



Newsletter

No. 9. 31st January 2025

Website: www.ourladys.devon.sch.uk

Facebook: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Barnstaple

In Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we learn about God and try to follow his footsteps by showing care and respect for one another.

Dear Parents and Carers

What a busy and productive half-term we are having. All the children have been working really hard and making excellent progress in their learning. From celebrating Chinese New Year in the Robin class to dealing with complex fractions in Y6 there is a lot going on in school!

Y4 are working really hard with their times tables and it is great to see their enthusiasm with Times tables Rockstars in class. Thank you for supporting your children with extra practice at home - it is certainly having an impact!

Over the last few weeks we have had the pleasure of talking to groups of children about their learning at school. It is clear they are enjoying their lessons and have learnt new and interesting facts. It was also lovely to hear about how happy and safe they feel in school and how our golden rules of Be Ready, Be Safe and Be Respectful help with this.

We are aware that, at times, there are small pockets of behaviour that don't always reflect our high expectations. We are a school that is committed to its relational practice, where we seek to support children dealing with these incidents, making sure their voice is heard and that a restorative conversation and or action is carried out. If you do have any concerns then in the first instance we would ask you to share these with your child's class teacher so we can put in support as quickly as possible.

It has been great to see our Chaplaincy Team leading the whole school through an Act of Worship this week, their efforts and behaviour is a credit to the school.

Next week is Children's Mental Health Week, where classes will spend some time exploring the topic and raising awareness of mental health.

We also have the school netball team taking part in a netball tournament on Wednesday and wish them the best of luck.

We encourage you to take a look at our school website, <https://www.ourladys.devon.sch.uk/web/> which has recently been updated to reflect the children's learning. If you have any questions about your child's curriculum please do contact your child's class teacher for more information.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Take care,

Rob Meech, Executive Headteacher and Lorna Wilby, Head of School

Spring Term Dates

Wed 5th Feb	Kingfisher Class Swimming
Wed 12th Feb	Kingfisher Class Last Swimming
Fri 14th Feb	PTFA Cake Sale/Non Uniform Day
Fri 14th Feb	Y3 Class Act of Worship 2.15pm—Y3 parents and carers welcome to attend
Mon 17th Feb	Half Term Break
Mon 24th Feb	Non Pupil Day—School closed
Tue 25th Feb	Pupils Return to School
Wed 5th Mar	Ash Wednesday Service
Fri 7th Mar	Crazy Hair Day raising funds for North Devon Hospice
Fri 14th Mar	Whole School Book Swop
Fri 28th Mar	Big Walk - CAFOD whole school

Headteacher's Awards

Well done to the following children who have recently received Headteacher's awards:-



Heron

Phoebe-Mae

Owl

Frankie

Eagle

Caitlyn

Tommy

Eilidh

Owl

Oliver x2

Jonathan

Cruze

Grace

PJ

Ava W

Reva

Harleigh

Maya

Anya

Kingfisher

Willow

Dylan

Juaan

Heart of Gold Awards

Well done to all the children who have achieved our Heart of Gold Award for displaying our school rules:



Abel J

Sophia

Kadie

Olivia T

Obie

Juaan

Charlie B

Nellie

Piper

Edith

Aika

Amesa

Maya

Jaxson

We are so proud of you.

Here in our school,
let us be patient and loving at all times.

Let our rooms be full of happiness
and respect for each other.

Let love be in our hearts
with kindness and compassion for all.

Let us remember
In learning together,
we grow together and succeed together.

Amen



Whole School Attendance

Heron Class had the highest attendance this week with 96.1%, closely followed by Puffin Class at 95.7%.

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

**EVERY
SCHOOL DAY
COUNTS**

PTFA News

Friday 14th February is Cake Sale/ Non uniform Day organised by the PTFA. Preferred Colours are Pink White or Red as its Valentines Day. However, if your child does not have any clothing items of these colours then anything bright will suffice. There will be no charge for non uniform, just £1.00 for the cake sale.



The PTFA , have asked for your help again by asking for donations of cakes, whether shop bought or homemade. They would like to thank you in advance for your kind donations and continued support.

PUNCTUALITY MATTERS!

Being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning:

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

19 days lost a year through being late means 90% attendance.



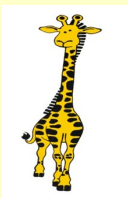
missed minutes =
missed learning
= missed opportunities!

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Devon
County Council

Each academic school year is 38 weeks (Sept-July) or 190 days. The following chart shows how missed days affects overall attendance.



