



20/1/23

FRIDAY NEWS

N^o. 17

Dear Parents,

One of the things that we most missed during the darker days of Covid-related restrictions was whole school assemblies. Like many things that we'd taken for granted, their sudden absence made us realise how important they were. After years of leading assemblies, I had certainly lost sight of just how vital these collective gatherings are in the life of a school. They provide one of the few opportunities we have in school to bring everyone into one space at the same time; this is important because it not only adds to the sense of belonging and community, it also gives us a chance to get important messages and ideas across to the whole school at the same time.

The time pressure on delivering a huge curriculum in each year group is a constant challenge for all schools. I feel that assemblies are a really valuable and often powerful opportunity to introduce or reinforce generic themes or concepts which are an important part of children's learning in school. This is not an area that we share with parents as often as we perhaps should, and I thought it might be helpful to know what is being covered in my assemblies and how they are structured.

They generally start with a piece of music playing as the children enter and a slide on the large screen with some information and questions related to that music. I try to cover as wide a variety of musical genres as possible, including the recommended pieces from the music curriculum.

I theme assemblies over a half-term or term depending on the focus area. Last term we looked at the broad question of 'How to achieve your goals'; this included assemblies looking at what happens if you get distracted with the small things, the importance of perseverance using the incredible story of Cliff Young, the idea that 'hard work beats talent, when talent doesn't work hard' using the Tortoise and the Hare fable, hearing Michael Jordan talk about how making mistakes made was the key to his success, and focusing on Steve Jobs's assertion that you need to follow your own passions.

This term, the theme of the assemblies is 'Staying Safe' and started last Monday by trying to balance the constant fear and bad news which seem to fill the news from all forms of media on a constant basis. We looked at some good news stories including some significant facts such as the average life expectancy in the UK in 2023 is around 30 years longer than it was only a hundred years ago. Over the rest of this term, we'll look at some of the potential hazards that do exist and how to manage these safely; this will include online safety, choices we make, other people (including bullying), risk taking and healthy lifestyles.

We normally finish the assembly by looking at the current House Point totals for each week and a challenge question that children can take home and enter over the course of the week using the challenge postcards and post box. By this time, staff are looking anxiously at their watches and prompting me to hurry up as it is 3.14pm and I've over run, again!

Martin Higgs
Headteacher

Remember – safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Martin Higgs (Designated Safeguarding Lead) at

head@alverton.cornwall.sch.uk or, if it is out of school hours, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Unit on 0300 1231 116;

E-mail:

multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk

Clubs

All clubs have now started. There are waiting lists for a number of them so if your child doesn't attend regularly, their place will be given to another child.

If you are more than 5 minutes late collecting your child from their club they will be put into the after school care run for which there is a charge.

Camp final payments

A reminder that the final dates for payment for camp next term as follows:

Year 4 Bude	1st March
Year 5 BF, Penryn	3rd March
Year 6 London	31st March

You can pay as little or as much whenever you would like up to the final date but please ensure full payment is made by these deadlines.

Reading

Just a reminder that you can find lots of useful information about reading and phonics at Alverton School on our school website! http://www.alverton.org.uk/web/reading_and_phonics/297522

THIS IS OUR

HELP YOUR SHELF

How it Works

It's all **free**.

**Take what you need,
whenever you need it.**



No Questions Asked – No Judgements Made

Give what you can if you would like to.

We currently have lots of items on our Help Your Shelf ready for collection which are free for anyone to take at any time.

If you prefer, you can buy a reusable bag for £1 and fill this with items from the shelf. Once you've bought your bag, you can fill it with as much as you want, as many times as you want.

Whichever way you choose, the Help Your Shelf is available all day and you can pop in at any time.

Water bottles

All children should have a named, filled water bottle in school every day which needs to be taken home to be washed regularly.

Daisy's Diary

Two weeks ago we started making thick hedge up in the wildlife garden. Normally Cornish hedges are made of granite but we are having a go at a Midlands hedge. The trees were put in five years ago and have just got to the right size! Midlands hedges involve big stakes, woven tops and cutting the trees almost all the whole way through their middles which seems a bit harsh - but then they



grow back very very thick and bushy. I watched Countryfile on how to do it and the people there making them said it was a skill passed down through generations that took years to master. But John Craven seemed to be doing alright so we have just given it a whirl. If it works I shall put a whole host of photos in the newsletter in a few weeks time. If it doesn't I probably won't...

