



Happy New Year and warm welcome to the Spring Term! We hope that you all managed to stay healthy over the Christmas break and spend some quality time with your friends and family.

The children seem excited to be back at school, catching up with their friends and starting new topics. You will be receiving this half term's curriculum maps and homework menus in the next few days so that you can see what learning will be happening and find out how you can support this at home.

Can we take this opportunity to remind you that we hold a coffee morning for parents/carers every Tuesday morning in the dining room from 9-10. This is a chance for you to meet up with other parents /carers and chat, get to know school staff better or ask any questions that you may have over a hot drink. The sessions are very informal and friendly. We would love to see more of you there.

We will also be opening the library every day after school until 4pm from next week. You are very welcome to pop in with your children to share books together. There will be hot drinks available for adults at no charge.

### Our attendance target is 97%

This week's attendance:

**Whole School - 94.9%**

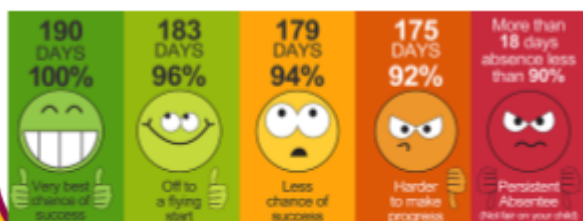
**Year 3 - 93.4%**

**Year 4 - 94.8%**

**Year 5 - 96.3%**

**Year 6 - 95%**

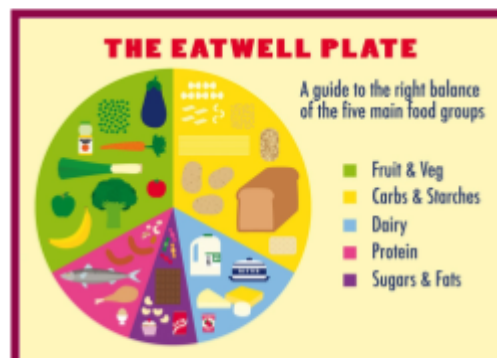
We are still hoping to see some green scores next week!



### Healthy Eating

The children really benefit from a mid-morning snack, but we would remind you that this should be fruit or vegetables where possible and definitely not sweets or chocolate.

Thank you :)



## **Year 3 News**

In Year 3, we have had a brilliant week. We have settled back into routines and into our lessons. We have been working hard on column subtraction and have been looking at our new text for English (Little Red Reading Hood). We have started to look at maps and learn about mountains. We have also been doing work on belonging and being part of a team. We have all designed our team flags. In Year 3 we are focussing on our school rule of 'Be ready' and hoping to see this over the next few weeks. Please keep learning times tables and practising reading before the homework menu comes out in the next few weeks. Keep working hard Year 3 - you are doing great.!

Mrs Hillier

## **Year 4 News**

In Year 4 we have had a brilliant week. We have settled back into routines and have focused straight on our learning. We have been working hard on factors in Maths and have been looking at a wordless story called 'Journey' in English. The class novel, that we are going to read this half term, is called 'The Secrets of the Sun King' by Emma Carroll. We have started learning about the water cycle in Geography; the difference between solids, liquids and gases in Science; and Judaism in RE. We have also been doing work on belonging and being part of a team. We have all designed our team flags. Please keep learning times tables and making sure that they read 3 times a week before the homework menu comes out in the next few weeks. Well done for a great first week back Year 4 and I've had a lovely first week as your Head of Year.

Mrs Preston

## **Year 5 News**

Year 5 have had a successful return to school and have settled in well to their learning and routines. This week, we have been looking at fractions and begun our new class novel "Cosmic' by Frank Cottrell-Boyce, which links to our Space topic in science. We have also started to explore North and South America in our theme work and locate these in our map work. I am really proud of the focus on learning within Year 5!

Miss Sutcliffe

## **Year 6 News**

Year 6 have had a really positive start to term. We have studied suspense stories and used figurative language to create tension for the reader. In maths, we are converting fractions, decimals and percentages and continuing to practise our arithmetic skills. Our new topic is trade and economics, which we are already enjoying, especially playing a trading game to understand how goods are traded around the world!

