



Ark Brunel Primary Academy

Newsletter



4th November 2022



Our
Heart
Values



Honesty



Enthusiam



Ambition



Resilience



Thought

Dear Ark Brunel Community,

Welcome back after a longer half term break. Whilst you were enjoying the sunshine two weeks ago, the staff team were split across several Ark schools, engaging with some excellent in-service training to support us with delivering outstanding teaching and learning and pastoral care to your children.

Parent consultations began this week and I hope that you have all had (or are scheduled for) a productive session, in school, with your class teacher. Research tells us that where school and home work closely together, children will make better progress.

This wet and windy week has seen the return of after-school clubs. I know from my last parent forum workshop that you were keen to see clubs return and we are proud to offer six different clubs across the week. Each staff member has their own interests and skills and has volunteered their time to run a club at some point through the year so if there isn't something that takes your fancy this half term, there may be something more suited coming up. Further, this ensures that we can keep our club offer consistent through the remainder of the year. Part of the reason why clubs were so in-demand was because of the need for affordable and accessible after-school care. We fully understand the financial pressures that families are under and want to help where possible. Therefore, we are offering a range of clubs to support working parents on the days where collection is difficult. What we are desperate to avoid is any child walking home alone. With British Summer Time ending last week, it is now much darker much earlier and we feel it would be safest if parents or carers collect their children directly from us, either at 3:30 or at the end of a club session.

As you know, I am always looking forward to working with you to better the school and have fixed the next parent forum session for 14th December, with the focus on behaviour. This will be our final parent workshop of the calendar year. We have parent workshops each Wednesday at 9am and recommend that you look at the upcoming events list to see if any are of interest to you. I know that some parents cannot make this time and so we have also posted the resources on our website for you to access too.

In other news, we have been working hard on recruitment and are excited to share that Ms Molony has joined our admin team. Please give her a nice, warm Brunel welcome when you see her on our reception desk or speak with her on the phone.

If you're planning on visiting a firework event this weekend, I hope it is both safe and enjoyable in equal measure.

See you all on Monday.

Mr Scott

Odd Socks Day



On Monday 14th November it is the start of anti-bullying week. To raise awareness about such an important topic and to make a pledge to anti-bullying, we are inviting all children to come to school wearing odd socks.

Attention Wollstonecraft Parents:

You will see from the Upcoming Events list that our class assembly is scheduled for Thursday 15th December. We'll share with you lots of fascinating facts about Mary Wollstonecraft, after whom our class is named. We look forward to seeing you then!



This week's Value Certificates go to:

CARPENTER	Thulio, Rex
DARWIN	Affan, Yasmine
FARADAY	Affan, Yasmine
FRY	Mansour, Aaliyah
JENNER	Hafsa, Murad
JOHNSON	Latrell, Rayanah
NEWTON	Omar, Mariam
PANKHURST	Imran, Ahmed
SEACOLE	Aiden G., Radman
SHACKLETON	Tianna, Nuhayd
WILBERFORCE	Zayd, Nathan
WOLLSTONECRAFT	Byron, Mohammed

This week's Mathletes are:

FARADAY	Adnane
FRY	Leen
JENNER	Yhya
JOHNSON	Rewan
NEWTON	Umar
PANKHURST	Mohamed
SEACOLE	Zaynab
SHACKLETON	Keynan
WILBERFORCE	Lina
WOLLSTONECRAFT	Adrian



Congratulations to this week's winning Class:

Shackleton

Total School Points: **15,769**

Which class will win next week?

Overall attendance for last week was 90.99%. Please help us to improve this low level by making sure that your child comes to school EVERY day – we are aiming to reach 96% attendance and can only achieve this if you support us.

Buss	86.4%
Carpenter	97.5%
Darwin	99%
Faraday	82.6%
Fry	92.3%
Jenner	89%
Johnson	93.9%
Newton	87.8%
Pankhurst	82.9%
Seacole	98.7%
Shackleton	86%
Wilberforce	89.6%
Wollstonecraft	90.7%



Monday 7th Nov:

- Y1 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Y3 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Tuesday 8th Nov:

- EYFS Parent/Teacher Conferences

Wednesday 9th Nov:

- Y6 Parent Workshop – SATs
- EYFS – Dress in Pyjamas

Monday 14th Nov:

- Odd Socks Day

Wednesday 16th Nov:

- S&L Parent Workshop – DLD

Thursday 17th Nov:

- Y4 Pankhurst – Class Assembly

Wednesday 23rd Nov:

- Y4 Newton & Pankhurst – Science Museum trip
- All Parent Workshop – Supporting Parents (see info on following page)

Thursday 24th Nov:

- Y3 Jenner – Class Assembly

Support for families in Place2Be schools

Digital toolkit for schools



Overview

As part of our mental health support for the whole school, Place2Be is proud to offer advice and resources for families. We do this through:



Family Practitioners

Each Place2Be primary school has access to a dedicated Family Practitioner offering specialist support and training.



