

Robert Browning, Snowfields 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 14th March 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

After such a warm sunny spring weekend, it has very much felt back to winter this week!

A reminder that Tower Bridge are holding their Pupil Parent review meetings on Monday 17th March. We look forward to sharing your child's learning and achievements during the review meeting.

We have had visits from our school Governors this week and it has been brilliant to show off the wonderful learning that is taking place across the federation. Please check on google classroom for this terms homework project sheet so that you can continue to support your child's learning at home.

We would really appreciate donations of Easter Eggs for fun chocolate events in our schools at the end of this term.

Also if your child has grown out of their school uniform we always value receiving preloved school uniform which families can reuse. This has huge environmental and financial benefits.

Have a lovely weekend, the gates open at 8:45am, many children are still arriving to school after 9am which disrupts their learning. Please support your child to arrive at school on time every day.

Stay Safe Online

As a parent or carer, you play a key role in helping your child to stay safe online. Please click [here](#) for advice, tips and resources on how to keep your child safe online.



Dates For Your Diary



Tower Bridge

Monday 17th March - Pupil Parent Review Meetings
Friday 4th April - Break Up 1pm
Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd April - INSET Days - School Closed
Thursday 24th April - Back to School from 8.45am

Robert Browning

Friday 4th April- Break Up at 1pm
Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd April- INSET DAYS- School Closed
Thursday 24th April- Back to School

Snowfields

Friday 4th April - Break Up 1pm
Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd April - INSET Days - School Closed
Thursday 24th April - Back to School from 8.45am
Week Beginning Monday 12th May - Year 6 test week

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](#)



EGG RAFFLE

We are still selling raffle tickets for our end of term Easter Egg Raffle. Tickets are £1 per strip. The raffle will be drawn at the end of term.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MONDAY 17TH MARCH

Parent and Pupil Review Meetings School Closed to pupils, but must attend meetings

FRIDAY 4TH APRIL

Break Up at 1pm

TUESDAY 22ND AND WEDNESDAY 23RD APRIL

INSET Days - School Closed

diversity is celebrated

[value of the week]
TOWER BRIDGE



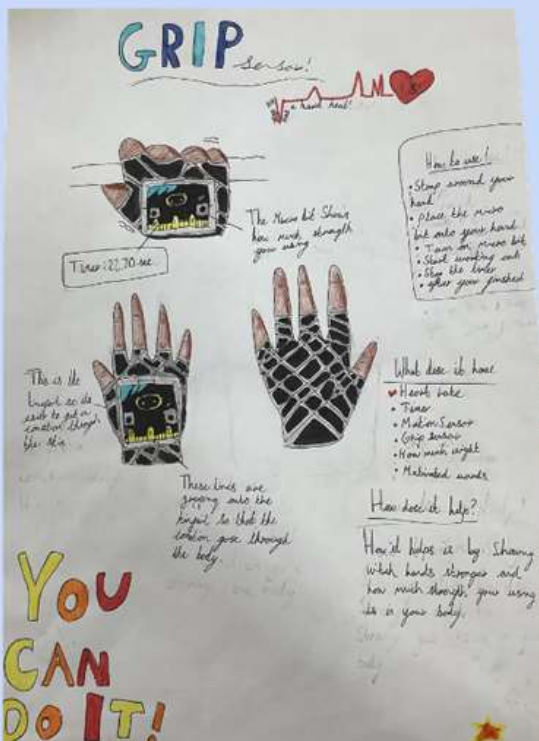
BIGGEST EVER FOOTBALL SESSION

On Friday 10th March, We participated in the 'Biggest Ever Football Session': empowering girls to take part in football. They had a brilliant time. Thanks Elijah and Tony for organising this!



CONGRATULATIONS

Last term, Year 6 took part in a design/invention competition run by BBC Microbit and the TV show "Gladiators". The design "Grip Sensor" was designed to train the Gladiators' grip strength for the hanging physical challenges and was shortlisted to the top 50 entries. Although we did not win first prize, we did win a new class set of microbit computers and we are so proud of our Year 6 inventor for her hard work and ingenuity for making it to the top 50 in the whole country.



