

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Dear Families

THE COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN! It is now less than twelve days to Christmas (well...less than twelve school days to the end of the Autumn term!) so the decorative countdown hoops are now being displayed in school ready for a bit of a sing-song as the children leave on the last day. It's an informal occasion but if you are with us for pick-up on the 20th, please feel free to join in.

The Year 6 Advent Service and the Year R nativity are now sadly behind us, but there is still plenty happening in school to ensure we keep the Christmas spirit alive—more details below and in the dates for diary. OtterFest is nearly upon us and I need to thank everyone for the positive responses to us, once again, having a big Christmas event in school. Our amazing FOS are working very hard to make it a special occasion and I thank you all, in advance, for the support you give to the school with your time and generous donations. I hope to see you there.

For tomorrow, hopefully you saw the message recently that Monday 9th is a dress down day in school to support OtterFest, should you wish to participate. It's 'bring a bottle' day. Thank you.

Best wishes for a good week.

Mr Geraghty

Key Stage 1 Nativities

Please make note of the different dates for the various nativity performances this week, so you don't miss out on seeing your child(ren) perform.

Monday 9th - **Year 1** Nativity in the school hall (9:20am)

Tuesday 10th - **Year 2** Nativity in the school hall (9:20am)

Wednesday 11th - **Year 1** Nativity in the school hall (2:20pm)

Thursday 12th - **Year 2** Nativity in the school hall (2:20pm)

Monday 9th - Year 2 Listen to Me concert (open to Year 2 parents)

It is a busy week for some classes, which we do try to avoid when possible, but we look forward to seeing our Year 2 parents for the Listen to Me concert at 3pm tomorrow.

Christmas Disco

I hope the children can join us on Monday 16th for our festive disco. It's our gift to the children but you can make a donation (on the door) if you wish. **Let's make it sparkly!!**

Year R/Key Stage 1 (4.45pm - 5.45pm), Key Stage 2 (6pm - 7pm)

Church Notice - 16th December - impact to school pick-up

We have been informed that there will be a funeral at the church on Monday 16th December starting at 2:00pm. The reception following the service is planned for the village hall which will put pressure on parking around the school, church and village hall at the end of the school day. Spaces at the front of the church will also be coned off in places at certain times.

ARE YOU A KNITTER?



The Children's Council have responded to the pupils' request of a knitting club by enquiring how many children would be interested in attending. The numbers were overwhelming so it would be super if we could create this new club. The problem is, we need some experienced knitters who could support and teach our children during one lunchtime a week for approximately 30 minutes. Please get in touch with the school if you think you could help!

COURSE

Safeguarding Awareness for Parents & Carers

Helping parents make an informed choice about the football setting they enrol their children in.

This course was brought to our attention recently. You might find it useful, if you are considering a football club.

The website is:

<https://learn.EnglandFootball.com/courses/safeguarding/safeguarding-awareness-for-parents-and-carers>

Instruments In School

We have a lot of children participating in private music tuition in the school, and on certain days (especially Friday) there are a lot of instruments brought in from home. We do all that we can to give the children a safe place to store the instruments, and I have recently cleared space in the music cupboard, but please speak at home about safely handing *all* instruments when locating their own. We have a small school with limited space and as much as we genuinely support the children to explore their talents, we can't be held liable for damage if this occurs during a private lesson. Thank you for your understanding.

Gifts to children.

It is genuinely lovely that families might want to give gifts to other children in the class, but if this is happening in school, for the reasons of parent preference and dietary requirements can I ask that you please check with us first if you are considering it. Thank you.

