



Teaching and Learning  
in a supportive environment  
where all  
feel valued, happy and  
successful.

Blaydon West Primary School  
Blaydon Bank  
Blaydon on Tyne  
Tyne and Wear  
NE214PY  
Tel: 01914143286

[www.blaydonwestprimary.org](http://www.blaydonwestprimary.org)

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of term, we have a number of important reminders and exciting events to share with you. Please take a moment to read through the details below.

### **Parents' Evening – Booking Now Open**

A gentle reminder to please sign up via Arbor for our upcoming Parents' Evening appointments. These will take place on Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st March. This is a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress and development.

We would also like to inform you that Mrs Wright is now working across EYFS, predominantly within Nursery. She will be supporting and conducting Parents' Evening appointments alongside Mrs Bellamy, and will be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

### **Easter Egg Competition – Monday 30th March**

We are delighted to announce that our annual Easter Egg Competition will take place on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March! This is always a highlight of the term and a wonderful chance for families to get creative together.

- Entries must be brought into school on Monday 30th March
- This is a family project to complete at home together
- All entries will be judged during the school day
- Winners will be selected from across the school, with special prizes awarded for standout entries in each class.
- **Get Artistic!**  
Paint or dye your egg in bright, vibrant colours and experiment with fun patterns.
- **Themed Eggs**  
Design your egg based on a favourite story, film, or character your child loves.
- **Crafty Creations**  
Use materials such as cotton wool, pipe cleaners, feathers, or glitter to add texture and bring your design to life.
- **Funny Faces**  
Create a silly or expressive face—these always bring lots of smiles and laughter!
- We can't wait to see your fantastic creations—good luck to everyone taking part!

We encourage every family to take part and let your creativity shine—your ideas always amaze us and make judging incredibly difficult each year! If you're looking for inspiration, here are a few egg-citing ideas from last year to get you started:



### **Eid Celebration – Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March**

On Tuesday, we will be celebrating Eid in school. Children are warmly invited to come dressed in celebration party clothing to mark the occasion.

These celebrations are an important part of our cultural enrichment programme, where we explore and appreciate different cultures and religions from around the world. We encourage you to talk with your child about what they have learned and experienced during the day.

### **Online Safety Focus – YouTube**

As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping children safe online, this week's **online safety guide** focuses on **YouTube**.

YouTube is a hugely popular platform for children, offering a wide range of educational and entertaining content. However, as with all online platforms, it is important to ensure children are accessing content safely and appropriately.

In this week's guide, we will share:

- Practical advice on setting up parental controls
- Tips for monitoring what your child is watching
- Guidance on age-appropriate content
- Ways to encourage positive and safe viewing habits

We strongly encourage all parents and carers to take a few moments to watch the guide and discuss online safety with your child. Working together, we can help children develop the skills they need to stay safe and responsible online. The guide is on the last sheet of this newsletter.

### **End of Term Reminder**

Finally, please remember that we break up for the Easter holidays on Thursday 2nd April and return to school on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We look forward to seeing many of you at Parents' Evening and to enjoying these special events together with the children.

Regards

Mr Brown

Head Teacher



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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](http://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload videos to be shared around the world, and as a result, it's an incredible resource with instant free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Some content is flagged as 'age-restricted' (requiring the user to be logged into an account with a verified age of 18), but children can still view some mildly inappropriate content. This can include profanity and violence, which some young users may find upsetting.

#### CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube recommends videos related to what the user has previously watched on their account, aiming to provide content that will interest them. This is intended to be helpful but it can also lead to binge-watching and screen addiction – especially if 'auto-play' is active. Users without an account are shown popular videos from the last 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

#### RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that's getting the most traffic – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can be fine for harmless topics, but YouTube isn't regulated like television, and that means that conspiracy theories, fake news and hateful ideologies can occasionally surface to warp impressionable minds all too easily. Remember – the more they watch, the more they'll be recommended.

#### CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube is a social media platform which allows people to interact with other (usually unknown) users. Account holders can leave comments on any video they have access to, as well as message other users directly. Connecting with strangers online can potentially lead to children being exposed to adult language, cyberbullying and – in the worst cases – online predators. If a child is creating content themselves, this can increase the likelihood of them becoming a target.

#### TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

YouTube is teeming with trends and challenges, some of which are fun to watch and join in with. Children often find these immensely entertaining and might want to try them out. Most challenges tend to be safe, but many others may cause physical or emotional harm children who watch or copy them. The painful 'salt and ice challenges' – where people use these two ingredients to burn their skin – is just one of many examples.

#### SNEAKY SCAMMERS

The comments sections of popular content creators regularly have scammers posing as that influencer, attempting to lure users into clicking on their phishing links. Scammers impersonate YouTubers by adopting their names and profile images, and often offer cash gifts or 'get rich quick' schemes. Children may not realise that these users aren't who they claim to be.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, Restricted Mode is an optional setting that prevents YouTube from showing inappropriate material (such as drug and alcohol abuse, graphic violence, and sexual content) to underage viewers. To prevent children from changing across age-inappropriate content on the platform, we would recommend enabling Restricted Mode on each device that they use to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the auto-play feature off, to prevent YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending something inappropriate.

### 18 CENSORED TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their child is watching, uploading, and sharing with other users. It will also display their recently watched videos, searches, and recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account gives a parent or carer oversight of how their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.

### MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the online viewing platform of choice for billions of people, many of them under 18. Younger children will watch different content to older ones, of course. You may want to keep an eye on how children interact with this material – and, if applicable, with content creators – to understand what they're interested in. Remember that creators often share content outside of YouTube, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere!

### CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content completely via Google's own YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This lets you filter content by 'preschool' (4 and under), 'younger' (ages 5 to 8) and 'older' (ages 9 to 12). This isn't a perfect substitute for personal supervision, as the app's filtering system is automated, and Google can't manually review all videos.

### CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos as 'private' or 'unlisted' – so they could be shared exclusively with family and friends, for example. Comments on videos can also be disabled and channels that a child is subscribed to can be hidden. If the child is only uploading videos set as 'private', they are far less likely to receive direct messages from strangers.

### LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some in-app purchases. For example, users can rent and buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you'd like to avoid children purchasing content online, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents have discovered the hard way that a child happily consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

### Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

## #WakeUpWednesday

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