Groundwork Update

The next coffee morning session will be on Tuesday 25th March- the theme is 'Reflection'. Please join the team from 9am!



Biggest Ever Football Session

On Friday 10th March, We participated in the 'Biggest Ever Football Session': empowering girls to take part in football. They had a brilliant time. Thanks Carol for organising this!



Reminder

Please do not book holidays during term time. Term time leave will not be authorised and you risk being fined.

Music Lessons

All our classes have been enjoying music lessons with the Southwark Music Service this term.

Doll Donations!

We are currently collecting dolls for our children to play with during playtimes. If you have any old dolls and dolls clothes, e.g. barbie or other dolls, please could you donate them to the school. Thank you!



Snowsfields Primary School



In science, the children in Green class measured the volume of different instruments in decibels and recorded their findings using bar graphs. It was a fun, hands-on activity that helped them link scientific concepts to real - life examples.

This week, our Years 2, 5, and 6 students participated in the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe workshops. The children learnt about topics such as bullying and abuse in a child-friendly, age-appropriate way. They were also reminded of the importance of speaking to their trusted adults whenever they need support or help.



In Year 3, the children explored the vital role the River Nile played in their civilisation. They discovered how the river was used for transportation, irrigation, and trade, shaping life in Ancient Egypt.



Purple Class revisited the fountain at Christ Church Southwark to see the completed renovation. Some of the children gave a fantastic speech to the public, sharing all they had learned about Victorian history and architecture over the past few months. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to showcase their knowledge and engage with the community!



To celebrate International Women's Day, some of our girls from Years 4, 5, and 6 took part in the Biggest Ever Football Session on March 7th. This nationwide event gave them a chance to get active, have fun, and showcase their football skills. It was a brilliant opportunity to encourage teamwork, build confidence, and promote equal opportunities for girls in sport. We were so impressed by their determination, and teamwork on the field!



We would be incredibly grateful for your support with our **Easter raffle!** If you are able to, please donate a chocolate Easter egg by **31st March**. All funds raised will support school activities. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity!



Our school value this week is:
D - Diversity is Celebrated



Reading Raffle Winners



Reading Raffle Winners

Our core value this week is: Independence



Our school value this week is:
S - Sharing ideas, skills and knowledge

Times Tables Rock Stars

Reading Raffle Winners





	% present	Lates	Total
Year 1	89.2%	2	425
Year 2	96.5%	3	650
Year 3	97.4%	7	400
Year 4	95.8%	11	300
Year 5	95.9%	5	275
Year 6	93.1%	2	725

Overall whole school attendance for week beginning 3/3/2025: 94.62%

**1st Place Attendance: Year 3
1st Place Punctuality: Year 1 & 6**



Overall whole school attendance for week beginning: 3/3/2025: 94.24%

**1st Place Attendance: Y5
1st Place Punctuality: Y1**

	Absence	Lates	Total
Year 1	16	3	93.55%
Year 2	16	5	93.28%
Year 3	8	4	97.32%
Year 4	10	4	95.98%
Year 5	3	5	98.96%
Year 6	16	5	94.67%



	Absence	Lates	Total
Year 1	5	5	350
Year 2	5	6	250
Year 3	4	1	1125
Year 4	7	6	25
Year 5	3	5	575
Year 6	9	9	325

Overall whole school attendance for week beginning: 03/03/2025:

90.39%

**1st Place Attendance: Y5
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/>

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?

