

Robert Browning, Snowsfields and Tower Bridge Primary Schools

We learn and succeed together



 [@robertbrowning.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/robertbrowning.bsky.social) [@towerbridgeschool.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/towerbridgeschool.bsky.social) [@snsprimary.bsky.social](https://twitter.com/snsprimary.bsky.social)
Find us at: www.thebridgesfederation.org.uk

Newsletter 17th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please check your schools 'dates for your diary' box for upcoming class assemblies.

It has been a 'back to normal' week this week, with all our children back in their schools. Staff and children have shared how much they enjoyed spending time together and they are looking forward to 'planned' shared events in the future.

A reminder to download and login to the the Arbor app and if you haven't done so, please can you add this to your to do list to do this weekend. If you are having any difficulties with the app please contact your school office.

The children are working towards earning a yellow wristband for 100% attendance and punctuality for this spring 1 half term. Please support your child to attend school everyday on time. We understand that sometimes children are too unwell to come to school and therefore children whose attendance is 98% or above will be entered into the attendance raffle for spring 1 to win a hamper. You can check your child's attendance on the new Arbor app.

The children are enjoying their new topics, please check Google classroom for updates from your child's class. The topic web which will show what your child is learning and the homework project sheet for projects to complete with your child at home. Please complete this half terms project by Friday 7th February.

Have a lovely weekend, we look forward to seeing you on Monday, the school gates open at 8:45am.



Important!
Scholarpack has changed to Arbor
6th January 2025

We have changed our MIS system (Scholarpack) to Arbor from 6th January 2025. You will need to download a new app from your app store to continue to receive messages from the school and to be able to send us messages. Please see page 2 of the newsletter for further details.



Dates For Your Diary



Tower Bridge

Wednesday 22nd January- Year 5 assembly 3pm
Wednesday 29th January- Year 4 assembly 3pm
Wednesday 5th February- Y3 assembly 3pm
Friday 14th February- Break up for Half Term
17th- 21st February - Half Term Week
Wednesday 5th March- Parent and Pupil Review Meetings

Robert Browning

Tuesday 21st January- Year 5 assembly
Tuesday 28th January- Year 4 assembly
Tuesday 4th February- Year 3 assembly
Friday 14th February- Break up for Half Term
February 17th- 21st - Half Term Week
Wednesday 5th March- Parent and Pupil Review Meetings

Snowsfields

Tuesday 21st January - Year 5 assembly 2:55pm
Tuesday 28th January - Year 4 assembly 2:55pm
Tuesday 4th February - Year 3 assembly 2:55pm
10-14th February - Wellbeing week including Safer Internet Day on 11th February
Friday 14th February- Break up for Half Term
February 17th- 21st - Half Term Week
Wednesday 5th March - Parent and Pupil Review Meetings

Term Dates 2024-2025 are on the Federation website
[Term Dates – The Bridges Federation](#)
Term time holidays will not be authorised.
Other important dates for this year can also be found on the school website here:
[Diary – The Bridges Federation](#)



Snowsfields Primary School

Our project 'Play Learn and Grow' has been shortlisted for the Tesco Community Grant Initiative where we could win up to £1,500. Please collect a blue token at the checkout every time you shop at these local Tesco stores (see list below) and vote for us!
Southwark SE1 5HG, Southwark The cut SE1 8JZ
London Bridge High St, Blackfriars Circus,
Tabard Square, Tower Bridge, Borough Rd,
Ldn Gt Suffolk, Tooley Street, Borough New Kent Rd




On **January 6th 2025** all 3 schools are moving to Arbor.



We will no longer be using Scholarpack.

Parents please see below guidance explaining what you need to do. From **January 6th** you will no longer be able to send or receive messages with the school via Scholarpack.

If you need any help please contact your child's school.



We're using Arbor's free Parent Portal and Parent App



We've chosen Arbor to help us manage our school.

