



EDITH CAVELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ambitious, Achieving and Nurturing

Manton Lane, Bedford. MK41 7NH

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<https://www.edithcavellprimary.co.uk/>

Newsletter – February/March 2026

A message from Miss Cooke

Our annual sponsored event – our BIG Run/Walk/Jog took place on Thursday 26th February. The event was a big success with the whole school taking part in some way. In their allotted slot, children ran, walked and jogged around the circuit. Some children managed in excess of 20 laps. I managed 20 laps in the whole day! I took part with every year group and phase to support, encourage and cheer them on.

Now we have completed the activity we ask that all sponsor money be sent in to school. If every child in the school raises a minimum of £2 we will raise almost £600. We would love to raise over £1000 to spend on reading books for classrooms and the reading scheme.

For every child who raises £25 or more, there will be a prize.

I have written to parents this week to say that we will not be opening the gates to the school until 8.30am each morning. We have made this decision because there has been an increasing number of children and parents arriving at school before 8am. It is not safe for children to be unsupervised on the playground for up to 45 minutes in a morning. If parents need their children to be in school before 8.30am, they can book them into Breakfast Club. Details and costs are displayed on the school website.

It was fantastic to see so many parents attend the Showcase events before half term. The opportunity for parents to look at the evidence of learning that their children are producing in their exercise books is one half of understanding the progress that your child is making. The equally important half is having discussions with your child's class teacher at our parent consultation events. A specific letter has been emailed out to all parents to strongly request that ALL parents make appointments to see their child's class teacher. There are also further details later in this newsletter. Your support can make such a positive impact on your child's learning. Attending parent consultations is a vital part of an effective partnership with the school to work together to support, encourage and enable your child to make progress in their learning all across the curriculum. Please make an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher.

I wrote to the parents of the children in Amber and Topaz classes just before half term to inform them that Mrs Wibberley will not be in school this half term. This is because she has been diagnosed with breast cancer and is undergoing treatment. Mrs Wibberley was keen that she was honest with the whole school community about her absence this half term. I have been in constant contact with Mrs Wibberley and following some treatment she is recovering well at home. I will keep you updated with her progress.

On a positive note, I can happily report that Mrs Rahman has given birth to her second daughter. Both Mum and daughter are well and thriving.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to speak to me in the playground or make an appointment to come and see me.



Miss Cooke



Careers Day



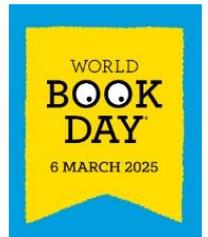
On Wednesday 4th March we will be holding our Annual Careers Day. The children will be thinking about the different careers that they might like to consider when they are older. We want to inspire and enthuse the children to think about the different jobs that could be open to them in their future and the paths that they can take to achieve their aspirations. We hope that the children will have the opportunity to meet, talk with and question visitors who are working in a huge range of professions about their career paths, what they enjoy about their work as well as the down sides, unknown or unseen impact or consequences of their jobs. If you can help with this, please get in touch with Miss Cooke.

World Book Day is Friday 6th March 2026.

The national World Book Day is Thursday 5th March, but due to the school Careers Day on Wednesday 4th February, we will be celebrating World Book Day on **Friday 6th March**.

Children are invited to dress as their favourite character from a book. This does not have to be a purchased expensive costume, most book characters in books wear normal everyday clothes.

For example, Horrid Henry is a school boy who wore normal children's clothes and Gemma in Jacqueline Wilson's Best Friends wore normal children's clothes. There are many book characters who wear normal children's clothes. Have that conversation with your children about who are characters in books that they have enjoyed and what they wore. World book day is all about talking about books, enjoying books and learning about new books, it is not about parents spending lots of money on costumes for a dress up day.



Parent Consultations and SEND co-production meetings – Mon 9th, Tue 10th and Wed 11th March.

Spring Term Parent Consultations, will also incorporate SEND Parent Co-production consultations, and will be offered as either face to face or virtual meetings. However, please note that **ALL** bookings are to be made via School Cloud using the following link. <https://edithcavellprimary.schoolcloud.co.uk/>

Parents should all have their own personal log on to this system from using it in the autumn term.

ALL PARENTS MUST BOOK A CONSULTATION APPOINTMENT WITH THEIR CHILD'S CLASS TEACHER.

