



The Avenue Infant School
FRIDAY UPDATE
 Friday 9th February 2024



Thank you so much to all the parents who came along to our 'Come and see' event on Monday. We hope you enjoyed seeing your child's work and seeing the progress they have made. Thank you also to you all for being so prompt in booking your parents evening appointments for Monday 4th or Wednesday 6th March. This will be an opportunity to discuss your child's progress, strengths and next steps. We are looking forward to seeing you all then. If you are still to book an appointment, please do so as soon as possible as we have limited slots available.

Next week we will welcome a new member of staff, Mrs Brown, who will be teaching Oak class when Miss Cotter has her leadership time on. Mrs Brown is an experienced teacher and we are very much looking forward to her joining us here at The Avenue. She will be in school Wednesday afternoons, Thursdays and Fridays.

Next week is the final week of this half-term and we close for a week's break. The children return, after a teaching training day, on Tuesday 27th February.

Have a lovely weekend.

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

Jaxon (Beech class) - for putting a lot of thought and effort into his writing.

Harper (Hazel class) - for having excellent knowledge of our key text and retelling it brilliantly.

Zak (Maple class) - for his kindness to friends.

Jasmine (Cherry class) - for being a great role model in Cherry class and working hard on her writing.

Hunter (Willow class) - for a super story map of Handa's Hen.

Matilda (Oak class) - for always sharing her lovely ideas during carpet time.



WHAT'S ON NEXT WEEK (Spring 1 Week 7):

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Monday 12th | - Rock Steady Club
- Year 2 P.E. - please note, change to usual day. |
| Tuesday 13th | - |
| Wednesday 14th | - Play & Perform club 3.15 - 4.15pm |
| Thursday 15th | - Year 1 P.E.
- Story Explorers club 3.15 - 4.15pm |
| Friday 16th | - Year 1 Family Reading - 8.50-9.10am
- Reception P.E.
- SCHOOL CLOSSES FOR HALF TERM HOLIDAY. |

SCHOOL REOPENS TO PUPILS TUESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY 8.50am

LETTERS / EMAILS HOME THIS WEEK:

Parents evening invites
 Year 2 change of PE day
 Phonics emails
 Breakfast Club and After School Club Information regarding prices

Values tokens
 total this
 week:
110



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 Monkey

With Omegle finally shutting down in late 2023, the top spot among video chat services is up for grabs – and Monkey has its eyes set on the crown. Randomly matching its users for 15-second conversations, the platform's developers claim to have created a dynamic online space for people to make new connections and, potentially, even some new friends.

Despite these innocuous-sounding intentions, however, Monkey has been criticised for moderation which may not be comprehensive enough to defend against the obvious dangers that unregulated, random video calls pose to the younger element of the site's userbase. This week's guide tells trusted adults what they need to know about Monkey.

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 MONKEY

Also known as Monkey Cool, this platform aims to fill the gap left by Omegle (which has now shut down) by placing users in random video chats with strangers. Participants use their mobile number and Snapchat username to connect to the service, where they can make matches, message other people and join group chats. The mobile version has been removed from the App Store due to safety concerns, but iPhone owners can still access the site via their web browser. The app remains available on Google Play, where its listing claims that Monkey has more than 30 million users worldwide.

AGE RESTRICTION
17+

(although the lack of age verification means that someone younger could easily log in with a false date of birth)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The app claims to use AI to detect sexual content or activity that violates its policies, along with having a 24/7 moderation team. However, reports in the media continue to indicate that explicit content remains commonplace on Monkey (including sexually graphic or violent material) and is therefore accessible to anybody who uses the app – including those aged under 18.



CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

The obvious risk in accepting random video chat partners is that users cannot know what or who they will see on their next connection. Talking to strangers is, of course, potentially dangerous – especially for children who might be persuaded to meet up with these people offline. The app lets users find each other by location, increasing the chances of a child being matched with a stranger from their local area.



IN-APP SPENDING

While Monkey is free to download, it nevertheless offers in-app purchases promising to unlock access to premium features. For example, users who wish to make use of 'Knock Knock chat' (Monkey's text-based messaging option), rather than the app's Chatroulette-style random video calling feature, will need to pay to be able to do so.



INTRUSIONS ON PRIVACY

According to Monkey's privacy policy, personal information (such as name, profile picture and date of birth), user-contributed content (any photos, texts, videos and screenshots shared) and each user's browser and IP address are collected. That is a considerable amount of data for Monkey to gather on its users – and all of this information is shared with third parties.



Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

Even if you're comfortable with your child using Monkey, it's still important to talk about the potential dangers. It's crucial, for instance, that young people recognise the risks that stem from video chatting with strangers; that they understand not to share identifying information (like their street or school name); and that they know what to do if they are exposed to inappropriate content.



RESTRICT IN-APP PURCHASING

If your child is accessing Monkey via an Android device, you can prevent them from making in-app purchases through the device's settings. If you do allow your child to use the site, we'd recommend that you enable this feature: young people have been known to spend significant amounts of money in their desire to unlock more features in apps such as this.



REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Monkey states in the safety section of its site that "people are given the power" and that, to a large extent, Monkey is "self-governing." If a user is exposed to sexually explicit or inappropriate content on the platform, they can select the 'police' emoji in the top right corner of their screen to submit a report for Monkey's moderation team to review.



SPOT THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child is spending too much time on Monkey – or that they may have been exposed to inappropriate or distressing content – it's important to watch for potential indications that they've been affected emotionally. They could be unusually irritable or unable to concentrate, for example, or failing to complete their homework or even to eat regular meals.



Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

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