Arbor is a simple, smart and cloud-based MIS (Management Information System), which helps us work faster, smarter and more collaboratively as a school. The Parent App and Parent Portal mean we can keep you informed about your child's life at school in a much more accessible way. Log into Arbor to see and update your child's information, get live updates and make payments or bookings on the go!

The Parent Portal works on Google Chrome (computer or laptop) and you can download the Parent App from the App Store or Google Play Store on your phone (Android 5.0; iOS 10.0 and upwards).

How to get started

1. Wait for your welcome email from us telling you Arbor is ready - you won't be able to log in before
2. Click the link in your welcome email to set up your password
3. Go to the App or Google Play Store on your phone and search 'Arbor'
4. Click 'Install' on Android or 'Get' on iPhone then open the App
5. Enter your email, select the school, then enter your password
6. Accept the Terms & Conditions and enter your child's birthday

The Sunnyville School of Magic
W10 5BN, London, GBR

Enter your password

Log In

Forgotten password?

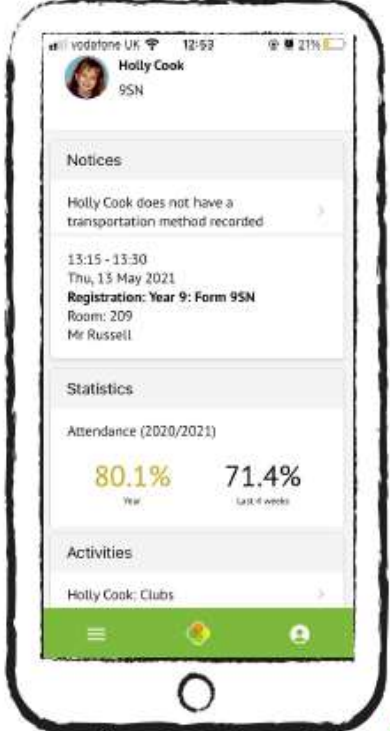
Need help using Arbor?

Contact the school office if you have questions about Arbor, the App or Parent Portal. Tell us the type and model of your phone, e.g. an iPhone SE, and include screenshots or screen recordings.

To safeguard student data in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Arbor only works directly with schools.

Some tips to try:

1. Ensure your username is the email address you use for Arbor. Ask us to **check the email address** linked to your account.
2. **Reset your password** from the login page, or ask us to do this.
3. If the login email was sent to you more than 96 hours ago, the **password link will have expired**. Ask us to send it again.
4. Ask the school office to check that your email address has not been used twice - e.g. on another guardian or child's profile.
5. **Enter the birthday** of one of your children to log in.
6. Only relatives who are **Primary Guardians** of a child can access the Arbor App. Ask us to check you can access Arbor.





**Groundwork's Wellbeing Support Team
Tower Bridge Primary School**

Supporting the wellbeing of children and families



Charlotte
Education Wellbeing
Practitioner



Vinisha
School Lead

How can we help?

We offer 6-8, 1:1 sessions of parent/carer led guided self-help on Tuesdays at Tower Bridge. This includes practical techniques and strategies to use at home

Support focus' on **Child Anxiety** or **Common Behaviour Problems** but also considers your child's self-esteem, independence and emotional regulation skills

For more information contact either:

Helen Viggiani

office@towerbridge.southwark.sch.uk

vinisha.kurup@groundwork.org.uk



Please can you make sure that your child is not wearing jewellery, apart from stud earrings. Bracelets and necklaces should not be worn. We have also spoken to the children this week about wearing the correct uniform, especially for PE days.

Hoodies should not be worn at all.

From Monday, we will be sending parents text reminders if children are not wearing the correct PE kit on their PE days. Check last week's newsletter for each class' PE days.

Toys, including fidget toys and toy jewellery should not be brought into school. Thank you for your support.

**Let's
dance!**



This term the children will be working again with Chantel, our amazing dance teacher. This half term, Chantel will be teaching Year 1, 3 and 5. Year 2, 4, and 6 will work with Chantel after our half term holiday.



This week we were treated to a special music assembly from Sounds Steps Music.

The children enjoyed all the live performances.



Congratulations!

