



Harting C of E Primary School Newsletter



Issue 1 – 26th September 2023
Value of the Month: Trust

It is with great pride that I am sharing the 1st edition of our 2023 – 2024 newsletter. Just three weeks in to the term and we already have so much to celebrate and even more to look forward to!

With Love and Respect as the school's key Christian values, this half term the children are focusing their minds and thoughts to the value of Respect. As a team we have been exploring what this means both for us and those around, with a focus on how Christians apply this value to their lives. We aim for children to be confident in how they can use this value to form and maintain meaningful and supportive relationships with others. This learning closely links with our whole school focus in PSHE of 'Being Me in My World'. This piece of the jigsaw in their learning explores how our choices have an impact on others and further develops an understanding of our role and responsibilities in school in the local and wider community.

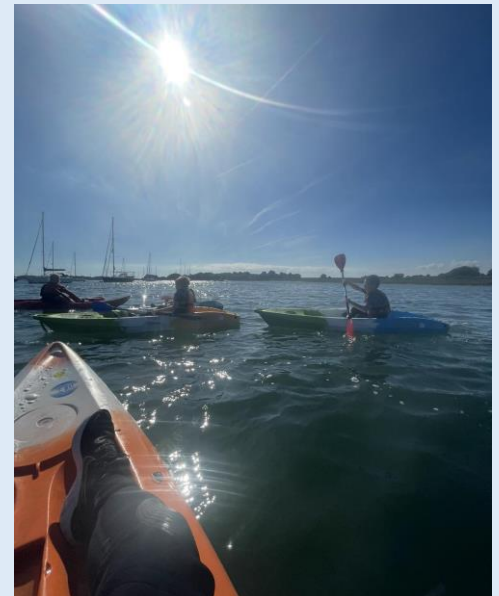
I hope you enjoy celebrating the many successes already achieved by our children, and that you too are looking forward to what we know is going to be a fantastic year at Harting!

Mr Tidey, Headteacher

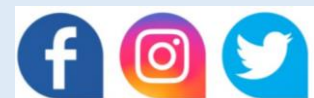


Cobnor Residential

Last week saw our year 5/6 children taking part in a residential trip to Cobnor Activities Centre. The week saw them all taking part in sailing, kayaking, canoeing, raft building, archery, Aeroball and not to forget the yearly talent show! Both the centre's instructors and school staff were truly blown away by the teamwork and support shown for each other. We are so proud of each of the children for making the week so special.



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Our Grounds

You may have already noticed a few changes to the school grounds. We are pleased to share that we have a new Grounds Maintenance team who will be working hard over the coming year to maintain and ensure that our grounds are in tip top condition at all times!



New Arrivals!

We are all very excited to have recently rehomed 3 new hens as part of a welfare rescue service. It will soon be time to name the hens – get your thinking caps on!

Key Dates for Autumn Half Term

- 26/09 Open Morning for new parents
- 27/09 Willow & Chestnut Meet the Teacher
- 28/09 Open Morning for new parents
- 04/10 Open Morning for new parents
- 04/10 Rowan & Oak Meet the Teacher
- 05/10 Tempest Photography to school
- 05/10 Coronation Garden Open evening
- 06/10 Open Morning for new parents
- 10/10 Harvest Festival service at Congregational Church (am)
- 13/10 MRC Yrs 5&6 Football Tournament
- 17/10 Brass Band England Visit
- 19/10 Chestnut trip to Butser Farm
- 20/10 Last Forest School for Chestnut Class
- 23/10- 27/10 HALF TERM
- 30/10 INSET DAY (no children in school)
- 31/10 Children back to school



Forest School

Friday saw the first of this year's Forest School sessions with Chestnut class. As you can see they had a lot of fun with clay today! Sessions will be running weekly across the year with all children



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Online Safety Focus

Online Platform: Discord

Have you heard of Discord? This is a fast-growing online platform which is run from private servers. We strongly recommend that parents read the attached information to understand the risks associated with using this platform and how to set parental settings to minimise these risks for your children.

