



FRIDAY UPDATE

Friday 17th November 2023



It has been another lovely week in school. The children all enjoyed their Dog Safety talk from Wood Green Animal Shelter - please do ask them what they remember learning from Woody the dog.

Thank you for all your donations to Children in Need today - you have been very generous. The children learned about the work of Children in Need in assembly on Wednesday and showed a great understanding of charity and helping others.

We are continuing to monitor children's reading and we are so grateful for any time you can give to read with your child. Home practice makes a massive difference to their progress. The children are rewarded for reading at home at least four times per week. Don't forget to log these reads with a tick on the correct day in their reading record. Thank you so much. If you have any questions about reading or any aspect of your child's learning, please speak to their class teacher.

Have a really wonderful weekend.

In celebration assembly today we said well done to the following children, who received **Special Awards** and special gold Headteacher's Award sticker:

Bobby (Beech class) - for thinking really carefully when spelling individual words.

Noah (Hazel class) - for writing a brilliant diary entry independently.

Zhenya (Maple class) - for using varied punctuation in English.

Anya (Cherry class) - for superb sentence writing with great use of adjectives and punctuation.

Nylah (Willow class) - for working hard in phonics.

Michael (Oak class) - for always being a kind friend and sharing with others.



WHAT'S ON NEXT WEEK (Autumn 2 Week 4):

Monday 20th	-
Tuesday 21st	- Year 2 P.E.
Wednesday 22nd	-
Thursday 23rd	- Year 1 P.E.
Friday 24th	- Reception Family Reading - 8.50-9.10am - Reception P.E.



LETTERS / EMAILS HOME THIS WEEK:

Pantomime letter
Book Fair letter
Flu vaccination permission



As part of our commitment to safeguarding, it is important that we ensure that parents/carers are as informed as possible about online safety.

What parents and carers need to know about X

The social media network formerly known as Twitter has undergone numerous alterations since its change of ownership and rebranding as X – and many of these recent developments have proved controversial. With any user now simply able to pay a fee for account verification, for example, the once-reliable 'blue tick' system has become largely meaningless.

It's just one of several changes that have set the social media giant on what many consider a concerning path in online safety terms. The guide provides a run-down of the most significant tweaks made to X; their potential safeguarding implications; and how to help ensure young people minimise the risks while they continue to use the service.

A larger version of these guides can be downloaded from our school Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/TheAvenueInfantSchool/>

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

X

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote denial and hatred.

LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

BLUE TICK SALE

Advice for Parents & Carers

PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow; this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



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