



Farewell to the Class of 2023

It has often been said, *“Education is not a destination, but it is a curious journey to enjoy the beauty of life”* (Debasish Mridha) and we have thoroughly enjoyed being part of that journey with our Class of 2023 over the last seven years in Thornhill College. Our aim has always been to give you all the best quality education alongside a range of experiences that will prepare you well for life beyond school. We hope that you take what you learned during your time with us and use it to shape your exciting futures. Remember to always aspire to the great things we know you are all capable of. Set yourself the highest bar, work hard to achieve your goals and dreams and remember once a Thornhill girl, always a Thornhill girl!

We have enjoyed marking the end of your time with us with a number of milestones this year from the elegance of your Formal, to the joy and fun of your last Christmas Show and more recently reminiscing watching the footage of your first day with us as Year 8's. Of course, we can't forget the tradition of our Year 14 rendition of 'Rock the Boat' which echoed through the school corridors over the past week. We thank you most sincerely Class of 2023, for the wonderful and enriching contribution each and every one of you have made to our school community during your time with us and indeed for the dignified manner you have enjoyed your leavers celebrations. Our thanks go to Fr Colm Clerkin, Mrs Ciara Collins, Mr Declan McCay, Miss Claire Barr, Mrs Ann Moohan, Mrs Orla McDermott and our canteen and caretaking staff for arranging the beautiful mass and celebration which we enjoyed on Friday 5th May alongside your parents / carers. We wish you all the very best for your upcoming exams and the future girls and say a fond, farewell to you all.



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GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL



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HELP CURRENT STUDENTS**



www.futurefirst.org.uk |   [futurefirstorg](https://www.instagram.com/futurefirstorg)   [Future First](https://www.facebook.com/FutureFirst)

Netball Success

Congratulations to four of our Year 8 pupils who were selected to represent the Northwest in a Regional Development Netball Academy. The girls attend training on Sundays and play in tournaments against other Academies across Northern Ireland. This is part of Netball NI's Future International Talent ID programme.

Left to Right:
Kaitlin Green
Sevanna Mallon
Ana Kirby
Clodagh Quigley



Congratulations

Young Enterprise Success

Congratulations

Our congratulations go to Mr Gareth Quigley and the Year 13 Young Enterprise Group, 'To My Younger Self' who recently attended the Young Enterprise Awards Final at the Ulster Hall in Belfast. Our girls looked absolutely stunning and Mr Quigley was very dapper in his tuxedo as they travelled in style to the gala event.

This group have received many accolades for their very novel creation, and this was acknowledged with them being awarded a Company Programme Special Recognition Award at the ceremony. This is a very fitting tribute for all the hard work, dedication and commitment of the Young Enterprise Group under the supervision of Mr Quigley. Well-done to everyone involved we are very proud of your fantastic achievements!







Primary School Easter Funday



On the 3rd April 2023, the Middle School Prefect Team hosted two primary schools, Oakgrove PS and The Model PS for an Easter Funday at Thornhill College. With the help of Barney McGuigan and the team at REACH Across the day was a great success and certainly a day to remember for all involved.

We started our preparation for this event early in the spring term with an initial meeting to brainstorm ideas, organise the groups and plan the day under the guidance of Barney who led us through an event planning programme. We arranged a fundraiser to pay for the materials and costs of the day and during the next two planning sessions we spent time practising our different roles and creating solutions to possible scenarios. We had everything prepared and ready to start when the day finally arrived.

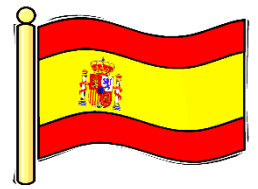
It was wonderful to see all 64 Key Stage 2 students arrive accompanied by their teachers and classroom assistants and there was great excitement in the air. Throughout the course of the day, the pupils rotated between four different activities, each lead by four or five Middle School Prefects. Everyone had the opportunity to create Easter arts and crafts, take part in parachute games and enjoy juice and Easter buns, kindly provided by the school canteen. In the Lecture Theatre, there were team building activities where the students could work on their communication skills, and everyone took part in a treasure hunt outside around the perimeter of the school with prizes for the winners at the end of the day. It really was a great day full of Easter fun activities, prizes and treats for all.

This event provided a wonderful opportunity for the Middle School Prefects to build our leadership and problem-solving skills. The day showed us the amount of work put in behind the scenes in planning an event and this was a great learning experience. We would like to thank Barney, Ryan and Anna from REACH Across for helping us to organise the day, and also the Senior Prefects who gave up their time to come and help. We hope to see many more days like this as it was an incredible experience to be a part of and all our work paid off when we saw the joy on everyone's faces. Some of the primary school children asked on leaving 'Can we come back?' 'Yes please!' say the Middle School Prefect Team! Hopefully see you all again next year!

The Middle School Prefect Team



Spanish Drama at Thornhill College!



Onatti Theatre presents

Mi personalidad (A play in Spanish for teenagers)

On Monday 24th April, we had the great opportunity to watch a play in Spanish, entitled 'Mi personalidad' (My Personality) in our school. All Year 10 students who study Spanish were invited to watch the performance. The entire play was in Spanish and was performed by two fluent Spanish speakers.

Although the play was entirely in Spanish, we were so surprised to find that it was easy to follow and understand, after three years of learning Spanish. The actors were truly great and they were so friendly and animated. The play was very engaging and they were even members of our year who were picked to go on stage! These lucky girls were Maria Brady and Ava Gillam in 10E, Emily Taylor in 10F and Ava O'Hagan in 10H. We think this was a really effective feature of the play!

