMS OF 6 TO 8 PLAYERS
- TICKETS £15 EACH
- FISH & CHIP SUPPER INCLUDED
- BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS
- RAFFLE
- CHARITY ROUND

SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

7PM FOR 7.30PM START

OTTERBOURNE VILLAGE HALL

To book tickets, please contact Vera Oldham,
email quiz23@deadeye.plus.com

Supporting emotional health and wellbeing from 0-19+

Free online courses for all parents, carers, grandparents and teens

- Antenatal and postnatal baby bonding
- Understanding your child or young person
- Your child or young person with additional needs
- Teenager's feelings and brain development
- And lots more specialist courses

Designed by clinical psychologists in partnership with practitioners and parents



Residents of HAMPSHIRE and the ISLE OF WIGHT

In paid partnership with:



Use Access Code
FAMILY

Understanding your child: from toddler to teenager

Free online course for all parents, carers, and grandparents.

- Reading your child's behaviour and understanding their feelings
- Effective communication techniques
- Reflecting on your relationship and how to nurture your child's emotional health
- A transformative journey that can strengthen your bond with your child at every age

Designed by clinical psychologists in partnership with practitioners and parents



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Use Access Code
FAMILY

For teenagers

Free online courses to help you understand your feelings and brain development, to support your wellbeing

- **Understanding your brain** development and what this means for how you feel and behave
- **Understanding your feelings**, your mental health and how to nurture emotional wellbeing
- How your relationships and friendships may change and why
- Written for teenagers with teenagers

Designed by clinical psychologists in partnership with practitioners and teenagers



Residents of HAMPSHIRE and the ISLE OF WIGHT

In paid partnership with:



Use Access Code
FAMILY

SOME FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE RISK AND CONCERNS AROUND VAPING:

We have addressed this in school with our Year 5/6 children. However, there is so much concern about vaping across the county, Hampshire have also given us additional advice that you may find useful.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/smokefreeme/guidanceforschools>

<https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/behaviour/challenging-behaviour/im-worried-about-my-child-vaping/>