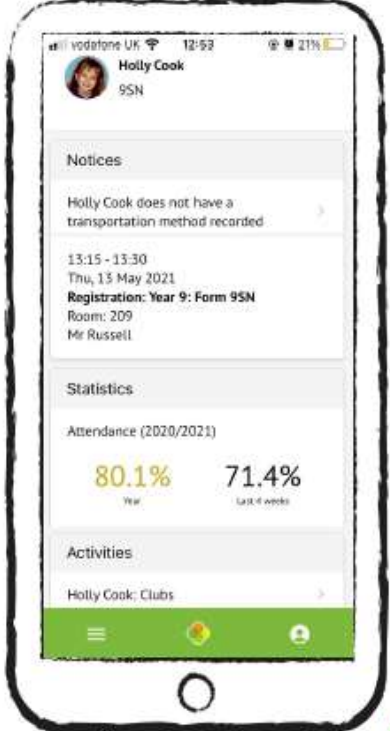
Need help using Arbor?

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.



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 modeling. Crèche provided.

When: 1st Floor Family Hub, 12 Charnleigh Street, Burgess Park, SE16 0NF

BOOK A PLACE

Email: ben.compbell@southwark.gov.uk
Phone: 07738 860 768

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 LEMINGTON CENTRE COMMUNITY CENTRE
8 EUGENIA ROAD ROTHERHITHE SE16 2RU

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER:
02033308605, 07394062002
Admin@parentskills2go.com
parentskills2go.org

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

Voces for Autism Charity presents

AUTISM AWARENESS COMMUNITY DAY

Tuesday 8th April 2025 | 11am-3pm
Nunhead Green Community Centre, London SE15 3QQ

Come and join us to celebrate Autism Awareness month. There will be lots on offer, for the whole family including:

- Arts & Crafts
- Information Stalls
- Guest speakers

FREE Entry - Tickets available on website www.vocesforautism.co.uk

Southwark Young Carers

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

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

Southwark Young Carers is a service of Imago Community. Registered charity number: 2336 008

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.

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.

Work covers:

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

For further information contact:

- Email: Southwark.YoungPeople@sg.gov.uk or scan the QR code for a direct link to the event page.
- You can call us on: **020 3404 7499**

PARENT SPACE

A QUARTERLY ONLINE & IN PERSON PROGRAM

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER:

- Admin: Admin@parentskills2go.com
- parentskills2go.org

020 333 08605
07394 062002
02033308605
07394062002

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

For parents of children aged 6 - 24 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?
Tuesday 10am-12pm
12 Charnleigh Street, Burgess Park, SE16 0NF

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 859 846

WHEN IS IT ON?
STARTING 17th JANUARY 2025

TUESDAY AFTERNOON
11 PLACE CHILDREN & FAMILY HUB
12 CHARNLEIGH STREET
LONDON SE16 0NF

What time?
10am-12pm

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE COFFEE MORNING

We are excited to invite parents and families of autistic children to our upcoming coffee morning to celebrate World Autism Acceptance Month.

Event Highlights

- Free tea, coffee and biscuits!
- Meet the Autism Support Team
- Connect with other parents of autistic children
- Find out what local services are available to you and your child
- Get advice from a range of professionals
- Get ideas for how best to support and advocate for your child

Register your interest

9.30-11.30am
2 April
Crompton Primary School
616 St. London SE17 3QA

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

Sessions include:

- Digital Safety - how to support children to be safe
- 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

We hold in person sessions throughout the year. Contact the team next available

Family info

SOUTHWARK SCHOOLS' INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Southwark is a proud member of the Green School Network and you can all benefit.

Asthma - Air Quality Monitoring & Engagement Project for students in Year 6 and above

This project will use air quality sensors placed in classrooms and the homes of Southwark children, offering a first insight into the air quality they experience.

Teachers and students will participate in a specially designed curriculum to deepen their understanding of air quality's effects on health and discover strategies to improve family air quality.

This initiative builds on existing air quality efforts and provides tools with a dedicated webpage and monitoring device to your school in fostering a cleaner, healthier educational atmosphere.

School staff and parents can register interest by filling out the form on this link or by emailing: https://forms.office.com/e/123456789

environmental.coordinator@southwark.gov.uk
www.southwark.gov.uk

Check out the Climate School Action Plan which includes a link to improve air quality.



