

Friday
8th Dec
2023



HURST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Newsletter

Honesty, Attitude, Respect, Resilience, Caring

Despite the challenging weather, Hurst Hill children have had an active week. On Thursday we had our sports event where children took part in Glow Dodge Ball. If you speak to your children, I am sure they will tell you they had a wonderful time - I even had thank you letters pushed under my office door.

The Christmas spirit is definitely evident around school; children are enjoying the school 'Elf antics' and Christmas decorations are up in classes. All children have been busy practising their carols and lines for the festivities.

Don't forget Christmas dinner day is next Wednesday and children are welcome to wear their Christmas jumpers. We have now ordered our turkeys, so we are unable to take any more orders. If you have not ordered then please ensure your child has a packed lunch. I would also like to remind KS2 parents about the carol service at St Mary's next Thursday morning. I am sure it will be a huge success.

Next week we will be competing against schools across the academy trust in the Christmas Times Table Rock Star battle. Please may I request your support by encouraging children to practice their times tables at home- we have been reminding them that it is accuracy and not quantity that wins the battle. ☺

We are still taking donations for the Christmas Fayre next Friday. Please add the date to your diary and join Santa and the team who will be: judging who has the best dressed tree in school; taking part in games; listening to the school choir; enjoying refreshments and so much more... **Please note, all year six pupils must be accompanied by an adult.**

Wishing everyone a wonderful weekend.
Mrs Johnson



DIARY DATES

Tuesday 12th December- Year 4 INSPIRE

Wednesday 13th December – Christmas lunch day & Christmas Jumper day

Thursday 14th December- KS2 Church service at St Mary's

Friday 15th December 3:30 – 5:00 Whole school Christmas Fayre

Thursday 21st December- EYFS/KS1 Nativity 10am and 2pm

Friday 22nd December- School closes at 3.30pm for Christmas

School reopens on Monday 8th January 2024.

Dates for
the Diary:

Friday
19th May
2023



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We use house points to reward pupils for following our values.

This week our house points totals are:
Ruby 192, Diamond 198, Emerald 200 & Sapphire 199
Well done Emeralds!



Attendance

Attendance at school is mandatory. Whole school attendance should be at least 96%.

The 100% winner this week is Kai in year 6

The winning class this week is Mr Lart's class. Well done year 5

The Department of Education has made it clear that schools must be stricter when dealing with families whose children are persistently absent or late for school. A child's absence from school can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example, if they are too poorly to attend or if they have a medical appointment that cannot be made outside school hours. If your child is persistently absent or regularly late for school, whatever the circumstances, a referral may be made to Dudley Education Investigation Service, and this could result in a fine.

If you are having difficulty getting your child to school, or to school on time, please contact the school office so we can offer some support. Please note that school will not authorise holidays during the school term and that our policy is to refer such absences of 5 school days or more to Dudley Education Investigation Service who may issue a fine. If your child is too ill to come to school then you should **contact the school office before 9.30am**, either by telephoning 01384 818845 (option 1) or using the absence reporting feature on ParentMail. Do not use our social media pages to report absences. Please remember that school can administer medication in certain circumstances



Our Century winners this week are:

Lily, Harjeevan, Melissa & Ruby-Jane



Our skills builders this week are:

Crystal, Mia, Lola, Noah, Maisy, Archie and Daisie



Star Pupils of the week who have shown our school values of honesty, positive attitude, resilience, respect and caring:

Reception- Mia for positive attitude to learning

Year 1- Samuel for resilience to his work

Year 2– Esmee for positive attitude to learning

Year 3- Jacob for resilience in learning

Year 4— Gary for caring on the year 4 visit

Year 5– Mia for positive attitude to school

Year 6– Tilly for respect for all.



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At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many games which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

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 untoward in the game. However, some of the 'baddies' 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's 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

Clare Gadein (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, 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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BRITISH
TRANSPORT
POLICE



Dear Parent or Guardian

Trespassing on the railway network is extremely dangerous and endangers not only the lives of those on the track, but also passengers, railway staff and the general public.

Many people - especially young people - fail to understand the danger they put themselves and others in, when they make the choice to stray onto the rail network. Incidents we are seeing involve children and young people:

- Walking along the railway lines
- Throwing stones at trains
- Placing objects on the railway lines
- Using the railway as a playground

I am sure you agree that all of the above activities are extremely dangerous.

The British Transport Police and Network Rail are seeking the support of parents, guardians and the local community to highlight the danger and implications of these activities to help us reduce the number of young people putting themselves and others at significant risk.

To assist with the conversation there are a number of online videos available and range depending on the age group of your child:

www.switchedonrailsafety.co.uk

www.networkrail.co.uk/communities/safety-in-the-community/safety-education/

www.youvrtrain.co.uk

Key Messages

- ✓ Trains are **ALWAYS** running on the railway and can differ in times meaning that you can never predict when a train will pass
- ✓ The Electricity is **ALWAYS** switched on around the railway
- ✓ Always **Stop, Look and Listen** before using a Level Crossing
- ✓ **DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?**

Trespassing on the railway is also a **criminal offence** which can involve your child obtaining a criminal record and a fine of £1000.

If you wish to report any information to us, please call us on Freephone 0800 40 50 40 or text the information to 61016.