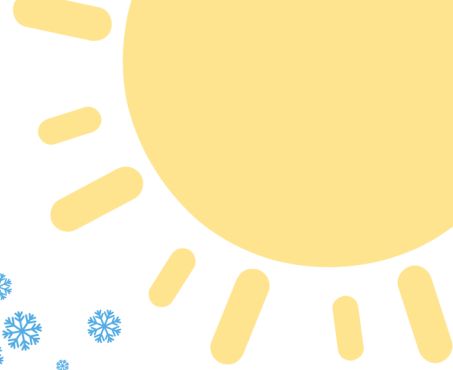




Newsletter

Friday 17th Jan, 2025



Dear Parents and Carers,

I can hardly believe we are already two weeks into the new year! It has been heartwarming to see the children return from the Christmas break happy, refreshed, and eager to learn.

Walking through the school, I have been amazed by the enthusiasm, focus, and curiosity on display in our classrooms. It is wonderful to see so many children deeply engaged and developing their love of learning across a variety of subjects.

2025

I've also been struck by how incredible our classrooms look this term. They are brimming with vibrant new displays that showcase fascinating information about the children's new topics, interactive learning walls designed to support their understanding, and stunning examples of pupils' work celebrating their creativity and achievements. These displays truly reflect the dedication and hard work of both pupils and staff. I hope you'll have the chance to enjoy this inspiring learning environment during our first Family Read Morning of 2025—a perfect opportunity to see the magic of our school in action.

We have so much to look forward to this term! From cycling proficiency sessions that will equip our children with essential safety skills, to the Easter Journey experience, the coming weeks are packed with engaging activities, enriching experiences, and opportunities for growth. We're excited to see the joy and enthusiasm these events will bring to our pupils.

As we begin this new term, I want to emphasize how much we value your involvement. Your thoughts and ideas are invaluable as we work together to make improvements and ensure our school remains the best it can be for every child. Strong partnerships with parents and carers are at the heart of our school community, and your support makes a huge difference in shaping the success of our children.

Before I close, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the warm words I have received since stepping into the role of Head of School. It is a privilege to lead Westwoodside—a school that is such an integral part of our wonderful community. With the dedication of our talented staff team and your continued partnership, I am confident we can build on the fantastic work already being done and help every child thrive and reach their full potential.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to working closely with you all throughout the year ahead.

Warm regards,

Aaron Rush

Head of School



Safeguarding At Westwoodside Church of England Academy



Welcome to Our First Safeguarding Update

We are pleased to introduce our safeguarding updates, which will now be included in all future newsletters. These updates aim to provide you with valuable advice and support on safeguarding matters.

At Westwoodside Church of England Primary School, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility—and our top priority. Anyone who comes into contact with children and their families has an important role to play in ensuring their safety and well-being.

The purpose of these newsletters is to share helpful updates that may support children and families within our community, guiding you to the right sources of help and advice whenever needed.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. Our details are provided below.

Ms. Janney
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
ddsl@wws.academy

Mr. Rush
Designated Safeguarding Lead
dsl@wws.academy

Worried about a child or young person?

Safeguarding children and young people or keeping them safe is the responsibility of everyone. If you are concerned that a child is being abused or they may be at risk of harm, you should contact North Lincolnshire's Children's Services Duty Team on:

01724 296500 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday)

08081 689667 (free phone)

01724 296555 (answerphone - out of office hours and at weekends)

101 - Police non emergency

999 - Police emergency

Link to the CMARS website: <https://www.northlincscmars.co.uk/children-and-young-people/>

Safeguarding At Westwoodside Church of England Academy



We understand that group chats are a growing concern among parents and carers, as they have recently been raised with staff. Many pupils across different year groups have spoken to staff about their involvement in group chats on various platforms.

While group chats can be a great way for children to stay connected, they also come with potential risks. This week's safeguarding guide provides important information on the dangers associated with group chats. including:

- **Bullying:** Group chats can sometimes become a platform for negative behavior, such as exclusion or targeted comments.
- **Inappropriate Content:** Without proper supervision, children may be exposed to messages or media that are unsuitable for their age.
- **Unknown Members:** Some group chats may include individuals who are not personally known to the child, posing potential risks to their safety and privacy.

We encourage parents and carers to review this guide and have open conversations with their children about staying safe online. If you have any concerns or need further support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Safeguarding At Westwoodside Church of England Academy



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

GROUP CHATS

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they can be great for connecting with others, there are several risks posed by these tools.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

BULLYING

Teens are often trying to find their place in their social group. Unfortunately, group chats can sometimes lend themselves to unkind comments being shared freely, putting people down to make their peers laugh – often creating a vicious circle that encourages others to join in. Being bullied so publicly – in front of friends and acquaintances – can also amplify the hurt, embarrassment and anxiety that the victim feels.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: for instance, starting a new group, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one person doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss events that exclude them – for example, sharing photos from a day out that they didn't attend.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by a child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some apps have features that cause messages to disappear after they're viewed, so children may be unable to report something they've seen, as it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

SHARING GROUP CONTENT

Group chats can feel more private and protected, allowing children to share inside jokes and video calls with a smaller group of friends. It's important to remember that while the chat's content is private between those in the group, individual users can easily share material with others outside of the group, or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something a child intended as private becoming public is higher if there are strangers in the chat.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely for children to communicate with people they don't know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly towards everyone present. It's wise for young people to avoid sharing personal details and remember that they have no control over what others do with the material they send into the chat.

NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications they tend to generate. Every time someone sends a message, each member's device will be 'pinged' with an alert. This could result in hundreds of notifications a day. This is often highly distracting, and young people's fear of missing out (FOMO) can cause increased screen time as they try to keep up with the conversation.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for young people to compete for social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse which could upset others. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave in this way. If the child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being picked on.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block whoever sent the material, report that person to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could put a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise that it's OK for children to simply leave any group chat that makes them feel uncomfortable.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure children understand the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school, or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up and how it might be used.

AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their identity to gain a child's trust and serve their own ends – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure the child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and why they should never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a device bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of the group chat while disabling notifications – and that it would be healthier for them to do so, avoiding a situation where they could feel pressured to respond.



Equipping more than five million children with the skills and confidence to cycle on today's roads

Bikeability cycle training equips children with vital life skills. Pupils not only learn to cycle, they gain independence, social skills and a sense of wellbeing.

After Bikeability, children are better at responding to risk and report increased confidence. As a result, more children cycle to school which in turn improves mental health and wellbeing. This allows children to get more out of the classroom, improving their attention span and engagement. Healthier habits lead to increased attendance and improved academic results. Bikeability goes beyond a training course; it impacts children's lives.

Year 5 Cycling Proficiency Course

Pupils in Year 5 will be taking part in their cycling proficiency course on Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st January.

Please ensure that pupils wear appropriate outdoor clothing suitable for the weather conditions.

Year 6 Cycling Proficiency Course

The training days for Year 6 pupils will be announced soon.



Breakfast Club!

Don't forget we offer a Breakfast Club!



Breakfast club is open every morning from 7:30 AM to 8:50 AM. We offer a range of healthy breakfast options to help your child start their day energised and ready to learn.

The cost is £3.50 per session. If you're interested in booking a space for your child, please contact the school office for more information or to reserve a space.

After School Clubs

From exploring music and performing arts to honing athletic skills, there's a wide range of opportunities for your child to discover new passions and develop valuable skills.

MONDAY

- Rugby tots

TUESDAY

- Dance Club for Year 1 to Year 6

WEDNESDAY

- Multi-sports Club for Year 3 to Year 6

THURSDAY

- Choir for Year 1 to Year 6
- Multi-skills club Reception to Year 2

FRIDAY

- Performing Arts for Year 1 to Year 6
- Football

To register for any of the After School Clubs, simply contact the office or click on the links on any of the flyers which are on the school notice-boards, or which you will have received via email from the school.

Attendance

A top priority at Westwoodside



At Westwoodside Church of England Primary Academy, we are committed to ensuring outstanding attendance and punctuality for all our pupils. Regular attendance is crucial for maximizing learning opportunities, and we rely on parents and carers to help encourage a positive attitude towards attending school. Research shows that pupils who attend school consistently not only achieve better academic results but also build stronger friendships with their peers.

Our school's minimum attendance target is 96.5%, and we expect all pupils to meet or exceed this. Every day matters, and maintaining good attendance will have a significant impact on your child's overall progress and development. Let's work together to support your child's success in both learning and social growth.

Together, we can ensure that all our pupils have the best possible opportunities for success!



Shining Lights

of the week

Here are this week's Shining Lights of the Week! These pupils have been shining lights for others to follow, embodying our school vision through their kindness, effort, and positive example. Let's celebrate their achievements and the difference they make in our school community!

Nursery

Reception/Year 1

Years 1/2

Years 3/4

Years 4/5

Year 6

Elaine

Layla

Florence

Indie Rose

Laila

Kieran

CERTIFICATE



Upcoming Events

Something for the fridge door...



January

- **Mon 20th and Tues 21st** - Cycling Proficiency Year 5
- **Wed 22nd** - Weekly SEND Coffee Morning. 9:15am
- **28th** - year 1/2 Geography walk in Westwoodside
- **28th** - Informal meet The St Lawrence Academy Trust (3.30pm - 4.30pm)

February

- **1st - 7th** - Children's mental health week
- **Tues 11th** - Internet Safety Day
- **17th - 21st** - Half Term Week

March

- **3rd - 8th** - National Careers Week
- **Thur 6th** - Get dressed up as your favourite storybook character for World Book Day
- **7th - 16th** - British Science Week
- **Fri 28th** - The Easter Journey Year 5

April

- **7th - 22nd** - Easter Holiday

May

- **26th - 30th** - Half Term Week

June

- **Wed 4th** - Trip to Austerfield Reception and Year 1



Remember to see further dates please log into the School Jotter App where you can view and subscribe to the school calendar

This Week at Westwoodside!

Take a look at some of the fantastic experiences we've had in school this week!



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