TAP - IN SESSIONS

Free and stand alone information sessions for parents and carers on a range of topics. Join us with Thinking About Parenting and TAP in to....

Digital Safety Thursday 13th March 1pm Online via MS Team	Parenting and Autism Wednesday 5th February 1 - 2.30pm Friday 14th March 11 - 12.30 Both online via MS Teams
Parent Emotional Wellbeing Friday 31st January 10.30am - 12	Parenting and ADHD Monday 10th Feb 12 - 1.30 Thursday 20th March 10 - 11.30 Both online via MS Teams
Ages and Stages Monday 10th March 10am - 11.30 Both online via MS Teams	Parenting and ADHD Monday 10th Feb 12 - 1.30 Thursday 20th March 10 - 11.30 Both online via MS Teams
Parenting and ADHD Monday 10th Feb 12 - 1.30 Thursday 20th March 10 - 11.30 Both online via MS Teams	Parenting and ADHD Monday 10th Feb 12 - 1.30 Thursday 20th March 10 - 11.30 Both online via MS Teams



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO JOIN NOW

Beth Gilbey
07394 865 980
bethany.gilbey@southwark.gov.uk
earlyhelp@southwark.gov.uk

Let's talk PANTS with Pantosaurus! | NSPCC



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

Price & Buckland

NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM WEBSITE LAUNCH

On the 11th of February we will launch our NEW website. The URL remains: www.price-buckland.co.uk



Website QR code. This will take you to the homepage to search for your school.



If you have ordered from our website before, go to the Account Section and re-set your password. You can use the same password that you have currently.



You can then see previous orders and manage your account.

Any Questions? Call us on 01859 640827

Parent Skills 2024

SEWING SKILLS

10 WEEKS DRESSMAKING COURSE FOR BEGINNERS & INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS

FREE SEWING MENDING STATION (limited to one per household)

BASIC BEGINNERS SEWING CLASS STARTS WEDNESDAY 10TH JANUARY 2025
10AM TO 12PM
£20 (includes materials)

INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS SEWING CLASS STARTS FRIDAY 17TH JANUARY 2025
10AM TO 12PM
£30 (includes materials)

VENUE: THE LEWISTON CENTRE COMMUNITY CENTRE
8 EUGENIA ROAD
ROTHERHITHE SE16 2BU

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER
02032 284508, 0734003202
admin@parentskills24.org
parentskills24.org

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



Southwark Council **LU Learning Unlimited**

Online English (ESOL) Course

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

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 23rd June 2025

We will contact you when you register to arrange an assessment trial. 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 City & Guilds Award in Support Work in Schools (Level 1)
- The opportunity to progress to the Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools or to apply for work as a Teaching Assistant
- Free course FAWB form: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/learning-unlimited>

How much does it cost?

*The course is free but there is a non-refundable registration fee of £10.

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

All applicants should have level 2 English.

Please note you will need to complete a portfolio with a full register with a list of homework sheets on arrival in completion of application form and assessment.

Southwark Council **LU 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
25th February - 26th June 2025
(never-free weeks)

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/learning-unlimited>

Spaces are limited so book soon.

We will contact you to confirm your place on the course.

Family
fun



INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY EVENT
(INTERGENERATIONAL)

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S DIVERSITY -OUR STORIES!

SATURDAY 8TH MARCH 2025
TIME: 11AM - 4PM

VENUE: THE APPLEBY BLUE ALMS
HOUSE 94 -116 SOUTHWARK PARK ROAD
LONDON SE16 3RR (OPPOSITE AGE CONCERN UK)
REVERDY BUS STOP

**Activities: Arts and crafts, Massage ,
Poetry, Dance, Food and more!**

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

Proudly supported by



IWDyouth

Saturday 8 March 2025
PLAY LIKE A GIRL SESSION

Location: **Alleyn's School**
Time: **10:00-12:00**
Age group: **5-12**
Level: **All abilities**
Cost: **FREE!**



girlsunitedfa.org/iwdyouth25



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>

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