To all the children who received wristbands for 100% attendance last half term.

Groundwork Coffee Mornings!

We are excited to welcome Courtney, a drama therapist to our school. She will be working with Anna Geissmann on Tuesdays. You can meet them both on Tuesday 21st January from 9-9:45 in the community room. All welcome! Groundwork offer non-judgemental and confidential support for parents/carers of children with anxiety and challenging behaviour



Music Lessons

Music lessons have started this term. For the first half term Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5 will work with our music teacher. They really enjoy it.



Orange Class Trip to the Tate Modern.

Orange Class had a fantastic trip to the Tate Modern on Tuesday. They got to visit the Solid Light exhibition.

Snowsfields Primary School



Sunshine class had a great time creating messy maps based on the story 'Rosie's walk'.



In science, the Year 1 children are learning about different materials. They classified a range of objects.



While waiting for their heating system to be repaired, the children from Robert Browning's Rainbow class had a wonderful time at Snowsfields.



Green class children learnt to use the index pages on an atlas to help them find countries. They also located areas with a similar climate to the Maya's.



We had a visit from the Education Team at Veolia. In assembly, we learnt about recycling, food waste and composting. The children from Year 1 to Year 6 also took part in workshops.



In science this week, the children in Blue class learnt that some plants reproduce asexually by cloning themselves. The children sorted plants into tubers, runners and bulbs.

Snowsfields Primary School Play Learn and Grow Tesco Fundraising Project

We have been shortlisted for the Tesco Community Grant Initiative where we could win up to £1,500. Every time you shop at one of these local Tesco stores (see list below), please collect a blue token at the checkout and vote for us!

Voting starts today!

- Southwark SE1 5HG, Southwark The cut SE1 8JZ
- London Bridge High St SE1 1NP, Blackfriars Circus,
- Tabard Square, Tower Bridge, Borough Rd, Gt Suffolk,
- Tooley Street, Borough New Kent Rd





Our school value this week is:
O - Overcoming Challenges

Reading Raffle Winners



Our core value this week is:
Resilience

Reading Raffle
Winners



Times Tables
Rock Stars

Our school value this week is:
W - Working Together

Reading Raffle
Winners





	% present	Lates	Total
Year 1	87.5%	4	150
Year 2	79.52%	2	75
Year 3	93.91%	7	0
Year 4	94.55%	6	50
Year 5	97.77%	9	75
Year 6	95.52%	4	100

Overall whole school attendance for week beginning 6/1/2025: 92.1%

**1st Place Attendance: Year 5
1st Place Punctuality: Year 2**



Overall whole school attendance for week beginning: 6/1/2025: 86.6%

**1st Place Attendance: Y1
1st Place Punctuality: n/a**

	Absence	Lates	Total
Year 1	26	0	88.55%
Year 2	26	0	88.18%
Year 3	34	0	88.19%
Year 4	30	0	86.75%
Year 5	39	0	85.97%
Year 6	36	2	84.81%



	Absence	Lates	Total
Year 1	7	9	50
Year 2	4	10	50
Year 3	2	0	150
Year 4	12	10	0
Year 5	7	6	75
Year 6	8	6	50

Overall whole school attendance for week beginning: 6/1/2025:

92.57%

**1st Place Attendance: Y3
1st Place Punctuality: Y3**

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Find us at: www.thebridgesfederation.org.uk

ATTENDANCE UPDATE

Being in school and having the best attendance possible underpins all the many benefits of school for your child, such as their learning, wellbeing and wider development. We want to work with you to ensure that attendance for pupils at the Bridges Federation is the best it can be.

As a parent, you are legally responsible for making sure your child gets a suitable full time education. This means making sure your child is in school every day except when

- Your child is too ill to go to school.
- You have permission for a leave of absence from your child's school for them not to attend. You should only ask for this in exceptional circumstances. Generally, a holiday will not be classed as an exceptional circumstance.
- Your religious body has a day especially for religious observance.

If my child needs to be absent from school, what do I need to do?