The table below outlines when class teachers will be available for consultation meetings. We respectfully ask that parents make all efforts to be available on these days and times as having to arrange additional alternative dates to meet with parents significantly adds to teacher's workload.

Class	How to book appointment	Date	Time	Date	Time
Little Treasures Mrs Pallister	Book with teacher	Mon 9th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Amber & Topaz Miss Tolley	Book with teacher	Mon 9th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	4pm – 6pm
Emerald Miss Nyamande	Book with teacher	Mon 9th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Jade Miss Martin	Book with teacher	Mon 9th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 5pm
Aquamarines Mrs Fowler	Book via SchoolCloud	Mon 9th March	2pm – 6pm	Tue 10th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Garnet Miss Bondon	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Mon 9th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Ruby Miss Dakin	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Mon 9 th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Sapphire Mr Mortimer	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Mon 9th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Opal Mrs Anderson	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Quartz Mrs O'Dell	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 6pm
Pearl Mr Parks	Book via SchoolCloud	Tue 10th March	2pm – 6pm	Wed 11th March	3.45pm – 6pm

Mother's Day Breakfast – Friday 13th March 2026



Our now annual Mother's Day Breakfast will take place on Friday 13th March. Children along with their Mums, step mums, Grandmothers or significant female carers are invited to join us for Mother's Day Breakfast on Friday 13th March in the school hall. Doors will open at 8am. There is no cost for this event, but there will be a bowl for donations for anyone wishing to make a donation.

Breakfast club will take place in Sapphire room on this day.

Red Nose Day – Friday 20th March 2026

We will again be marking Red Nose Day by holding a non-uniform day. Children can dress in Red or dress as a Superhero for the day and make a minimum £1 donation either on Parent Pay or in cash on the day.

Think outside the box about dressing as a superhero – there were some wonderful costumes last year as children dressed as scientists, doctors, firemen and nurses.



Attendance – 92% National Threshold

Due to very high levels of sickness and illness since the start of the school year across all year groups, the levels of attendance for many children have fallen below the national expectation of 92%.

Thank you to all parents who ensure that they contact the school on the first day that their child is absent and on subsequent days. This ensures that we are fully informed of the reason why a child is absent and can update our records accordingly.

As a school we constantly monitor levels of attendance and in accordance with The Bedford Borough Attendance Toolkit we formally review levels of attendance each month. When a child's attendance falls below the national expectation of 92% we will write to parents to inform them that their child's attendance has fallen below the national expectation of 92%. We will write to all parents where their child's attendance has fallen below 92% regardless of the reason for the fall in attendance.

Learning moves on so quickly in school and if your child is absent for a considerable amount of days their learning and progress will suffer.

If your child is absent for ½ a day every week, their attendance will only be 90% - equivalent to 4 weeks of school and learning missed over the year.

If 90% attendance continues over 5 years that is equivalent to half a year of school and learning missed.

All children should be at school every day unless they are too ill to attend. If you are not sure, please send them in to school and we will send them home if they are unwell. If they seem a little unwell in the morning and make a recovery during the day – please bring them in. Establishing good attendance habits is important early in a child's school career, as this is a trait that will serve them well throughout life.



Fun reading on a Friday



We would like to remind you that we are continuing with our fun reading with your child on Friday mornings 8.45am – 9am. For those of you who are new to our school, all parents and grandparents are invited in to school on a Friday from 8.45-9am to listen to your child read. Just go along to your child's classroom.

Advance Warning

Early finish on Friday, 27th March 2026

We would like to give parents the opportunity to collect their children early on the afternoon of the last day of term, Friday, 27th March 2026. Children may be collected at **1.45pm**.

Any child may stay in school until the normal end of the school day if parents are working or they do not wish to collect them early.

Please note: Year 5 and Year 6 children will not be allowed to leave early without the school receiving a completed form from parents. Forms have been emailed to parents.

Parents may collect their child/ren at the early finish time from their normal class. Any children not collected at the early finish time, will be cared for in their phase groups until the normal end of day.

GEMS – Afterschool Club

The after-school club will be available **until 4.30pm on Friday, 27th March 2026** and bookings should be made in the normal way via Parent Pay.

Message from Friends of Edith Cavell –(FoEC)

A massive thank you to all the disco goers! It's a real treat to see so many happy faces! Thank you for all the volunteers too, these events couldn't run without support from staff and parents/carers.