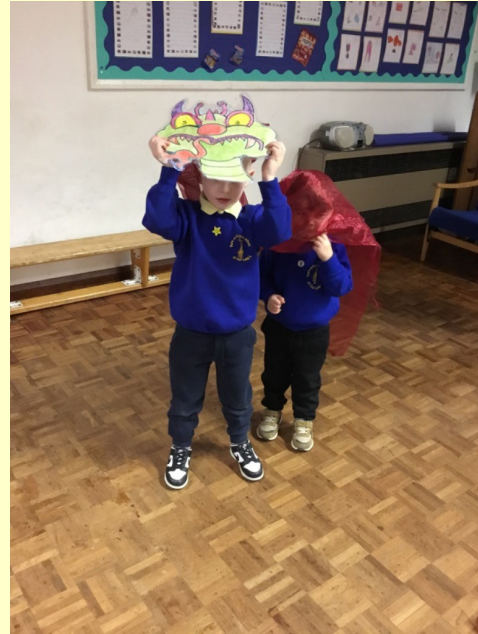


Barn-a-b's at Our Lady's

We have had a great week celebrating Chinese new year; 2025 is the year of the snake!
Barn-a-b's gate- The blue gate by the car park is being left open. The magnets don't always catch, so it needs to be firmly closed for the magnets to connect. Thank you for your support.
There will be a non pupil day on Monday 24th February. We will be back on the 25th

February.

Cathy, Jane, Liia, Lisa and Tracey



This week's Monday assembly was created and run by our Chaplains. They did an amazing job and helped the whole school reflect on Peace. They asked questions to help us reflect. Shared and bible reading, and shared prayers with us and the mission to share peace with their school community. They did an amazing job and we are very proud of them. Thank you for helping us share God's love.



The next newsletter will go home on: Friday 14th February 2025

Our Lady's School takes incidents of bullying, including on-line safety seriously. For further information the school's policy is available on our website or please see your child's class teacher if you have any concerns. www.safer.internet.org.uk

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL LITERACY

Emotional literacy refers to the ability to recognise, understand and express our feelings effectively. It plays a crucial role in strengthening a child's wellbeing by enhancing their relationships and resilience. However, emotional literacy is not necessarily an innate talent, and its development may present challenges. This guide gives parents and educators practical tips on supporting children to cultivate this essential skill.

1 NAME THE EMOTION

Encourage children to identify and name their emotions. This helps them understand what they're feeling and why. Use simple language and relatable examples to make it easier for them to share their emotions. This builds a foundation for emotional understanding and open communication.



2 MODEL EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

Demonstrate healthy emotional expression by sharing your feelings visibly. When children see adults properly displaying how they're doing and what they're thinking, they learn to do the same. Discuss how you handle emotions in different circumstances, providing a real-life framework for young ones to follow.



3 MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Teach children mindfulness practices to help them stay present and manage their emotions during more challenging moments. Activities like deep breathing, meditation or yoga can reduce stress and enhance emotional regulation. Regular practice can improve focus and emotional stability, which can significantly help children both as they're growing up and throughout their adult life.



4 USE STORYTELLING

Incorporate storytelling to help children understand emotions. Stories can offer relevant scenarios illustrating how the characters experience and manage their feelings. Discuss the emotions depicted in stories and ask children how they might feel in similar situations.



5 PRACTISE EMPATHY

Teach children to consider others' views and emotions – and to explore why they might think or feel this way. Role-playing and discussing various scenarios can enhance their ability to empathise. Understanding others' emotions helps children to develop compassion and improves their social interactions.



6 ENCOURAGE JOURNALING

Suggest keeping a journal to make note of thoughts and emotions, as writing can provide an outlet for self-reflection and emotional processing. Encourage children to write about their daily experiences and feelings, helping them gain insight into their emotional world. Do this alongside them, so they can see and experience how to do it effectively.



7 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING

Do what you can to help children develop problem-solving skills to assist in managing emotional challenges. Discuss potential solutions to emotional conflicts and encourage them to think critically about what they (and others) can do to process their feelings in a healthy way. This empowers children to handle emotions positively and build resilience.



8 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Establish an environment where children feel safe to display their emotions without judgement. Encourage open exchanges and reassure them that all feelings are valid. This supportive atmosphere promotes trust and encourages children to express themselves with confidence.



9 USE VISUAL AIDS

Take advantage of visual aids like emotion charts or mood meters to help children identify and express their feelings. Use these tools regularly in your interactions. They provide a visual representation of emotions, making it easier for children to communicate their emotional state.



10 CELEBRATE EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Acknowledge and celebrate progress in emotional literacy, and praise children for expressing their emotions and handling them effectively. Positive reinforcement is a useful tool that will encourage continued growth and reinforces the importance of emotional literacy – encouraging young people to maintain the good habits and healthy behaviours that you've taught them.



Meet Our Expert

Adam Gilllett is Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, an organisation that supports schools in improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

X @wake_up_weds

f /wuw.thenationalcollege

ig @wake.up.wednesday

music @wake.up.weds

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

TIKTOK



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT



While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app *could* potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS



With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables anyone to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app: that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025>



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