You should contact us as early as possible (no later than 10am) on the first day of absence to explain why. If you do not, we will contact you to find out where they are.

My child is ill. What should I do?

If your child is ill, read the NHS's 'Is my child too ill for school?' advice to help you decide whether they can go to school. Contact us as soon as possible to let us know that they will be absent.

Do I need to provide medical evidence to support my child's illness related absence?

We may ask for medical evidence when your child is absent due to illness. This may be in cases where:

- Your child is regularly absent due to illness, to assess how we can help by putting support in place.
- We have reason to believe your child was not too ill to attend and a conversation has not resolved the issue.

If you are asked to provide evidence this does not need to be a letter from your doctor or consultant, and doctors will not usually provide such letters. It can, instead, be appointment cards, prescriptions, or notes of previous consultations (including from the NHS App.)

To avoid disruption to your child's attendance, medical and dental appointments should not be booked during the school day whenever reasonably possible.

My child is struggling to attend school. What can I do?

The first step is to talk to us about why your child is missing school, and what help we can give. You should still do everything you can to help your child attend as much as possible whilst waiting for help and support to be put into place. Information on who you can contact for help, including the school's senior leader responsible for attendance, can be found in our attendance policy on the website. We follow the expectations laid out in the DfE guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance.'

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2024/07/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance-19th-Aug-version.pdf>

<https://thebridgesfederation.org.uk/home/attendance/>

Family support

FATHER'S GROUP



Join a 12-week course to improve your parenting skills.

Whether you are a father, grandfather or stepdad, receive advice and tips on topics such as positive parenting, improving relationships and role modelling. Crèche provided.

When:
Where: 1st Place Family Hub
12 Chumbleigh Street, Burgess Park, SE23 0BN

BOOK A PLACE
Email: ben.campbell@southwark.gov.uk
Phone: 07738 860 768



The Nest - Wellbeing Hub

The Nest operates a drop-in service every **Saturday between 10:30 and 14:30**. Therapeutic practitioners and support workers can offer 1:1 emotional support, information & advice and signpost you to the appropriate services.

Drop-In Service | The Nest

SAFETY IN THE HOME

A ONE DAY COURSE

ACCIDENT PREVENTION & AWARENESS WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

DATE: TUESDAY 21ST JANUARY, 2025
TIME: 10AM - 12:00PM

VENUE: THE LEWINGTON CENTRE COMMUNITY CENTRE
8 EUGENIA ROAD BOTHERHITHE SE16 2RU

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER:
02035398605, 07394462602
Admin@parentskills2go.com
parentskills2go.org

Southwark Young Carers

To get involved, you can refer via our website www.imago.community or scan the QR Code

For further information, please contact our Hub
youngcarers@imago.community
0300 111 110

We support young people living in Southwark aged 6-24, who provide unpaid care or support to a family member with a long-term illness, disability, mental health condition or a substance misuse issue.

Southwark Young Carers in service of a diverse community
Registered charity number: 2336 008

Free Workshops for Parents and Carers

Do you want more guidance on how to talk to your children, teens and young people about vaping, alcohol or drugs? Do you want to be informed on the current themes and trends we come across working with young people in the borough?

Substances are more accessible today than ever before. For parents, carers or anyone responsible for children and young people, it can feel overwhelming and difficult to know how to respond.

We're offering FREE online workshops for parents and carers in Southwark, to give advice and guidance to help you navigate this quickly changing landscape.

WE'LL COVER:

- Current trends amongst young people
- Strategies for talking to young people about substances in an open and supportive way
- Practical advice on how to keep your children safe from the dangers of substance misuse

For further information contact:

- Email: Southwark.YoungPeople@cgl.org.uk or scan the QR code for a direct link to the event page.
- You can call us on: 020 3404 7699

Free and stand alone information sessions for parents and carers on a range of topics - 'TAP-IN' to the support you need or complete the course

Sessions include:

- Digital Safety - how to support children to be safe online
- Ages and Stages - how to support different developmental stages
- Parental Wellbeing - how to communicate our needs
- Parenting and Autism
- Parenting and ADHD
- More to come....

