SPRING TERM - NEWSLETTER - Issue 19 – 5th March

Message from Ms Jarrett

Dear Parents and Carers,

We're very much looking forward to having the school buzzing and alive with full classrooms again next week! You should now have received a copy of the Risk Assessment and Reopening Plan detailing all the information you need. Please can I reinforce the importance of punctuality and sticking to your child's allotted time / location for drop off and pick-ups to prevent the mixing of bubbles and help with the smooth start and finish of the day for all the classes.

I would also like to highlight the need for layers under uniform please as our requirement to ventilate the school does mean that the classrooms are slightly colder than usual. Children will need to make sure they have waterproof coats and appropriate footwear too please as they will be getting outside as much as possible in the coming weeks for their own wellbeing and safety.

As home education comes to a close - I just want to say a final thank you to all our families for the incredible support you have shown both the school and your children over this difficult period; encouraging the children to complete tasks, getting involved in live sessions, activities and taking care of their wellbeing whilst juggling your own work etc. has been no easy feat, but all of us at GwC have been thrilled with the level of engagement and very grateful for the kind words and display of appreciation for their hard work too.
So, whilst we still have plenty of hurdles to overcome, I am confident that we can continue to support each other and have a successful term. Have a relaxing and restful weekend and we will see everyone on Monday morning in their 'World Book Day' best!

With very best wishes
Caroline Jarrett

St Piran's Day
Friday 5th March 2021

Please follow the link below to see the story of St Piran.

https://www.facebook.com/cornwalllivenews/videos/the-story-of-st-piran/1461222510578261/

SPRING TERM

Mon 4th January 2021 to Thursday 1st April 2021

Easter Holiday Friday 2nd April to Friday 16th April 2021

SUMMER TERM

Mon 19th April to Friday 23rd July 2021

Half Term—Mon 31st May to Friday 4th June 2021

Final Inset Day

Friday 11th June 2021

Last day of term Friday 23rd July 2021

PE Stars

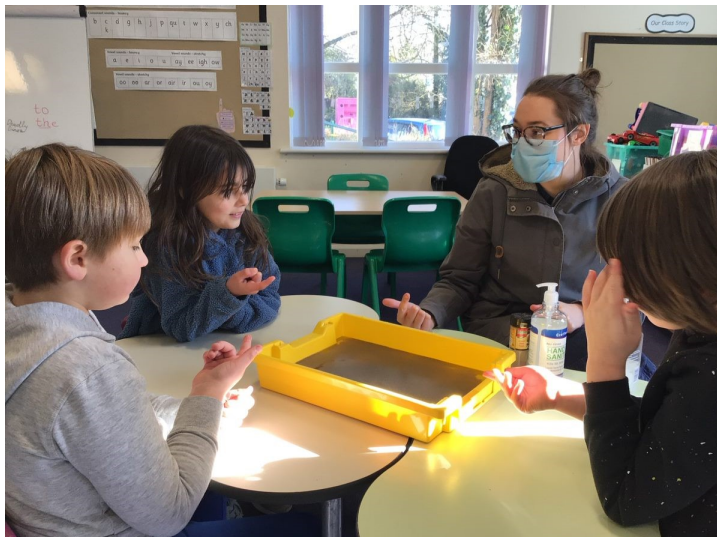PE Stars for last week are

Lottie, & Thomas

WELL DONE

REMINDER — WORLD BOOK DAY

We will be celebrating on Monday 8th March please see poster later in this Newsletter,

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At Celtic Cross Education…
we nurture, we learn, we achieve together.

Photos of our pupils at school and at home

Photos of our pupils at school and at home

WORLD BOOK DAY 2021

Monday 8th March

Let's celebrate World Book Day in style!
Check out the details below to get involved!

COOL!

IT WILL BE...

POW!

WOW!

Dress up as a Word!
We know that it might be difficult to buy or create a costume, so we thought we'd keep it simple - dress up as a word! Your costume should reflect the word you have chosen – get creative! There are some great ideas here.

Books for £1!
Amazon are offering books for £1 for World Book Day! Click here to find one you might like.

STAY TUNED TO FIGURE OUT OUR THEME...