We are celebrating the important women in our lives on Thursday 12th March the Moher's Day shop will be open after school in the playground. Bunches of daffodils will be sold at £1.50. Please can we ask that the correct cash is brought in as it's hard to give change.

Thank you for your continued support. Please if you can volunteer get in touch. The charity will need a new Chair from September 2027 but it would be great to start the hand over asap!

Many thank

FOEC

From Bedfordshire Police – For Parents and Carers



This session is aimed at parent/carers (including foster carers/grandparents) to gain an understanding on the important issues surrounding county lines, as well as the impact that it can have on young people and their families, and the support that is available to young people who are impacted/suffering from County Lines and Criminal Exploitation.

Topics will include:

- County Lines, child criminal exploitation (CCE) and financial exploitation,
- Stages of recruitment,
- Push and pull factors,
- The National Referral Mechanism,
- The Psychological impact
- Social media, Debt bondage, plus more

Dates/times with links

- **Thursday 5th March 2026(10am – 11.30pm)** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/county-lines-awareness-webinar-for-parentcarers-only-tickets-1982277709992?aff=oddtcreator>

Catch 22 – Knife Crime & County Lines

This session is aimed at parent/carers (including foster carers/grandparents) to gain an understanding on the important issues surrounding knife crime, county lines and how they interlink, as well as the impact and support that this has on young people and their families, affected by knife crime and county lines

Topics will include

- How county lines exploitation contributes to knife crime among young people.
- Identifying the common weapons involved
- Examines why these knives are chosen
- How the pressures of county lines activity normalise violence for exploited young people.
- The wider impact on communities and the serious legal consequences of knife possession and the importance of early intervention, education, and strong multi-agency safeguarding to prevent both exploitation and knife carrying.

Webinar Dates & Times:

- **Monday 23rd February 10:30AM - 12:00PM** - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/knife-crime-county-lines-understanding-the-hidden-link-tickets-1982180735940?aff=oddtcreator>

Wednesday 4th March 16:30 - 18:00PM - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/knife-crime-county-lines-understanding-the-hidden-linkparents-carers-tickets-1982181001735?aff=oddtcreator>

Ivison Trust Webinars

Child Exploitation and Missing From Home – Free parent webinar

These sessions are free and designed specifically for parents/carers. They aim to help parents understand the links between children going missing and different forms of exploitation, including CCE and County Lines.

These sessions help parents/carers to understand:

- Why children go missing
- How missing episodes link to grooming and exploitation
- Warning signs and risk indicators
- How parents can be supported

www.edithcavellprimary.co.uk

- Where to seek additional help

Webinar: *Child Exploitation and Missing From Home – Free parent webinar*

- 19 March 2026 – 7:00pm–8:30pm (East of England) - <https://ivisontrust-civi.org.uk/civicrm/event/register?reset=1&id=159>

Thank you for your support

Regards

Beds Police Education and Diversion Team



NEW! Launched for Safer Internet Day: The NSPCC has partnered with Vodafone to develop an **online safety guide** for parents and carers of **children under 5**. The guide contains useful information about **common risks** this age group face, some guidance around **screen time limits** and lots of **practical tips** for families:

[Click here: A parent's guide to online safety for children under five | NSPCC](#)

For Parents –

Set Up Safe Guide Once again Internet Matters have put together a brilliant new resource for parents and carers. This time it's a Set Up Safe guide which simplifies all the confusing tech/device settings advising that online safety works best when it's shaped around how children actually use their devices, it's all about 'layering'.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/setupsafe/>

Top tips for parents and carers

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026/top-tips-for-parents-and-carers>

Top tips for children and young people

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026/top-tips-for-young-people>

You can find more information here:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026>

For Parents - New Parental Control Videos

A couple of days ago Internet Matters uploaded 3 new short videos onto YouTube, each focussing on parental controls for YouTube, Roblox and TikTok, the links are:

- [**YouTube parental controls top features.**](#)
- [**The top 3 parental controls to use on Roblox.**](#)
- [**The top 3 parental controls to use on TikTok.**](#)