Mrs Grigg

## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# MINECRAFT

Age Rating  
**7+**

Minecraft is a beloved classic of modern gaming. First released in 2011, this open-ended 'sandbox' game of building and exploration still has over 140 million players who happily return to play it at least once every month. Minecraft has also been utilised for much more than just entertainment: it's sometimes used in schools to teach children coding, and it's also employed as a tool for computer-aided design, which is another valuable skill. Encouraging creativity and problem solving, Minecraft has plenty to offer gamers of all ages, and it's available on almost all video game platforms.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### PUBLIC SERVERS

Joining a public network (called a server) lets your child potentially interact with strangers through text chat. Some servers focus on building, while others are dedicated to role-playing – encouraging direct player interaction. Anyone can join public servers and connecting to one is relatively simple. Public server IP addresses (and therefore someone's location) are easy to find with search engines.

#### GRIEFING

Some people in Minecraft delight in purposefully damaging or destroying another player's creation. This is called 'griefing' and is a form of bullying. It intentionally spoils someone else's experience in the game by deleting hours of their work and forcing them to start from scratch. Many public servers treat griefing as a severe offence and frequently ban offenders.

#### ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's gameplay is relatively simple, and the outcome (when a child has built something new, for instance) can be extremely gratifying. This can make the game highly addictive. It's easy to lose track of time while playing Minecraft, causing committed young players to forget about other activities like homework or enjoying family time.

#### SCARY ELEMENTS

The visual design and gameplay of Minecraft is purposefully child-friendly, so there's nothing too unworldly in the game. However, some of the 'bosses' that can be encountered might prove a little too scary for very young players. In the game, certain enemies come out at night and are accompanied by audio – such as zombie moans and skeleton bone rattles – that may unsettle young ones.

#### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

After initially buying the game, players can make optional extra purchases for cosmetic items and other bonuses. Minecraft Realms is an optional online subscription (requiring regular payments) that lets users run a multiplayer server to play with their friends. Most games consoles also need an active subscription to enable online play – so online gaming can quickly become an expensive hobby.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

#### RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

There are a lot of Minecraft content creators who release helpful videos about the game on YouTube and Twitch. Not all of these, however, are suitable for children. Watching these content creators' channels yourself first is a safe way to find appropriate Minecraft videos to share with your children. This also helps you learn more about the game itself, and how your child plays it.

#### CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting 'Creative' or 'Peaceful' mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of moaning zombies or creepers damaging your build.

#### HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for your child to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given the necessary joining details. A private server also lets you control who is allowed to enter and – if necessary – to ban someone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft.

#### ENCOURAGE BREAKS

It's easy for the hours to fly by while your child is playing Minecraft, so reminding them to take regular breaks is essential. This is a useful way for them to learn good time management, which they'll benefit from as they get older. It will also teach them to play their favourite games in moderation – limiting addictive behaviour and allowing them to manage their day better.



#### TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone needs to have contact with a stranger online. Talking to your child about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan in place for dealing with any hostile or difficult strangers. Ensure that your child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online, and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

#### Meet Our Expert

Care Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2016, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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## Upcoming Events

**Monday - Friday each week - library open for children and parents from 3:15 - 4:00.**

**Tuesday each week - Parents' Coffee morning in the Dining Room from 9-10.**

**Monday 16th to Friday 20th January - Blackwater Class at Into University**

## Stars of the Week

Each week, every teacher chooses a Star of the Week, based on our school values of **Aspiration**, **Learning**, **Tenacity**, **Opportunity** and **Nurture**. Here are this week's Stars:

Year 3

**Preston, Ronnie, Scarlett and Bailey**

Year 4

**Joshua C, Poppi, Miya and Nico**

Year 5

**Riley B, Darryl, Lexi Rae and Greg**

Year 6

**Nate, Alexandra Rebecca, Albert and Lily May**