Parenting Smart

Our website full of practical advice and tried and tested tips for parents and carers of primary-age children.



Parenting Smart - Online Course

For parents and carers of children at Place2Be schools, our free course will help strengthen relationships with your child.

As a Place2Be partner school, your families are able to access these free resources which can help them to support their child or young person's wellbeing. Your Place2Be school-based staff member can refer families to a dedicated Family Practitioner, and any parent or carer can access [Parenting Smart](#) and the [Parenting Smart - Online Course](#).

This toolkit has suggested copy to help you share these two resources with your school community; including ideas for school newsletters, your school website, and more.

Share in your school newsletter

Place2Be, our in-school mental health support service, has a variety of resources to help you support your child's wellbeing.

Visit their Parenting Smart website for free practical advice on a range of topics (from bullying, to sleep difficulties). If you're looking for more support on your parenting journey, you could also sign up for their free Parenting Smart - Online Course.

Learn more about both of these offers at place2be.org.uk/family.

This copy could also be used on your school website.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about OVERWATCH 2

A long-awaited sequel to 2016's massively successful Overwatch, this is a futuristic shooting game with a focus on teamwork and strategy which gives it an extra dimension to the majority of titles in the genre. Its cast of characters is diverse and memorable, while there's a definite (and rewarding) learning curve to players improving their skill. Created by established developers Blizzard Entertainment, Overwatch 2 is free to play, with an emphasis on competitive multiplayer action – meaning that children may want to play the game even more simply because their friends have it.

AGE RATING
PEGI 12

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

MULTIPLE PASSWORDS

Overwatch 2 supports convenient cross-play across consoles and PC – as long as users link all their devices under a unifying account on the Blizzard battle.net platform. This has other benefits (preserving a player's original skins for use in the new game), but if your child does want to link their accounts, be warned: the process can be extremely tricky and requires multiple passwords.

VOICE CHAT

As a shooting game which focuses on fast-paced, competitive play, teamwork is central to getting the most out of the Overwatch 2 experience. Many players use voice chat to coordinate with other users – often with friends, but sometimes also with strangers. In either case, this means your child is in contact with others, who may – for example – use offensive language in the heat of the moment.

IN-GAME PURCHASING

Like many free-to-play games, Overwatch 2 offers in-game purchases for unlocking its colourful skins. While new characters arrive as part of a free 'battle pass' each season (normally lasting around three months), players can unlock them much earlier by buying a premium version of the pass. There are also in-game bundles (with varying costs) themed around certain characters or events.

VIOLENT GAMEPLAY

Overwatch 2 heavily features combat, although the on-screen shootouts are relatively sanitised. Most of its characters are of a fantastical nature (there's a gorilla scientist with a laser weapon, for instance, and a DJ on roller-blades who fires sound energy), but some – such as Reaper, an assassin in a wealth-like metal mask – are a little on the darker side and could unnerve younger players.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ASSIST WITH ACCOUNT LINKING

If your child is trying to link their accounts from different devices together, it might be wise for you to help them set it up. Not only should it enable the process to run more smoothly (and save you being asked for the passwords for each account), but you'll also be able to make sure that the website for linking is correct. We've put the right web address under the expert's bio at the bottom of this guide.

MONITOR COMMUNICATIONS

Playing Overwatch 2 with friends is almost universally the most popular way to enjoy the game. If your child is playing with a new friend they only know online – or a stranger – you may want to monitor the chat to make sure they aren't being exposed to anything unsavoury. You might also decide to adjust the in-game voice chat settings so only confirmed friends can speak to your child.

USE IT AS INSPIRATION

Overwatch characters represent many races, nationalities, gender identities and sexual orientations. This eclectic roster of heroes offers a superb jumping-off point for discussing racial, sexual or gender diversity with your child. Whether it's finding Nepali on a globe together or talking about non-traditional relationships, the game could be an excellent conversation starter.