JOIN NOW

Beth Gilbey
07394 865 980
bethany.gilbey@southwark.gov.uk
EARLYHELP@SOUTHWARK.GOV.UK

We hold in person sessions throughout the borough. Contact the team for the next available session.

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

For parents of children aged 0 - 16 years

This 12 week course helps parents and carers to:

- Build positive family relationships
- Manage anger and stress
- Implement effective discipline strategies
- Understand your child's development
- Recognise and value your family and cultural traditions
- Develop effective communication
- Meet others and share ideas

JOIN NOW

When is it on?
Weekly 10am to 12pm on Tuesdays
12th January - 10th February
12 weeks of support
What's new?
This course has been updated to include...

EPEC BEING A PARENT 1-3

For parents of children aged 1 - 3 years

This 9 week course helps parents learn practical skills for everyday life.

- Looking after yourself as a parent
- Recognise and manage your children's emotions
- Learn positive parenting strategies
- Support your children's resilience

JOIN NOW

Contact: Claire Gager
Email: Claire.Gager@southwark.gov.uk
Tel: 07547 859 666

WHEN IS IT ON?
STARTING 17th JANUARY 2025

12 PLACE CHILDREN & FAMILY HUB
12 CHUMBLEIGH STREET
LONDON SE23 0BN

What time?
10am-12pm

BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF AUTISM & SEND

(SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES)

ISSUES FOR BLACK AND MARGINALISED FAMILIES

(5 WEEKS ONLINE PROGRAM)

Monday 20th January
TIME: 6:00PM - 7:00PM (ONLINE)

ZOOM DETAILS WILL BE SENT AFTER REGISTRATION

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER:
02035398605, 07394462602
Admin@parentskills2go.com
parentskills2go.org

PARENT SPACE

A QUARTERLY ONLINE & IN PERSON PROGRAM

A QUARTERLY COFFEE MORNING FOR PARENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN TO SHARE THEIR ISSUES AND CONCERNS AS WELL AS GOOD TIPS ON HOW THEY SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN

DATE:
WEDNESDAY 16TH JANUARY 2025 TIME: 9:30 - 11AM
WEDNESDAY 2ND APRIL 2025 TIME: 9:30 - 11AM
WEDNESDAY 16TH JULY 2025 TIME: 9:30 - 11AM

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER:
• Admin@parentskills2go.com
• parentskills2go.org

OR CALL:
07957 643777
07325 18223
02035398605
07394462602

PLEASE NOTE TO BOOK ON BEHAVIOUR AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Family info

SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

Supporting Southwark schools to improve air quality in their schools and homes.

Air Quality Monitoring & Engagement Project for students in Year 5 and above

This project will use an air quality monitor 200cm in elevation and the Pupils of Year 5 will be taking readings. Pupils will receive an air quality kit to use at home.

Teachers and students will receive a specially designed, interactive to monitor their understanding of air quality's effects on health and discuss changes to 2023/24 term's activities.

The project aims to educate on health effects and promote skills such as a differentiated and age-appropriate activities to use at school in following 4-Stage, teacher educational programme.

Year 5 staff and parents can register interest by filling out the form on this QR code or by emailing: airquality@southwark.gov.uk

For more information visit: www.southwark.gov.uk

Parent Skills 2Go in partnership with SOUTHWARK ADULT LEARNING SERVICES

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

CLASSES ARE STARTING!

Come to test your level on **WEDNESDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2024**

Time :10am - 1pm

Venue: The Lewington Community centre
9 Eugenia road
Rotherhithe SE16 2RU

CRÈCHE WILL BE PROVIDED (FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS)

For details and to register: 02035369609, 07394662602
Parentskills2go.org

Let's talk PANTS with Pantosaurus! | NSPCC

- NSPCC
- PANTS**
- Privates are private
 - Always remember your body belongs to you
 - No means no
 - Talk about secrets that upset you
 - Speak up, someone can help

Southwark Council Learning Unlimited

Online English (ESOL) Course

A FREE 15-week Entry level online accredited course for Southwark residents

Classes will be on **Tuesdays & Thursdays at 10am-12.30pm** (seven times only) 25th February - 26th June 2025

plus online Conversation Clubs

This course will take place on Zoom. Applicants should live in Southwark

To apply for a place on the course in advance please use this link: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/information-and-services/learning-unlimited/14557724146>

Spaces are limited so book soon. We will contact you to confirm your place on the course.

