



# STOKE HILL JUNIOR

October 2022

## AUTUMN TERM, ISSUE 1

### DATES

Book Fair  
17th –21st  
October

Parent's Evening  
18th and 19th  
October 3.20-  
6.00pm

Last day of half  
term  
22nd October

Half Term  
24th –28th  
October

Deadline for  
Year 6 to apply for  
High Schools  
31st October

Year 6 Residential  
Week @Heatree  
31st October -4th  
November

Dear Parents and Carers

We're a few weeks into the new school year and there has been plenty going on. I hope that you enjoy the new look monthly update that will be sent to you at the beginning of each new month. We've taken on board the various bits of feedback and hope that this strikes the right balance between key information that you all need to know and an update of events that have happened or are coming up over the next few weeks.

Now matter how many times I've been involved with the start of a new school year, it never ceases to amaze me just how much preparation the staff put into to trying to meet the needs of all of the children. I'm really proud of the way their hard work has allowed children to settle into the new school year. Equally the first day of term for nervous and excited children seems a long time ago, but they soon got back into the routines. For those that have found the transition more challenging and lengthy , I can assure you we are committed to meeting these needs and working with families to make school a happy place for all children.

Each month we have a school value that is worked on with children throughout the school day. In September the children were asked to reflect on and be more responsible. You'll see at the top of this page that in October we'll be encouraging the children to co-operate

Jamie Sullivan  
Head of School

### School Champions

The following children received school awards in reading, writing or maths during the last month:

Reading: Lyzee (6MK), Ed (4B)

Writing: Ellis (5J), Heather (5B)

Maths: Jago (3T), Nikola (6M)



## Curriculum Day

### Curriculum Day - History

Each half term we set aside a whole day to celebrate one of the foundation subjects that the children learn. On Friday it was the turn of History.

There is almost too much to tell you, from learning about Mayans, Queens of England, Anglo Saxon excavations, Stone Age paintings to using the fire pit, making necklaces to show which clan you were in and building Saxon houses. It all started with us in assembly learning about when the first computer was made and seeing what life was like in schools during Ancient Egypt. I was delighted when I heard one of our year 3 children say to their friend, 'It's the best day ever!'



## Good luck Miss Osborne

### Maternity Leave

We are all very excited for Miss Osborne as she now begins her maternity leave, with the birth of her first child expected in the coming weeks.

Many of the children have been trying to guess the name, but we'll all have to wait a few more weeks for a cuddle and to find out the name.



### School Council



Mrs Padbury has our first 12 children raring to go having been appointed by their class to represent them on School Council. These children represent the views of the 360 children across the school and report back on ways to make the school even better. They will hold the post for a term and then another 12 children will take over. I can't wait to hear what they have to say at the first meeting.

### Green Team

One of the most popular teams that we have at Stoke Hill is the Green Team. Mr Poustie teaches the children how we can make our school more sustainable. During the day you will see them recycling and looking closely at the environment for ways to improve our carbon footprint. Later in the year I look forward to seeing more new members added to the team.



## School Office Notice

A reminder to parents that the school has now moved over to School Gateway and that ParentMail is no longer being used. The new app allows you to;

- Order your child's lunch (must be before 8.00am on the day)
- Report absence
- Make online payments

If you are still having problems pop in and see us or call 01392667830.



## Reading Bus update

You will no doubt remember that sadly our Reading Bus was badly damaged over the summer holidays. I am able to update you that the police have identified the 4 children involved and taken the appropriate course of action available to them. We are awaiting confirmation from our insurance company before we can begin to repair it and allow the children to use it again. Sometimes it's only when you haven't got something that it makes you realise just how much you love it.



## Community News

### Food Packages

At this time of year we are proud to support local charities with food donations, who then distribute to many of our families. The current economic climate is making it very challenging for families to ensure there is enough to go round. At Stoke Hill we would like to be able to directly help these families and so we would like to try and set up a new initiative that we can all be part of. In the lead up to holidays we will be asking for donations of certain items that we will ensure make their way to Stoke Hill families that really need it. This will be coordinated by our Family Support Worker, Jo McCarthy, who will also be seeking volunteers to help sort the packages and offer to deliver where appropriate. Think Stoke Hill families helping Stoke Hill families. Please see the attached list of examples of goods that can be delivered to either school. All of these new initiatives start somewhere, but it's potential is huge.



### Road Safety

Once again I must ask you all to take extra care when travelling to and from school. This term we had a very near miss, with a child being pulled back from an oncoming car. I am yet to hear back with regards the possible crossing outside the school, that I encouraged you to air your views on before the holidays. We will continue to push for the best provision, but in the meantime,

- Drive slowly around the school
- Can you car share and reduce the traffic?
- Park legally
- If children walk to school by themselves, talk to them about road safety and for the older children making sure faces are looking for traffic and not at screens
- Ask yourself, whether your child is old enough to cross the roads by themselves or whether you still need to be bringing them to school.

# GROUP CHATS

Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

### EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

### SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

### UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

### NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert; potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

### PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

### GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

### AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

### BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

### SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

## 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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