Look at this funny old carrot found hiding in the nursery garden! I don't know why it's so bobbly—perhaps it's a special rare kind....



FEB
3



QUIZ
NIGHT

GROWN UPS' QUIZ NIGHT

PRIZES TO BE WON!

Come and test your general knowledge, socialise, and enjoy a soft drink, wine or beer from our bar.

Max team of 6, smaller groups/individuals can join forces!

An opportunity to raise funds for the school (FOAS) and meet others.

£3 PER PERSON ON THE DOOR

7-9pm in the MAIN HALL



Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust has its own Out of Hours telephone support provided by Support Matters Cornwall. This service operates from 5pm to 9am on weekdays and 24 hours a day at weekends and bank holidays. The service is open to all patients (aged 16+) under the care of the Trust's mental health services. Support can be delivered over the telephone, via text, email or web chat. Call free on **0800 001 4330**.



Family
Line

0808 802 6666

ChildLine

0800 1111



0300 123 3393

www.mind.org.uk



for better mental health

Download this image onto your phone for **when you might need help**



Samaritans: 24h
Emotional support to anyone in distress, struggling to cope, or at risk of suicide.

116 123

Shout: 24h
Text service, free on all major networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere.

• If you're over 18, text the word **SHOUT**

• Under 18s, text **YM**

Text: **85258**

Cornwall's 24/7 NHS mental health support

Call for free, any time day or night if you are worried about your own or someone else's mental health. The team behind the 24/7 open access telephone service will listen to you and determine how best to help

0800 038 5300

Valued Lives:

Supports people who are experiencing mental or emotional distress in Cornwall. Every day, 5.30pm - midnight.

01209 901438

If you, or someone else, is in immediate danger call **999**



www.cornwall.gov.uk/mentalhealth

If you're worried about a child:

0808 800 5000

help@nspcc.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

Penzance CTIPA Foodbank

The CTIPA Foodbank in Penzance provides food for anyone in need. If their support would be helpful to you, just phone Veryan or Adele in the office in confidence on 01736 364087 and they can phone the Foodbank for you who will be able to help.

The Foodbank are extremely busy at the moment and are very grateful for any donations.

citizens
advice

0344 411 1444

ON YOUR SIDE
NO MATTER WHAT

0800 58 58 58

THECALMZONE.NET/WEBCHAT

5PM-MIDNIGHT | FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | ANONYMOUS

CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
LIVING
MISERABLY
CALM

"It's alright to ask for help"

SAMARITANS

116 123

NATIONAL DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE HELPLINE
0808 2000 247
24/7 CONFIDENTIAL
FREEPHONE

AT HOME
SHOULDN'T
MEAN
AT RISK

#YOUARENOTALONE

FIND SUPPORT AT:
gov.uk/domestic-violence

WCWAid

West Cornwall Women's Aid

01736 367539

https://www.wcwaid.co.uk/helpline

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about TWITTER



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Twitter is a social media network which allows users to post short messages (tweets) of up to 280 characters. Tweets can consist of text, photos, videos, audio, links, polls and GIFs – often linked by hashtags if they share a common theme or message. Hashtags receiving high levels of interest are said to be ‘trending’. Twitter users can engage with other people’s posts by liking, retweeting (sharing) or tweeting back (commenting on). Since the entrepreneur Elon Musk acquired Twitter in October 2022 for \$44 billion, he has implemented several major changes to the platform.

INTERACTION WITH STRANGERS

Tweets are public by default, meaning that anyone can view and interact with posts, follow someone and send direct messages. The concern here is that young people may therefore connect and communicate with strangers. Some individuals may follow a young person’s Twitter account simply because they have similar interests; however, others may turn out to have more sinister intentions.

FIXATION ON VIEW COUNT

Twitter has recently introduced a ‘view count’ feature – telling users how many people have seen their tweet (even if they haven’t reacted to it). Previous research has found that unfavourable comparisons with other social media users can cause young people to experience feelings of insecurity, jealousy and low self-esteem – leading to an obsession with increasing their numbers.

