

# Update for parents: 4

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parents,

## **Lunches**

Now that we have settled into our new way of playing and learning at St. Mary's we have been considering how we can reintroduce some element of hot food into the children's lunchtimes. We are currently in discussion with the school caterers and the lunchtime staff to work out how we can feasibly do this with the numbers of children we have whilst maintaining the social distancing rules and the integrity of our bubbles.

From Monday, children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be eating their packed lunches in the hall rather than classrooms. This is the first step to expanding the menu offered to children. Once we have mastered the systems of moving the children into the hall, eating lunch and then cleaning down before the next bubble we will be able to plan the next steps of providing hot food.

We will keep parents informed of how this progresses and hopefully we will shortly be able to offer an expanded menu for pupils at lunchtime.

## **Letter from NHS**

I have attached a letter from the NHS which should give parents further guidance on what to do if your child has developed symptoms and you think they may need a test for coronavirus.

## **Online safety**

We are aware that many children, some as young as Year 2, are regularly accessing games such as Roblox and Fortnite and some are using the Tik Tok App.

The following information is to support parents in ensuring that your children stay safe online.

### **Roblox**

The games on Roblox are aimed at 8-18 year olds and it has a rating of 7+ years. Parents should check that their child's account is registered with the correct age to ensure they only access age appropriate material. Parents should also check the chat settings to ensure children under 12 are set to 'Friends' or 'No-one'. Otherwise children could be chatting with much older children or adults when they are playing.

### **Fortnite**

Fortnite is not recommended for children under 12 years old due to the frequent scenes of mild violence. The PEGI rating for Fortnite is 12. The game could also expose children to offensive language from strangers via the voice or on-screen text chat. It is also a game where the sound is crucial so children will wear headphones which means you can't hear what strangers may be saying to your children.

If you decide that you are happy with your child playing Fortnite you should set your console to have sound coming from the TV so you can monitor what is being said. You can also set the game up to allow children to only talk to their friends.

Fortnite is fiercely competitive which can make children angry and cross when they lose. Children under the age of 12 may not have the emotional maturity to manage how it makes them feel.

This competitive style also means it is hard to stop the game part way through as this will affect the child's standing in the game.

### **Tik Tok**

**Tik Tok is not suitable for children under the age of 13** and children at St. Mary's should not be accessing this app. Children can be exposed to extremely distressing and inappropriate material.

### **General online safety advice**

It is essential that parents/carers keep your child safe when they are playing games online or using Apps.

1. Check your child's privacy settings and age relevance
2. Talk to children about the content they share
3. Ensure children understand they may be talking to people they don't know and the risks that this brings.
4. Talk to children about what is and isn't appropriate to send on messaging apps.
5. Agree with your child how much time they can spend playing online
6. Pay attention to the video rating (PEGI rating) and what they mean.
7. Remember that some online games have built in chat functions – these need disabling.
8. Be aware that your child may use other applications to access online communities.
9. Talk to your child about bullying issues online
10. Make sure they can turn to you for support
11. Report any incidents
12. Talk to children about whether the site they are using is appropriate for them.

**Remember: Most social media sites are aimed at 13 year olds and upwards.**

**Support for parents can be found at:**

- [Saferinternet.org.uk](https://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- [Swgfl.org.uk/audience/parents](https://www.swgfl.org.uk/audience/parents)
- [Ceop.police.uk/safety-centre](https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre)
- [Connectsafely.org](https://www.connectsafely.org)
- [Internetmatters.org/parental-controls](https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls)

Yours sincerely

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Headteacher

