

Ifield School's Newsletter

Maddie Arnold-Jones, Headteacher



April 2024

For more news and information please visit our website: www.ifield.kent.sch.uk

Dear Ifield Families, Governors, Staff and Friends,

I hope you had a wonderful Easter holiday with family and friends. It has been lovely to experience lighter evenings and the weather is certainly starting to improve.

Ifield pupils have started another term, full of enriching experiences and community visits, engaging in Arts Week and a residential opportunity for Key Stage 3 and 4 students.

Our curriculum theme for Term 5 is: What We Eat and Where It Comes From. I hope that you have found the class curriculum newsletters beneficial for communication between home and school.

The newsletter for May will be shared via a platform called Microsoft Sway, which will enable us to share more interactive news with you, such as videos.

It was wonderful to see so many parents, carers and families join the Arts Week parade on Friday last week. It is expected that the sun will be shining on Saturday and we hope that many of you will join us at the School Woodlands for our Annual Bluebell Day from 11am.

With very best wishes,

Maddie Arnold-Jones
Headteacher



Voices In The Wilderness

Pupils from Ifield School took part in a Multi-Arts Event, Voices in the Wilderness, a collaborative project involving several special schools across Kent. It was a wonderful opportunity for pupils to express themselves through various forms of art, including music, dance, drama and visual arts. Pupils performed in front of an audience at The Woodville Theatre in Gravesend. As tickets were limited, pupils also performed at Ifield School, so that a greater number of parents, families, pupils and staff could attend. A special thank you to Hannah Stevens, our Music Teacher for orchestrating the project for Ifield pupils.



Ski Competition Winners

On Thursday 18th April 2024, students in Key Stage 3 and 4 took part in a Ski Competition at Chatham Ski Centre. We were all very proud of our ski team, as they came first in the Kent School Games, Ski Competition. All participants displayed amazing determination, confidence and teamwork and were so excited to receive a medal and trophy. Congratulations to all involved!



Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains our highest priority at Ifield School and we continue to work closely with parents and families to support online safety whilst at home. The National College publishes guidance related to online safety every Wednesday, which is shared via our Facebook page. Please see the advice below for parents and carers linked to What's App and how to ensure parental controls are in place for your child at home.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipient, not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging. WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EVOLVING SCAMS
WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS
To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS
WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

ONLINE

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT
The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK
Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION
WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION
Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS
It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval; you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

THINKING BEFORE SHARING
Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

CHAT ABOUT PRNACY
Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

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.

...HEY OSC WakeUp Wednesday

The National College

Source: <https://blog.whatsapp.com/an-open-letter> | <https://faq.whatsapp.com/077018839582322> | https://faq.whatsapp.com/061005868189245/?helpref=hc_inov | <https://www.whatsapp.com/privacy> | <https://blog.whatsapp.com/chat-lock-making-your-most-intimate-conversations-even-more-private> | <https://www.aure.com/learn/whatsapp-scams>

@wake_up_weds **/www.thenationalcollege** **@wake.up.wednesday** **@wake.up.weds**

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 12.04.2024

Save the Dates

PTFA Coffee Morning - Friday 10th May 2024

Bluebell Day - Saturday 11th May 2024

Lower School PE Enrichment Open Afternoon - Tuesday 21st May 2024

Cedar Class PE Enrichment Open Afternoon - Wednesday 22nd May 2024