

### **Welcome to the Family**

Today we officially welcomed our Reception pupils to our school family in an assembly led by their 'special friends' in Year 6. They 'shared the light' with the reception pupils and promised to help them throughout their first year in school

### **Curriculum Review**

The Government have begun a review into Curriculum and Assessment in schools and have asked for responses from parents, pupils and teachers. If you would like to contribute please complete this survey.

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/curriculum-and-assessment-team/curriculum-and-assessment-review-call-for-evidence/>

### **School Lunches**

Please complete the school meals form to make your child's lunch choices by clicking on this link. Menus are available on our school website. The form is open from 8am on Mondays until noon on Wednesdays.

<https://forms.office.com/e/miMkUpPTB5#>

### **Year 1 Class Mass**

Our Year 1 pupils led the first class Mass of the year on Thursday on the theme of belonging. They read and sang so beautifully and Father Andrew was so impressed with how well they all took part in the Mass.

### **First Holy Communions**

On Thursday evening there was a meeting for parents of Year 4 pupils who wish for their children to receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist. If you missed the meeting and would still like to take part please contact Father Andrew at Mass.

### **Mini Vinnies**

This week we welcomed our new Mini Vinnies to their post and are delighted that 13 Year 6 pupils have all volunteered to put their faith into action this year. Their first project is to lead the Harvest donations. We will be collecting tins, packets, cereals, dried good, biscuits, crisps etc for the Bay Foodbank from Monday until Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October

### **Dates for your diary**

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September** – Year 3 Trip to Rising Sun

**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September** – High Borrans Meeting for Year 6 parents at 6pm

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October** – Year 5 Trip to Jarrow Hall

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October** – Non-uniform day for EduFootyAid

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October** – Reading Meeting for Reception Parents

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October** – Reception/Year 6 Class Mass

**Next week is ZEBRA week on the school lunch menu**

**Don't forget to visit it our school website for further school information**

**[www.stmarysonline.co.uk](http://www.stmarysonline.co.uk)**

# Online Safety

## #wakeupwednesdays

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

### What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# INSTAGRAM

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

follow

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Instagram is a highly popular social media platform with over 2 billion active monthly users. The app is continuously updating and adding new features to meet the wishes of its audience, allowing them to upload images and videos to their Instagram feed, create interactive 'stories', go live, exchange private messages or explore and follow other accounts that catch their eye.

#### ADDICTION

Many social media platforms, Instagram included, are designed to keep us engaged on them for as long as possible. They encourage scrolling often and scrolling more in case we miss something important – in essence, a fear of missing out. On Instagram, young people can lose track of time when aimlessly scrolling and watching videos posted by friends, acquaintances, influencers and possibly strangers.

#### UNREALISTIC IDEALS

Children sometimes compare themselves to what they see online: how they look, how they dress, and the way their life is going in comparison to others on social media. However, most people only share the positives about their lives online and many use filters when sharing pictures of themselves. A constant comparison with unrealistic ideals can lead to insecurity over one's own appearance and lifestyle.

#### GOING LIVE

Livestreaming on Instagram allows users to connect with friends and followers in real time. Risks increase if the account is public, because that means anyone can watch the broadcast, which could result in further contact from strangers. Additional dangers of going live include an impulse to act inappropriately to draw more viewers, as well as being exposed to harmful content or offensive language.

#### INFLUENCER CULTURE

Social media influencers are sometimes paid thousands of pounds to promote products, services, apps and more. When celebrities or influencers post such content, it often says 'paid partnership' above the post. In April 2024, Ofcom found that over a quarter of children (27%) believed in influencer marketing, accepting their endorsement of products wholeheartedly. So it's perfectly possible for young people to be taken in by this kind of content.

#### PRODUCT TAGGING

Product tags allow users to tag a product or business in their post. This tag will take viewers directly to the product detail page on the shop where the item can be purchased. Children may also be encouraged by influencers to purchase products that they advertise.

#### EXCLUSION & OSTRACISM

Youngsters are highly sensitive to feeling excluded, which comes in many forms: not receiving as many 'likes' as expected; not being tagged in a friend's photo; being unfriended; not receiving a comment on their post or a reply to a message they sent. Being excluded online hurts just as much as offline. Young people have reported lower moods and self-esteem when excluded in this way, feeling as if they don't belong and aren't valued.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

#### AVOID GOING PUBLIC

If a young user wants to share their clothing style, make up or similar and use product tagging to show off their items in their post, they may be tempted to change their settings to public. This leaves their profile visible to everyone, which carries the risk of strangers getting in touch with them. Set a child's account to private and explain the importance of keeping it this way.

#### HAVE AN OPEN DIALOGUE

Talk to children about the positives and negatives of social media, including the risks involved and how they can view or create content safely with family and friends. Explain how safety settings will ensure only followers can view them, and why this is so important. Also, if you find a child continuously uses filters on their photos, ask them why and impress on them that they don't need it.

#### MANAGE LIKE COUNTS

Due to the potential impact on mental wellbeing, Instagram allows users to hide the total likes on their posts, to prevent people from obsessing over that number in the corner. Users can hide like counts on all the posts in their feed as well as on their own posts. This means others can't see how many likes a person gets. This can be done by going into Settings > Notifications > Posts > Likes > Off.

#### USE MODERATORS

Instagram Live has implemented a mechanic called Moderators, meaning that creators can assign a moderator and give them the power to report comments, remove viewers and remove the ability for certain viewers to comment at all. Consider this if a child in your care wants to go live on the platform. It's also recommended to keep devices in communal spaces so you're aware if a child does go live or watch a livestream.

#### FOLLOW INFLUENCERS

Following influencers will allow you to monitor what they're sharing as well as being able to discuss anything which you deem inappropriate. Talk to children about who they follow and help them to develop critical thinking skills about what the influencer is trying to do. For example, encourage the child to ask themselves if an influencer is trying to sell them a product when they make a video endorsing it.

#### BALANCE YOUR TIME

Instagram has a built-in activity dashboard that lets you control how much time is spent on the app. Make sure children sign in to the platform with the correct age, as Instagram's 'Teen Accounts' afford much more control for parents and carers over how long they can use the app each day. Talk with young users about how much time they spend on Instagram and work together to set a healthy time limit.

#### Meet Our Expert

Dr. Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at BCyberAware. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours 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/instagram-2022>

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