DISCORD

Discord is a free app which allows users to communicate in real time via text, video or voice chat. Available on desktop and mobile devices, it was originally designed to help gamers cooperate – but has evolved into a more general networking platform for a range of online communities, discussing topics like TV series, music, Web3 and more. Discord is organised around closed groups, referred to as 'servers'. To join a server, users must be invited or provided with a unique link. It's a space for users to interact with friends, meet others with shared interests and collaborate privately online – but it's also a place where young people can be exposed to risks if the right precautions aren't taken.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CYBERBULLYING
Discord's easy accessibility and connectivity, unfortunately, makes it an ideal place for cyberbullying to occur – especially as audio and video streams disappear once they've ended, meaning that bullying could take place without leaving any evidence. Closed groups can also be created, giving young people the opportunity to exclude their peers or send cruel messages without adult oversight.

DIFFICULT TO MODERATE
Like many private communication apps, Discord's real-time messaging can be difficult to control. The system enables content moderation through each individual server – so different groups can set their own rules for what's acceptable, and some groups may not monitor for unsuitable content. Anything that happens in an audio or video stream is also virtually untraceable once the stream has concluded.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT
Discord mainly hosts private groups, making it easier for unsuitable or explicit content to be shared on channels. Pornography, racism and inappropriate language can be found in some groups. Server owners are required to add an age-restriction gate to channels where 18+ content is being shared – but this solution isn't foolproof, as the platform doesn't always verify users' ages when they sign up.

ACCESSIBLE TO PREDATORS
On many chat platforms, users can lie about their age or true identity – and Discord is no exception. Predators have attempted to abuse the platform by using it to contact and communicate with underage users – by initially chatting with a child on an age-appropriate channel, for example. While Discord has improved its safety settings, some users will still try to bypass them for malicious reasons.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY
Discord does have strict Terms of Service and Community Guidelines to protect its users – but sadly, not everyone adheres to them. Criminal activity including grooming, hate speech, harassment, exploitative content, doxing and extremist or violent material have all been found on Discord servers over the last two years. In 2020, Discord received almost 27,000 reports of illegal activity on the platform.

AGE RATING 13+
Servers and channels marked as 'NSFW' require users to be 18 or older to join.

Advice for Parents & Carers

REVIEW SAFETY SETTINGS
Discord has a series of safety settings, enabling users to choose who can direct message them or send them friend requests. Your child's experience on Discord will be much safer if the app's privacy and safety settings are configured to only allow messages or friend requests from server members. This will minimise the chances of potential predators from outside the group contacting them.

EXPLAIN AGE FILTERING
While Discord requires users to be at least 13 to sign up, many servers geared towards older users are flagged as NSFW (not safe for work), which indicates they probably contain material that's inappropriate for children. It can be easy to click through settings without properly reviewing them, so ensure your child understands why age filtering is important and that it's there to protect them.

SCREEN OUT EXPLICIT CONTENT
In the privacy and safety settings, Discord users are offered the ability to filter direct messages for inappropriate content; a setting that should be enabled if your child uses the platform. Discord automatically tries to flag images that are explicit, but the setting must be manually enabled for text. If a young user is sent explicit content in a direct message, Discord will scan and (if necessary) delete it.

MONITOR ONLINE ACTIVITY
It's wise to regularly review your child's activity on Discord. This can include checking their safety settings to ensure they're correctly enabled, talking about which servers they've joined and reviewing some of their friends and direct messages. Ask if anything has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Things can change quickly online, so plan routine check-ins and follow up frequently.

DISCUSS GOOD ONLINE BEHAVIOUR
The anonymity offered by the internet often leads people to communicate more openly online and behave differently than they would at school or home. It's crucial to bear in mind, though, that every internet user is still a real person. Talk to your child about the severe and lasting consequences that cyberbullying or exchanging inappropriate material online can have in the real world.

HAVE CANDID CONVERSATIONS
It can sometimes be awkward to discuss topics like grooming, pornography, racism or explicit content with your child – but it's important to ensure they're aware of the harms these things can pose. Talking openly about these subjects is a great way to help your child feel more comfortable about coming to you if they experience an unwanted encounter on Discord (or anywhere else online).

Meet Our Expert
Coral Cripps is a Canadian-born, London-based tech journalist at gmw3.com: a website specialising in all things Web3, gaming and XR (extended reality). With a focus on brands and culture, she researches and writes about the ways that our current innovations – including the metaverse and Web3 – are impacting people, places and things.

National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday



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