Southwark Council Learning Unlimited

Free* 15 week Learning Unlimited course for adults interested in becoming Teaching Assistants Award in Support Work in Schools

Wednesdays 9.30am - 12.30pm
From 26th February to 25th June 2025

We will contact you when you register to arrange an assessment time. This course will be delivered online using Zoom.

What will I get from attending the course?

- The knowledge and skills required to become an effective teaching assistant
- The C & G Certificate Award in Support Work in Schools Level 2
- The opportunity to progress to the Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools or to apply for work as a Teaching Assistant
- Find course FAQs here: <https://www.learningunlimited.org.uk/faq>

How much does it cost?

The course is free and there is a non-refundable registration fee of £80.

To apply for a place on the course use the link below to complete the online form: <https://www.learningunlimited.org.uk/apply-for-a-course>

All applicants should have level 2 English.

Please note you will need to complete a post-qualification self-reflection pack at the end of the course. This will be used for completion of applications for work experience.

Parent Skills 2Go

SEWING SKILLS

10 WEEKS DRESSMAKING COURSE FOR BEGINNERS & INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

FREE SEWING MENDING STATION (SUPPORT ON HOW TO MEND CLOTHES)

BASIC /BEGINNERS SEWING CLASS STARTS WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY 2025

INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS SEWING CLASS STARTS FRIDAY 17TH JANUARY 2025

VENUE: THE LEWINGTON CENTRE COMMUNITY CENTRE 9 EUGENIA ROAD ROTHERHITHE SE16 2RU

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER 02035369609, 07394662602 Admin@parentskills2go.com parentskills2go.org

crèche will be provided

Parent/carer support at Robert Browning

With Anna and Toni

We offer non-judgemental and confidential support for parent/carers of children with anxiety and challenging behaviour

Tea/ coffee Morning

Time: 9:00- 9:45

Upcoming dates:

- 21st January - Welcome back! Meet and greet/catch-up
- 4th February- Managing strong emotions
- 25th February - Calming/relaxation techniques
- 11th March- Understanding anxiety
- 25th March- Reflection week

For more information please contact: anna.geissmann@groundwork.org.uk

GROUNDWORK CHANGING PLACES CHANGING LIVES

Enjoy FREE access to classes

Sign in or download the Southwark Leisure App and click on the 'free online classes' button.

Over 20 adult class programs, Kids Born To Move classes, 2000 plus workouts, plans and challenges. Stream from the web, your mobile and TV.

family
fun



LORD'S

NATIONWIDE CRICKET HUBS



We run a network of cricket Hubs that provide free-to-access training and match play to 6,500 state-educated young cricketers at 164 sites across the UK. The Hubs focus on talent: helping promising youngsters who have been engaged through mass participation activities or non-traditional formats to join cricket clubs, develop their hard-ball skills, and access the formal talent pathways. The Hubs also have a transformational impact off the cricket pitch, helping participants to feel happier and more confident, and improving their focus and performance at school.

<https://www.lords.org/mcc/mcc-foundation/mcc-foundation-in-the-uk>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

JustTalk Kids is a child's version of the JustTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JustTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JustTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a call, exclusive stickers, a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber, and exclusive ringines and themes.

RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JustTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (either the app or from their own adult JustTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JustTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JustTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact; this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JustTalk and JustTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

TOO MUCH SCREEN TIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 20% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

Advice for Parents & Educators

JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JustTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of limiting their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

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.



DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JustTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving. Check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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

@wake_up_weds

/wuw.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 06.01.2025