TROLLS AND BULLYING

The anonymity offered by fake profiles encourages some users to send tweets designed to provoke a reaction; to disrupt conversations; to spark an argument; or to harass the recipient. Such trolling and bullying can impact the mental wellbeing of both the target and anyone who witnesses it. Encourage your child to come to you if they experience such behaviour on Twitter, or if they see it taking place.

PAID-FOR VERIFICATION

Previously, if a Twitter profile displayed a blue tick icon, it meant that the owner – usually a celebrity or a major organisation – had been verified as genuine. Now, however, anyone can pay for a Twitter Blue subscription to receive the tick, with the platform carrying out limited checks on the account’s authenticity. This could easily lead to more fake accounts impersonating real people or companies.

CONTENT MODERATION CHANGES

In late 2022, Twitter stated that their ‘policy enforcement will rely more heavily on de-amplification of violative content’ (reduction of speech, but not freedom of reach). No policies have changed yet, but this wording suggests they may limit who can see posts rather than removing them. While supporting free speech, this could encourage an environment where some toxic content remains online.

HIJACKED HASHTAGS

The hashtag (#) is one of Twitter’s most recognisable facets, allowing users to find specific trends or topics. But the sheer volume of tweets each hour can rapidly distort a hashtag’s meaning: an initially innocent search term can quickly end up returning inappropriate results. This is common with ‘trending’ hashtags, as people know that using them will get their tweet seen by a larger audience.

Advice for Parents & Carers

SET ACCOUNTS TO PRIVATE

To reduce some of the fear of your child’s tweets being seen and shared by anyone, you can always make their account protected. This means that your child has to give approval for another user to view their posts. You can change Twitter’s privacy settings so that your child can’t be messaged directly by other people on the platform and their geographical location won’t be shared.

FOSTER CRITICAL THINKING

It can be difficult for anyone to ascertain if something online is real or false, but particularly for young people. Encourage your child to check several reputable sources to determine if a story they’ve seen is true; remind them to watch out for scams and think about the message’s possible motive. Emphasise that it’s not a good idea to retweet something if they aren’t sure it’s correct.

ENGAGE SAFETY MODE

When Safety Mode is activated, Twitter checks for abusive or spammy behaviour such as hurtful language or repeated negative replies. The platform then flags these suspect accounts and blocks them from responding to your child’s tweets. The autoblock function then prevents these accounts from interacting with your child’s again for seven days.

EXPLORE THE NEW SETTINGS

Previously, any user could reply to anyone else’s tweets. However, the new conversation settings let your child determine who can reply to their posts – either by selecting everyone (the default option), people they follow or only people they mention (using the @ symbol). This improvement has given users extra control, providing them with more protection from trolls and online abuse.

PAUSE BEFORE POSTING

It’s important that young people think about what they’re about to post and whether they might regret it later. Twitter has developed ‘nudges’: little prompts which appear if someone is about to tweet using harmful or offensive language. These nudges promote more positive online behaviour by giving users an opportunity to pause and consider their words before they post something.

BLOCK, REPORT OR MUTE

If someone is upsetting your child on Twitter, you can block and report them. Blocking stops them from messaging or following your child, while reporting an account alerts Twitter to investigate possible misuse. The ‘mute’ feature, meanwhile, keeps tweets from a specific account (or which include certain words) out of your child’s timeline. The other user won’t know that they’ve been muted.

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.



BE CAREFUL WHO TO FOLLOW

As accounts are no longer being as rigorously verified under the ‘blue tick’ system, it’s essential that young Twitter users understand what this means, in terms of people not necessarily being who they claim. Anyone who your child only knows online is still a stranger, regardless of how long they’ve been communicating for. Remind your child never to disclose personal information on social media.

Source: <https://blog.twitter.com/common-thread/en/topics/stories/2022/how-twitter-is-nudging-users-healthier-conversations> | https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/product/2022/twitter-blue-update | https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2022/twitter-2-0-our-continued-commitment-to-the-public-conversation | <https://scholarworks.lib.esusb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=213&context=std>

There is a lot of help and advice available to help you keep your children safe online. Have a look at the Online Safety section of our website for lots of useful information and links http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/online_safety_for_families/246722. Your child’s teacher will also always be happy to talk to you about online safety.

