



# FRIDAY UPDATE

Friday 2nd February 2024

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

**Alkaios** (Beech class) - for focus and effort, particularly in Maths.

**Harvey** (Hazel class) - for being an expert in our Maths lessons about money.

**Vedi** (Maple class) - for writing an excellent character description.

**Sammy-Jane** (Cherry class) - for working hard creating a new character in English, using adjectives in a descriptive sentence.

**Ariah** (Willow class) - for thinking of an interesting question to ask our class visitors and asking it bravely.

**Benny** (Oak class) - for joining in with lots of learning in class.



## Class Accolades

**Hazel Class** - Miss Morris was impressed with your perseverance tackling some tricky Maths work.

**Beech Class** - All the class adults were proud of what super scientists you have been this week.

**Cherry Class** - Miss Startin was so proud of the respect you are showing to others around school and working hard on your listening skills.

**Maple Class** - Mrs Bolter was so proud of how you are remembering your writing toolkit when writing.

**Willow Class** - Miss Cooper was so proud of your super listening when our visitors came in to see the class.

**Oak Class** - Miss Cotter was so proud of you all during the police visit to class this week.

**Each class was presented with their Class Accolade certificate and earned two class ticks. Well done everyone!**



## WHAT'S ON NEXT WEEK (Spring 1 Week 6):

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Monday 5th    | - <b>Children's Mental Health Week</b> starts<br>- Rock Steady Club<br>- <b>'Come &amp; See' your children's work - 3.15-3.45pm</b> |
| Tuesday 6th   | - <b>Safer Internet day</b><br>- Year 2 P.E.  |
| Wednesday 7th | - Play & Perform club 3.15 - 4.15pm   |
| Thursday 8th  | - Year 1 P.E.<br>- Story Explorers club 3.15 - 4.15pm   |
| Friday 9th    | - <b>Year 2 Family Reading - 8.50 - 9.10am</b><br>- Reception P.E.  |

Values tokens  
total this week:

**107**

**Please pop in to our 'Come and See' afternoon after school on Monday – a chance to look through your child's hard work so far this year.**



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 Persuasive Design

For many companies who operate in the online space, attention and engagement are the holy grail. Social media sites in particular make deliberate creative choices to keep people scrolling, reading, watching and clicking. This phenomenon is known as 'persuasive design' and it's being employed in the vast majority of the digital world's most popular destinations.

A study by the charity 5Rights Foundation concluded that "...the brain's response to rewards and punishments can be leveraged through persuasive design to keep children online." To tie in with Safer Internet Day 2024, this guide can help to educate youngsters on the effects of persuasive design – and suggests ways to insulate themselves from its influence. 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 PERSUASIVE DESIGN ONLINE

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

'Persuasive design' refers to the techniques that companies employ to influence our thoughts and behaviours when we're on the internet. These approaches can be spotted on websites, in apps and even as part of some video games. Persuasive design means that this content has been deliberately presented in a way that's intended to encourage you to spend your time or money (or both). These methods often prove highly effective at keeping people engaged and invested for longer than we might expect.

### POTENTIAL ADDICTION

In the digital world, persuasive design can make certain activities more addictive and harder to walk away from: some people may begin to feel anxious or irritated without access to their device or their favourite app, for example. It can also often leave users feeling isolated, as – if they spend most of their time on social media – they may start to find it difficult to talk to other people in real life.

### MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Scrolling online or gaming without regular breaks is proven to be harmful to our mental health. The constant bombardment of news stories (many of them negative), images and influencers' posts can create sensations of unease, uncertainty and FOMO (fear of missing out). Young people can get so immersed in this environment that they become less likely to spot misleading posts.

### PROLONGED SCROLLING

Social media can draw any of us – regardless of age – into a continuous pattern of refreshing our screen, following posts and links down rabbit holes or reading countless comments made by others. This aimless scrolling can eat up time which could have been spent on more productive activities. It could also lead younger users into areas of the online world which aren't age appropriate.

### SENSORY OVERLOAD

Repetitively scrolling, clicking on links or playing games can create an unending stream of new information and visual stimuli. Put it this way: social media isn't exactly renowned as a carefree, chilled-out environment. Such overstimulation can become too much for young people to handle, resulting in sensory overload and causing them to feel stressed, overwhelmed and exhausted.

### COSTLY ADDITIONS

Video games sometimes display offers for downloadable content or loot boxes which can be bought with real money. While these 'microtransactions' temptingly promise to improve a player's gaming experience, most of the time they are money sinks. Young people in particular, excited by the chance of enhancing their game, could spend quite a sizeable sum very quickly indeed.

### PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

Hours spent sitting and scrolling means far less time moving around and getting exercise: hardly ideal for a young person's physical health. Additionally, prolonged exposure to the light given off by a phone's screen can lead to eye fatigue and discomfort, especially if viewing it in the dark. Extended phone use before bed can also impact on sleep quality, affecting mood and energy levels over the following days.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### ESTABLISH LIMITS

Talk to your child about setting some time limits on how long they can use their phone, tablet or console in the evenings or at weekends – or perhaps how often they can go on a specific app, game or website. You could also decide to involve the whole family in creating this shared screen time agreement, making things fair (and healthier) for everyone.

### NIX NOTIFICATIONS

Stop knee-jerk responses at the source by turning off push notifications and alerts. Whether it's a gaming notification or a social media update, these not-so-gentle reminders are designed to catch our attention and lure us back to our device. Switching them off – or even deleting any particularly intrusive apps – can help prevent your child from being reeled back into the online world.

### ENCOURAGE MINDFULNESS

Acknowledging any addiction is key in overcoming it – and compulsive scrolling is no different. If anything mentioned in this guide sounds familiar, it could help to have an honest, open chat with your child about how much time they spend online. Get them to think about how often they scroll through social media aimlessly or habitually open it up whenever they have a spare moment.

### MAKE A CHECKLIST

Considering a list of relevant questions can be an effective way of helping children figure out why they're scrolling on certain sites or consuming particular pieces of content. A checklist can prompt young people to ask themselves if they're learning anything or benefiting from this activity – or if they're wasting their time. Taking a step back can sometimes help us to see things more clearly.

### Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings has more than 20 years' experience in the field of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). As well as delivering workshops and training for young people, parents and schools, she is also a subject matter expert on RSHE for the Department of Education.



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