Dress Up as a word link - - https://www.google.com/search?q=dress+up+as+a+word&rlz=1C1GCEA_enGB937GB937&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjM7-idq9DuAhUCqXEKHRkKCQMQ_AUoAXoECCEQAw&biw=1536&bih=754&safe=active&surl=1

Books for £1 link - - https://www.amazon.co.uk/b/ref=s9_acss_bw_h1_BooksHom_md3_w?ie=UTF8&node=69&pf_rd_m=A3P5ROKL5A1OLE&pf_rd_s=merchandised-search-1&pf_rd_r=Z7HMZ2HRBBD7Z97Y40S4&pf_rd_t=101&pf_rd_p=b308ccfe-e779-4a59-a3b7-ebb2b10740a0&pf_rd_i=266239

What Parents & Carers Need to Know About
AVAKIN LIFE

12+ App Store Rating

Described as a place where teens and adults can make new friends, Avakin Life is a mobile game that has more than 1.4 million daily users. The game lets players create a virtual avatar (an 'Avakin'), style it in fashionable outfits, buy and decorate properties, and interact with others in communal spaces. It's this social aspect which has caused safety concerns, with many parents and carers unsure if the game is suitable for teenagers at all.

Age Rating

Listed as 12+ on the iOS store (and 'Teen' on Google Play), Avakin Life asks for a player's age at the start – but doesn't ask them to verify it. The game states that players found to be a different age to the one entered will be banned, but all that's needed to create an account is an email address, which anyone can set up. This has led to cases of adults entering the game under a false identity to groom children.

Adult Themes

Avakin Life is full of suggestive and adult themes. While the game itself leans into ideas of gambling (users are encouraged to spin a prize wheel for free coins each day) and customising avatars with revealing outfits and seductive dance moves, the primary risks stem from other users. The in-game chat can often move onto sexual topics, while depression, suicide, and disabilities are discussed openly.

Chat Function

'Social spots', where 'Avakins' gather, feature a live chat which displays messages publicly. Anything users in that vicinity say appears on everyone's screen. Profanity is starred out – but users can still post hurtful or sexual messages, or harass other players. When two players become 'friends' in the game, they can then chat privately. If personal details are shared and conversation moves away from the game, that represents a clear risk.

In-Game Spending

Although free to download and play, Avakin Life has two in-game currencies: Avacoins and Gems. Users are gifted small amounts of these as they play – but are also encouraged to buy larger quantities of these fictional currencies with real money (with the incentive that it allows access to more clothes, furniture, etc). Buying these bundles can cost up £39.99 with the simple press of a couple of buttons.

Potential Addiction

MMO (massively multiplayer online) games like this have often raised worries over their addictive gameplay. Avakin Life employs lots of techniques to prolong its appeal. Glamorous in-game rewards for playing, unlocking exotic new items and levelling up can all give a feeling of accomplishment that can quickly become consuming – especially for those who aren't aware of the signs.

Advice for Parents & Carers

Block and Report

Other players can be blocked by clicking on their in-game avatar, selecting their name and going to their profile. Blocking the player means they can't contact your child or be put in the same social space again. Players can be reported by repeating these steps but selecting 'Report' instead of 'Block'. Follow the on-screen prompts and your report will be assessed by a human member of the development team.

Download It Yourself

Avakin Life is a free download, so if your children use it or are talking about it, you could try it yourself: see how it works and if you feel it's safe. If you're not convinced, explain that to your child. Listen to what they think about the game; discuss alternatives that might be safer. If a device has parental controls that prevent age-restricted apps being downloaded, it's best to set them up as soon as possible.

Warn about Strangers

Young people should not be communicating with strangers: that's as vital a lesson online as it is in real life. This game has a less-than-stellar reputation for attracting predators and scammers who prey on the innocence of younger players. Talk to teens about how not everyone online is who they claim, and make sure they know how to deal with such situations if they occur. Report, report, report!

Be Alert to Addiction

If you're worried your child might be addicted to an online game, it's vitally important to intervene before it's too late. A child may become irritable when not playing, lose interest in other hobbies and personal hygiene, and stop seeing friends or communicating with them outside the game. If you spot any of the symptoms of gaming addiction, it might be wise to limit (or stop) time on the game.

Disable Payment Methods

It's easy to make an accidental purchase on mobile games like Avakin Life; children might not even realise they're spending actual money on in-game items. Ensure that whatever device your child is using to play doesn't have any credit cards or other payment options linked to it. If you do notice that money has been spent without your permission, the game's website states you can apply for a refund.

