



Newsletter

<http://www.oldparkprimary.co.uk>

Newsletter 23: 18th March 2024

Message from the headteacher

It is hard to believe that it is the final week of the spring term already! It has been a short term but that doesn't mean it has been any less busy in school with sports fixtures, trips, visits from outside speakers, world book day, comic relief and music performances. The pupils have all worked incredibly hard this term and should be proud of everything they have achieved. I have had more children than ever be sent to me this term to show me their class work and earn themselves a 'headteacher award' sticker. We have worked hard this half term on our value of 'respect', and there have been lots of pupils who have gained a special headteacher pencil for going above and beyond with the levels of respect they have shown. I hope that everyone has a lovely easter holiday!

Easter lunch

On **Thursday 21st March** the canteen will be serving a special Easter lunch:

Cheese burger or veggie burger on a bun

French fries

Big salad bar with a selection of sauces

Chocolate sponge with custard

Easter eggs

Dawley town council have once again given us an easter egg for every pupil. We will be handing these out at the end of the week.

Music

A big thank you to all the parents that came along to watch the pupils perform in the orchestra on Thursday. They all did a great job, and it was a pleasure to watch how much progress they have all made this year with their playing. Also well done to all the Year 4 & 5 pupils who went along to Charlton school on Friday to take part in Telford Sings. Mrs Walker said they did a brilliant job! Many thanks as well to Ms Fynn and Ms Briggs who went along with the pupils.



Attendance

Well done to the following classes for having the best attendance in their year group last week:

FG, 1H, 2V, 3P, 4H, 5W and 6W.

A special **well done 3P** who had the highest attendance last week of 99.38%. An amazing achievement! A special treat will be on its way to them!

Easter raffle

Year 6 will be drawing the winning tickets for the Easter raffle this week, and delivering all the prizes to pupils in their classes. Good luck to everyone!





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Newsletter 223: 18th March 2024

Diary Dates

Spring 2

Tuesday 19th March

School photographs

Friday 22nd March

Last day of term

Term dates 2023-2024

22nd March 2024

Last day of term

25th March—5th April

Easter holiday

8th April 2024

Summer term starts

27th - 31st May 2024

Half term

3rd June 2024

Staff PD day

Friday 19th July 2024

Last day of term



Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary; emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.



FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful; if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable; what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. He has also written 18 guidebooks for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft. With work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VO247, he has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



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