FRIENDS OF OTTERBOURNE SCHOOL PRESENT



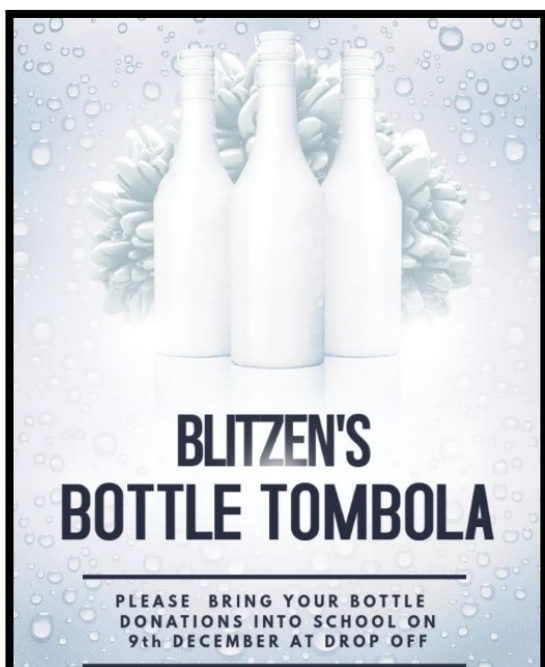
Otterfest

SANTAS GROTTTO, FESTIVE STALLS RUN BY THE CHILDREN, ELF EMPORIUM, MULLED WINE, DOMINOES PIZZA & MUCH MORE

13TH DECEMBER 4-6pm

Otterfest bakery

Bake or donate your festive treats for the Otterfest Bakery. Baked goodies can be brought into school during the day (on the 13th). Please ensure you label any containers you wish to keep



On the 9th December, in exchange for a Christmas dress down day, please bring in a bottle donation for Blitzen's Bottle Tombola at Otterfest! Please ensure bottles are new and in date - thank you!

Shoebbox Appeal

Thank you for your support with the recent shoebbox appeal.

Please find a letter from Eastleigh Rotary below.

Eastleigh Rotary

c/o 12 Romsey Rd, Eastleigh, SO50 9DD
Trust Fund Registered Charity No. 1003784
President 2024 -2025 – Brian Dodd



23 November 2024

Rotary Shoeboxes

Dear Mr Martin Geraghty

On behalf of Eastleigh Rotary, I thank you, your children, their parents, and your staff for embracing the Christmas Shoebbox collections. Thank you to everyone at Otterbourne Primary School for the boxes that you packed so carefully and decorated so creatively. We recognise that we are going through difficult times and that finding the money to fill the shoeboxes is not always easy, so thank you so much.

Eastleigh Rotary collected 207 boxes from schools, churches and other organisations in the Borough. Overall, the larger Rotary District gathered over 20,000 boxes from Rotary Clubs in the area. These were all packed into containers and are now on their way by road to Eastern Europe. We expect all the shoeboxes to be delivered to the children for Christmas. Every shoebox will be memorable and make a difference for a child this Christmas.

Please pass on our thanks to everyone involved.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you would like me to come to an assembly to talk about the Rotary Shoebbox Scheme or Rotary in general.

Many thanks

Martin

HORNS DROVE COMMUNITY CHILDCARE

January Holiday

Club from 02.01.2025 -
03.01.2025

Happy
New year



Holiday club activities on Thursday and Friday
will include baking, making calendars, and
engaging in winter-themed arts and crafts.

We are taking bookings for 2 - 11 year olds

Holiday club: 8.00AM-6PM including breakfast

Horns Drove, Bakers
Drove, Rownhams,
SO16 8AD



Book Now:

Contact us :

02380 737207

enquiries@hornsdrove.uk



ACE SPORTS
HOLIDAY CLUBS

CHRISTMAS
HOLIDAY CLUB
2024/5

SHERBORNE HOUSE SCHOOL
CHANDLERS FORD

Monday 23rd December & Thursday 2nd January

8.30am to 4.30pm each day
Extended Day Pass to 5.30pm available
10% Discount for Additional Siblings
£28 per day
Childcare Vouchers Accepted!
For Children aged 5 & up/ Half Days (Ace Mini's) For Year R's Under 5

JOIN US FOR TWO ACTION PACKED DAYS OF SPORTS FUN!!

Ofsted Registered

ACESPORTSANDEDUCATION.COM

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAP STREAK

97

DAYS

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION

13+

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 65% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapMaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

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

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

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.



#WakeUpWednesday®

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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practising mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>