Attendance

Each week in school we award the 'Attendance Bear' to the class that has had the best attendance in the school. The children enjoy having Attendance Bear in their classroom for the week and eagerly await the results each week. Please help your child's class earn the privilege of looking after Attendance Bear for the week by ensuring that your child attends school every day. The winners of Attendance Bear so far in February have been:

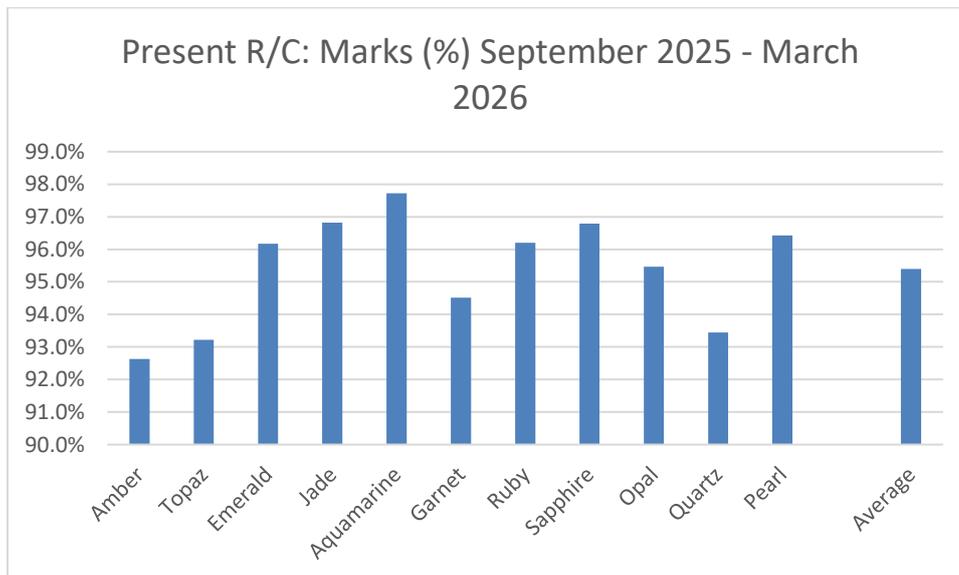


w/c 2nd Feb. – Jade Class

w/c 9th Feb. – Sapphire Class

w/c 23rd Feb. – Opal Class

Attendance – March 2025



Stars of the Week

February 2026

Amber

Sofia
Natasha
Bento
Amelia
Ely

Topaz

Kulraj
Albert
Avyaan
Kristian

Pearl

Stefan
Whole Class

Emerald

Harry
David
Gabi
Rahman
Azeenah

Jade

Santina
Ayize
Roksana
Willow

Opal

Zephy
Paul
Kai
Elsie
Remel

Ruby

Isla B.
Oliver-James
Whole Class
Xavier
Eljoia

Garnet

Kaelon
Ava

Quartz

Rosalee
Kian
Aadhav
Nella
Oba

Aquamarine

Patrick
Alexa
Jamal
Lyla
Olivia Z.

Sapphire

Carys
Dawid
Adriana
Ellie

Important Dates - Spring 2026

Wed 4 th	Careers Day Lego Club
Fri 6 th	World Book Day
Mon 9 th	2pm - KS1 & EYFS Parent Consultations
Tue 10 th	2pm - KS2 Parent Consultations
Wed 11 th	3.45pm – Parent Consultations Lego club
Fri 13 th	Mother’s Day Breakfast – 8am
Wed 18 th	Lego Club
Fri 20 th	Comic Relief – Non uniform Day
Tue 24 th	Termly Music Showcase
Wed 25 th	LKS2 – Sing on concert @ Corn Exchange Lego Club
Fri 27 th	End of Term – Early Finish

Academic Year 2025 -2026

Spring Term 2026

Training day – Monday 5th January 2026
Children return – Tuesday 6th January 2026
Half term – Monday 16th February 2026
Children return – Monday 23rd February 2026
Term ends – Friday 27th March 2026

Summer Term 2026

Training Day – Monday 13th April 2026
Children return – Tuesday 14th April 2026
May Day – Monday 4th May 2026
Half term – Monday 25th May 2026
Children return – Monday 1st June 2026
Term Ends – Friday 17th July 2026

The school term dates for 2026 – 2027 are available on the school website.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Currently, children are growing up in an immediate and throwaway culture when it comes to content that's consumed online. So much material is now deliberately created to be shorter in nature – and may often contain hidden elements such as advertising, or extreme political and cultural views. With complex algorithms built to keep people on their phones and engaging with social media content, it's becoming increasingly difficult to reduce time spent on these platforms.