LIMIT IN-GAME SPENDING

The loot boxes featured in the first Overwatch have been replaced by a rotating storefront – so users only have a set time to purchase a skin or item before it becomes unavailable. Your child can still earn plenty of items, however, through the free battle pass. In any case, we'd advise removing any payment methods – or at least setting limits in advance – if you're worried about in-game spending.

WATCH SOME GAMEPLAY

Overwatch players fight with an array of weapons and explosives, but the battles are presented in a way that forgoes blood, gore or dismemberment, regardless of the mode or characters selected. The game also usually avoids the word "kill" – referring to "eliminations" instead. Watching footage of Overwatch 2 on YouTube could help you decide whether it's suitable for your child before they play.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Games Editor of technology and entertainment website Dexerto and has been working in the gaming media for three years. A long-time fan of gaming, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have also been published on influential sites including IGN and Techradar, among others.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

AMIGO

Amigo is a social platform which purports to connect strangers from around the world – and, with built-in translation software, it reduces the expected language barriers. Focusing heavily on one-to-one chat, video calls and live streams, Amigo encourages its users to build up online relationships and unlock exclusive features such as private video and audio calls: essentially, the more that people chat, the more functions become available to them. This is an app designed with mature users very much in mind and is therefore definitely not recommended for children.

AGE RATING

18

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ONE-TO-ONE COMMUNICATION

While online chats and livestreaming are a great way to communicate with people that children can trust (such as friends and family), Amigo encourages users to connect with complete strangers and develop a friendship through private chats, calls and videos. This will be a clear red flag for most parents, due to the possibility of a child encountering inappropriate content or an online predator.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTACT

Within minutes of signing up for our trial of Amigo (and without using a profile photo), users of the opposite sex were messaging with suggestive statements such as "You're just my type" and "Let's have fun". While the app's stated intent is to help people build friendships, some users obviously seek to take those relationships in a more mature and amorous direction.

MEMBERSHIP COSTS

Like many apps that are free to download, Amigo's business model is centred on in-app purchases. Users are encouraged to pay for VIP membership – enabling them to send more messages each day and boosting their profile's visibility. People can also buy coins (again, for real money) which allow them to send virtual gifts and further increase the number of messages they can send daily.

LACK OF AGE VERIFICATION

Amigo makes no secret of the fact that it's for people aged 18 or above. There's no age verification, however, so a young person could simply sign up under a false date of birth. The app's algorithm claims to match users of similar ages (making them more compatible), but either the algorithm isn't very reliable, or most users have entered a fake age which doesn't correspond with their profile pic.

REWARDS FOR REPEATED USE

Amigo gifts virtual coins to users if they reply to messages within 10 seconds, while there are also daily rewards for posting comments, sharing a video, getting likes or simply opening the app. It also encourages increasing 'Intimacy Levels' with other users to unlock extra features: once someone's online 'friendship' reaches Intimacy Level 3, they can hold one-to-one video calls with each other.

Advice for Parents & Carers

MONITOR DOWNLOADS

As well as frequent catch-ups with your child about what they've enjoyed doing online, you could consider taking the additional step of physically checking their phone every so often to see which apps they've installed. The safest option could be to enable 'ask to buy' (Apple) or 'purchase approvals' (Android) on their device, meaning your authorisation is needed to download any apps.

RESPECT AGE RESTRICTIONS

Apps have age restrictions for a reason, and Amigo is very definitely a mature content platform. Given that many of Amigo's users apparently use a bogus date of birth, you might want to remind your child about the implications of setting up a fake profile – such as being exposed to messages and videos that make them feel uncomfortable or feeling pressured into chatting with strangers.

BLOCK, REPORT, DISCUSS

Many children already know that connecting with strangers online is dangerous, but it never hurts to refresh their memory. Whatever communication apps your child uses, make sure they're fully aware that if anything online makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, then they can block the user responsible, report the content, take a screenshot as evidence and come to tell you straight away.

ACTIVE LISTENING

If your child does approach you with a concern, make time to stop what you're doing and actively listen. Let them talk without interrupting or showing any judgement, then discuss their options and the possible solutions: this empowers them and reassures them that you're there to be supportive. If the issue is one that has put your child at risk, however, you may wish to contact the police.

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.



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