Free School Meals / Pupil Premium

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/>

Registering a child as eligible for free school meals (as described below) means that your child receives a free meal every day (though they can, of course, bring a packed lunch should they prefer) but there are additional benefits too. Pupil Premium brings more money into the school to help children achieve and learn. Children in receipt of the Pupil Premium also receive other benefits (eg contributions towards Key Stage 2 camps and funding to use for uniform, music lessons, trips etc). At some times, there are further benefits for these children such as food vouchers during holiday times where these are given. Please see the Pupil Premium Provision Map in the Pupil Premium section of our website http://www.alverton.org.uk/website/pupil_premium/172518 or speak to Mrs Gill or Mrs Stacey in the office or contact Mrs O'Rourke who leads our Pupil Premium provision.

The easiest and quickest way to apply for free school meals is online through the Cornwall Council website but, if you are unable to do this, you can call the Free School Meals team on 01872 323298 and a member of the team will call you back to complete the application over the phone.

A child is eligible for free school meals if their parent / carer (or the child themselves) receives any of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an annual income of less than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get) as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods

If you are claiming the benefits listed below you are NOT eligible for free school meals, regardless of what other benefits / credits are being claimed:

- Working Tax Credit
- Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and / or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance

























NB All Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) initiative, regardless of what benefits are being claimed. However, some children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 may also have an entitlement to benefits-related free school meals and it is important to apply for these if you think your child may be eligible.

Registering for free school meals / Pupil Premium is confidential. If you think that your child is eligible, we strongly recommend that you contact Cornwall Council as detailed above. Mrs Gill and Mrs Stacey in the office will also be able to help you and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

STARS OF THE WEEK



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p> Kittiwakes</p> <p> Curlews</p> <p> Puffins</p> <p> Owls</p> <p> Kingfishers</p> <p> Trencom</p> <p> Lanyon</p> <p> Kerris</p> <p> Bodrifty</p> <p> Bosigran</p> <p> Kenidjack</p> <p> Lunchtime Star</p> | <p> Bowen</p> <p> Rex</p> <p> Elliot</p> <p> Tyler</p> <p> Jensen</p> <p> Jemima</p> <p> Gabija</p> <p> Kitty</p> <p> Breidis</p> <p> Oscar</p> <p> Fred</p> <p> Ruby H</p> | <p>for your enthusiasm & creativity. Super effort in phonics too</p> <p>for your fantastic reading & making every effort at home & at school</p> <p>for his thoughtful & well written poster this week</p> <p>for effort & determination in Maths & writing this week</p> <p>for working so hard in all of his learning</p> <p>for being such a lovely & hard working individual</p> <p>for her fantastic attitude to learning & writing an excellent poe</p> <p>for her beautiful shape poem & fantastic effort in dance</p> <p>for a super attitude & hard work in Maths this week</p> <p>for working extremely hard on his arithmetic skills. You are a star!</p> <p>for superbly imaginative writing</p> <p>for her beautiful smile and lovely manners</p> |
|--|---|--|

It's finally beginning, the long awaited lighter days are actually here. I know I wrote about them recently but I was genuinely wondering how I was going to cope with the rain and dark days that seemed to be going on for ever, then I felt the days were getting longer for sure and then I wondered if I'd got it wrong...but no, it's true. It's not quite light when I get to school but it's no longer really dark and if I don't stay too late in the evenings then I can get home at dusk too. It makes me feel happier, lighter and warmer. I still have my amazing support network to help me on those days when life gets to me, because it does. There are days when I feel stressed and sad, while the constant rain seems to be ever present, when I wake up and wonder if I'll ever be dry again. And the day to day issues, based mainly around money, don't help. So I turn to others for help, comfort, support and a shoulder. Works for me every time. I'm here and can do the same for you too. Don't forget that. My very best wishes, Mrs Daylak xxx

DIARY DATES

Friday 3rd February 7pm for 7.30pm start	FOAS Quiz Night
Friday 10th February 3.15pm	School closes for half term
Monday 20th February 8.45am	School opens after half term