1 REDUCE DOOMSCROLLING

It's concerning how common for young people to spend hours 'doomscrolling': trawling through social media and aimlessly viewing every post they see, many of which might make them feel sad or anxious. Social media can be useful for keeping in touch with friends and family, as well as staying up to date on current events. However, it's important to use it with a clear purpose, instead of endlessly scrolling through content, which could lead to young people accidentally discovering harmful material.

2 TALK ABOUT THE CONTENT

It's important to keep apprised of the kind of content that a young person is being exposed to. Discussing what they're watching online can help you understand why they're using social media in the first place. Furthermore, ensure that children are aware of hidden content, such as advertising of a product – and that they know how to spot that the creator is being paid to talk about it.

3 FIND POSITIVE ASPECTS

Despite all the concerns, there's plenty of wholesome content on social media. It's worth spending time with children to help them find something suitable and enjoyable. Perhaps you'll even discover a joint interest, and you can enjoy the content alongside the child. As part of this, you should also point out why certain things shouldn't be given attention, explaining why it isn't suitable and why it's been created in the first place.

4 REDUCE SCREENTIME

Young people can sometimes be unaware of the exact amount of time they spend looking at social media. Smart phones don't just have the capacity to monitor screentime; they also record how much time is spent on each app. Consider setting targets to reduce this and support children to meet these goals, gradually reducing the amount of time spent on different apps.

5 FILL THE VOID

Monitoring and reducing screentime can create a lot of free time to fill, and young people can even face withdrawal symptoms when made to step away from their phones. To mitigate this, consider what offline activities you could introduce the child to, and what they would enjoy. This can ensure that young users will permanently cut down on their screentime, rather than temporarily doing so while they know it's being monitored.

6 REDUCE NOTIFICATIONS

One way in which social media platforms keep people coming back is through notifications. The algorithms behind these apps track people's daily habits, including the times of the day where they're most likely to engage with the platform. This data is then used to deliver specifically timed notifications to draw them back in. To avoid young users being exposed to this tactic, simply turn off notifications for the app in their phone's settings.

7 LIVE IN THE REAL WORLD

Overexposure to social media can distort someone's perception of the real world – from body norms to social conventions. This filtered environment can make it hard for young people to distinguish reality from online content, which is now becoming even more difficult with the rise of AI. To mitigate this concern, take time to teach young people how to discern truth from fiction, both on and off social media.

8 DIGITAL DETOX

Encouraging young people to take a 'digital detox', from even just a couple of the apps that they use, can result in an overall reduction of screentime and less exposure to potentially harmful content. Alternatively, rather than avoiding the app entirely, encourage children to take a 'digital detox' from content creators and influencers, and instead, keep in touch with friends and family – which is generally a far healthier use of these platforms.

9 MODEL GOOD BEHAVIOUR

Consider the habits that you're demonstrating to your children. How much time do you spend on your phone? How much do you 'doomscroll'? Comparing your own usage with the child's could put things into perspective for them – or if it turns out that you're also overusing social media, it can turn screentime reduction into a joint mission, which you and the child can work on together.

10 BE CLEAR ON THE "WHY"

Research shows that young people can become addicted to social media. There are many schools that are moving towards being 'phone free' due to the negative impacts of using social media and phones continuously. It's important to explain to young people why managing screentime is important. Set out the benefits and ensure they have all the relevant information, so it's not just seen as a punishment.

Meet Our Expert

John Inasley is a senior leader in a Birmingham secondary school and has vast experience in leading schools over the past 15 years – including the development of computing curriculums across primary and secondary schools, writing e-safety policies and supporting schools with computing and e-safety advice.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/top-tips-for-safety-on-social-media>



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency' – plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original... and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2023, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID. There is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't reopen them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution; get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can give permission to My Contacts or My Contacts Except... Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Check in with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a Locked Chats folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they've stored in there, who they're talking to, and why they want to keep these chats hidden. Also, if children send any View Once content, it could be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that words can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a good impression, to avoid joining in if conversations turn towards bullying, and to respond to such situations in an appropriate way. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that a user posts to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

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.



The National College

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

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