

# CPS Newsletter

## 28th April 2023



### Coming up...

- Monday, 1st May: May Day Bank Holiday
- Monday, 8th May: King's Coronation Bank Holiday
- Tuesday, 9th May: Year 6 SATs Week
- Thursday, 11th May: EYFS Church Farm trip
- Monday, 15th May: Hilltop Information Evening (6pm)  
Year 2 SATs Week
- Friday, 26th May: House Day (theme TBC)
- Monday, 29th May: Half-term week
- Monday, 5th June: Year 6 Residential trip
- Monday, 12th June: Year 1 Phonics Screening Check Week
- Monday, 26th June—Thursday, 29th June: Year 6 Bikeability
- Wednesday, 28th June—Year 4 Tower of London Trip
- Tuesday, 4th July—Class Swap afternoon
- Thursday, 6th & Friday, 7th July: Year 5 Grafham Water Trip
- Thursday, 13th July: PTCA Summer Fair
- Tuesday, 18th July: End of Term (2pm)

### A message from Mr Kilsby

Since returning back at the start of the summer term, we have all been coming to terms with the death of Mrs Faben.

This sad news obviously followed all too quickly on the loss the school experienced during the spring term.

It is very difficult to convey the impact that these tragic events are having on the staff and community.

In addition to the realisation that Katy and Linda are no longer a part of our lives, there is also the loss of what they contributed to the life of the school.

As I said in the letter which informed you of Mrs Faben's death, it is impossible to overstate the contribution she made to our provision. For a long time to come, we will still be uncovering the breadth and depth of what she did, and that many of the things that we all just assumed were part of the school's offer, only actually happened because of Linda.

Her appetite and unrelenting commitment to supporting the school were driven by her fierce desire to ensure that our children had as many opportunities as possible, across the range of the school's curriculum.

Not only have hundreds of children attended the early morning Multiskills Club that Linda led for years (with many going on to experience the unique joy of representative sport at a local and regional level), but countless children had access to resources and equipment that they simply would not have had, were it not for Linda. You only need look at our wonderful LRC to see the evidence of this; with many of the books paid for out of PTCA funding that Linda was instrumental in securing.

In addition to the professional debt that I will always owe Linda, there is also the personal. She was a stalwart of both the athletics club and rugby club that I belonged to years ago. Here again, she devoted endless hours to making these clubs function; be it be marshalling on a wet and windy running track, or cooking enough chilli con carne for a hundred hungry rugby players.

She was a genuine warrior: one of the bravest and toughest people I have known. But she was also one of the warmest and kindest. Her untimely death will be felt for many years to come.

We are currently considering how we can best honour Linda's memory, and I will write to you shortly to inform on what has been decided.

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## In the news...



Our Year 6 Netball Team recently competed in the South Cambs Sports Partnerships A Team Finals, at Comberton Village College. They did really well and came 2nd in their division.



Pete Thompson (5 x World Record Holder for skipping activities) spent a day leading skipping workshops for our KS2 children. The day started with a hi-energy assembly!

### Assembly Music

Recent music in assemblies has included: "Here Comes the Sun" by The Beatles; "I Get the Sweetest Feeling" by Jackie Wilson; "Shoes" by Bobby 'Blues' Bland; and "It Takes Two" by Marvin Gaye and Kim Weston.

### A Polite Request...

A number of parents have spoken to us recently regarding the use of 'Prime' drinks bottles in school. Apparently, these bottles are highly sought after and there is some sort of status in having a bottle. Unsurprisingly, this is putting some parents under unnecessary pressure, as their children are very keen to have said bottles. Therefore, if you could avoid sending your child into school with a Prime bottle, it would be hugely appreciated. A reminder that children should only be bringing water into school for a drink.

### Tier 2 Vocabulary

Please be aware that the following Tier 2 vocabulary is currently being shared and taught across the school:

EYFS	Chasing, Trekking, Floating	Year 4	Voyaging, Crackled, Plunge
Year 1	Afraid, Strange, hopeful	Year 5	Devious, Distress, Envious
Year 2	Searching, Darkness, Sway	Year 6	Exposed, Obligated, Contemplate
Year 3	Grasp, Relentlessly, Amongst, Innocent		



Should any of you be struggling to navigate the challenges of supporting your child's use of technology, Mr Moore, our Online Safety Lead, has found the following advice:

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 issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10-15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

### PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on our child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

### BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real life' – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

### DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem: it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

### ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it does also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people 'looking on', 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

### PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same: you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

### KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

### TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

### LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

### BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.