Meet Our Expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for five years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGbible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

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https://www.commonsensemedia.org/app-reviews/avakin-life/user-reviews/adult, https://www.saferkid.com/app-reviews-for-parents/avakin-life, https://www.faithandsafety.org/game-reviews/-/asset_publisher/XUYA2A5AQtV/content/avakin-life?inheritRedirect=false, https://avakin.com/player-safety/, https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/issue/gaming-addiction/

What Parents & Carers Need to Know About
SIGNAL

12+ App Store Rating

Signal is a multimedia messaging service (previously known as TextSecure) which provides secure chats between users. It is encrypted, so any intercepted communication cannot be read by attackers. Users can send one-to-one messages or set up group chats. The service is free, has no adverts and doesn't track users' location like many other messaging platforms. The app experienced a popularity boom in early 2021 as large numbers of users left WhatsApp over perceived privacy issues.

Disappearing Messages

Messages on Signal can be set to disappear (from both the sender and the recipient's devices) a specified time after they are first opened – potentially as little as five seconds. So it is difficult to monitor the app and see what your child is talking about. Should someone behave inappropriately towards them, unless they record evidence instantly there is no way to prove what has happened – making it difficult to take the proper action.

Risk of Screengrabs

Because messages can be set to disappear on Signal, some young people assume that nobody else will ever see them and let their guard down as a result. But a recipient could still capture a screenshot of your child's message before it vanishes from their device. This screengrab – which might be of something inappropriate or deeply personal – can then be shared with others or even made public on the internet.

False Sense of Security

The feeling of total privacy and security within the app can make young people feel like they are invulnerable – and possibly that they could get away with behaving in ways they normally wouldn't. This behaviour could range from the harmful (such as participating in cyber bullying or sharing age-inappropriate images or videos) to the extremely dangerous: perhaps chatting to strangers, who might potentially be predators.

Vulnerability to Hackers

Like virtually any piece of software, Signal has been shown to have flaws in its security. One hacker was able to make a call to a target device using the app and could then listen in on the victim through their phone – without needing them to even answer the call. Afterwards, the hacked user was completely unaware that the eavesdropping had taken place.

Advice for Parents & Carers

Gather Any Evidence Quickly

If your children are old enough to use Signal, they will likely already know how to take a quick screenshot on their phone. It's best to confirm this with them, however, because if they're sent something inappropriate or offensive, they will only have a very short opportunity to screenshot it as evidence of misconduct before the message disappears. Once they've captured the screenshot, they should then come to you or another trusted adult.

Talk about Online Bullying

Before your child downloads Signal, have an open discussion about the potential risks of this app and others like it. Ensure your child is aware of the possibility of bullying or hurtful messages on such platforms. They should understand that the app makers themselves do not help with investigating incidents – and that it may be difficult to prove someone has done something to upset them.

Think before Sending

The messages a young person sends on Signal don't last forever, but the effects of those messages very well might – for your child and for others. You could suggest to your child that, if they're unsure whether to send a particular message, they should ask themselves if they would be comfortable showing the content to you. And if they wouldn't, should they really be sending it at all?

Stay Updated

It's wise to make sure your child knows how to keep their software up to date by downloading the latest version. Developers will often release software updates that (as well as occasionally adding new features or improving functionality, etc.) help to fix any security flaws and stop hackers from exploiting possible weak points in the app.

Consider Online Reputation

Talk to your child about the implications if a message they sent was made public without their consent. Remind them that once an image (for example) is out there, there's no way to control what happens to it or erase every single copy. It's a good way to get young people to start considering how their digital footprint might have repercussions on their future prospects.

Meet Our Expert

Emma Davis is a cyber security expert and former ICT teacher. She delivers cyber awareness training to organisations nationally and has extensive knowledge and experience of managing how children access services and apps online.

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Asymptomatic testing information for parents and adults in households with children at school or college

Undertaking regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing helps reduce transmission of the virus. Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus (COVID-19) testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles.

Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are different ways for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

If you have any queries about the tests, and you live in England, please call 119 (free from mobiles and landlines). Lines are open every day from 7am to 11pm.

Children of primary school age (and below) without symptoms are not being asked to take a test.

Testing is voluntary, but strongly recommended to all who are eligible. Alongside the vaccine, washing hands, wearing face coverings, and maintaining social distancing, rapid testing plays a vital role in reducing transmission rates. Getting into the habit of regular testing as part of our everyday lives will help us all to play our part and do what we can to protect each other.

<u>Reminder - Contact Details</u>

Please can we remind you to keep the school informed of up-to-date emergency contact details and additional contact details of extended family/trusted adults.

Thank you

Car sharing on school run

At this time please **avoid car sharing**, but if you have to, please follow these simple steps.

Wear face coverings

Sit as far apart as possible

Share with the same small group only

Keep windows open

Wash hands or use sanitisers before and after

Clean the car after every journey

cornwall.gov.uk/coronavirus