The overall story and theme of the play were great too. It covered the topics of self-discovery, and identity, as Javier tried to make himself a more interesting person to gain friends. It was also very humorous and some parts caught everyone off guard! The actors asked 'sí' or 'no' questions directed at the Thornhill audience which got us all involved and shouting out in Spanish.

Overall, it was a really great play and it was a pleasure to watch! Everyone we spoke to loved the experience. Thornhill can't wait until Onatti Theatre Company comes to deliver another outstanding play next year!

Georgia Brown and Ava McNamee (10B)



British Sign Language

Year 13 pupils completed an 'Introducing British Sign Language' course with british-sign.co.uk during the Year 13 Enrichment programme. It is a comprehensive online course that covers the basics of communicating using British Sign Language.

Topics covered include fingerspelling, colours, introductions, workplace, family, descriptions, hobbies, likes & dislikes, timelines & tenses, time, money, days, months, seasons, clothing, food & drink, directional verbs, questions, animals, school & work, home, medical appointments, shopping, countryside, facial expression & body language, and conversation.



Darkness Into Light Walk



A number of our pupils and staff joined the huge numbers who participated in the Darkness into Light Walk in the early hours of Saturday morning. We are proud to support the amazing work and dedication of Pieta House and local charity Hurt.



I'm walking to stop suicide and self-harm.

DarknessIntoLight.ie



Random Act of Kindness



Well-done to all our Year 8 pupils on creating letters for residents of our local care homes. As a Random Act of Kindness, they wrote lovely letters telling residents about their favourite hobbies, holidays, foods, friends, subject at school and much more.

Culmore Manor Care Home wrote to Year 8 to thank them for their lovely letters. Mollie Bateson in 8H received a beautiful card in return from one resident, Mary, who very much appreciated her letter.

"We would just like to pass on a very big thank you to the pupils of year 8 and Mrs Katharine Green for sending our residents letters. They were very pleased and some overwhelmed because some of our residents do not have any family members, so to receive a letter brought them great joy. Once again thank you."
Lucy McCarron (Manager of Culmore Manor Care Home)

Year 8 - Junior School Rewards Programme

Congratulations to 8F who have achieved the most points as part of the Junior School Rewards Programme. They have accumulated 368 points since September. In second place is 8D with 266 points and in third place is 8E with 225 points.



Year 9 - Junior School Rewards Programme

Congratulations to the pupils in Year 9 who have reached 10 points or more in the Junior School Reward Steps during March. These points were rewarded for the students' positive contribution to the life of the school. Congratulations to all of you and keep up the good work!

9F: Kayla Barnfield, Orlaith Cutliffe, Holly Doherty, Molly Kate Doherty, Sarah Beth Hamilton, Zara McCool, Eireann McGeoghegan, Fraya Porter & Neva Rotherham



Congratulations to our Year 9 Digital Futures Team

Jovita Biju, Rose Abdelsayed, Natalia Effiril Ikhwan and Precious Bunhu from 9G have had great success in the Digital Futures 2023 Semi Finals on Thursday the 4th of May and will now progress to the Northern Ireland Digital Futures Final that is taking place on the 7th of June. The team competed against 20 other schools from Northern Ireland by presenting and making a digital app based on career pathways that can be used by students. This is an excellent result, well done girls! Good Luck in the finals!



SEMI-FINALS

4th May 2023

Industry Partners



Synechron

Aftac



Well done!

Athletics Success

Well done!

Well-done to all our students who recently competed in the District T&F Championships in Antrim. A special congratulations to all of our medal winners.

- Year 14 Sophie Parlour gold in the 100m
- Year 9 & 10 Relay Teams who both came 2nd
- Year 12 Hannah Wade 3rd in the 800m

- Year 11 Grace Callaghan gold in the 300m
- Year 8 Ana Kirby 2nd in the Long Jump





Poetry – Words of Love



Congratulations to Hannah Quigley (Year 14) and Eve Deeney (Year 11) who have both had poems published in a new anthology called 'Words of Love'. Eve and Hannah recently attended the book launch in Dublin and received copies of their first published work.



Careers – Inspire North-West Event



Well-done to our Junior Prefect Team who recently participated in the Inspire North-West event held at the University of Ulster, Magee campus.





Careers Workshop

Our thanks go to Mr Deane (Acting Head of Careers) and Mrs Scott (KS3 Digital Lead) who recently liaised with School Employers Connections to organise an informative careers workshop on the growing jobs available within the Fin Tech and Digital Technology industries.



**School Employer
Connections**



Congratulations Veronica



Huge congratulations to Year 13 student Veronica O'Neill on her superb achievement of a new NI U18 100m hurdles record with a time of 13.75s in Loughborough.

Thornhill College Important Dates



MON 1ST MAY

Bank Holiday

FRI 5TH MAY

Study Leave
Year 14

MON 8TH MAY

Bank Holiday

WED 10TH MAY

Study Leave
Year 12 & 13

MON 29TH MAY

Bank Holiday

TUES 30TH MAY -
FRI 2ND JUNE

KS3 Summer
Examinations

Year 13 T1 Club Ambassadors

A group of our Year 13 students have recently volunteered to act as ambassadors for a local type 1 diabetes charity known as the T1 Club to help raise awareness and funds for the charity. The T1 Club was set up in Derry by Edelle Irwin as a mechanism to offer support, raise awareness and provide a comforting atmosphere for parents and children who have been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes to avail of.

We were fortunate to have the opportunity to join the club for one of their Easter events where we got the chance to meet children and families who attended, engage in arts and crafts activities and participate in their easter egg hunt!

In addition to this speaking to the parents and children who are living with type 1 diabetes we were offered an insight into the reality of life with type 1 diabetes. We learnt that there are many misconceptions associated with type 1 diabetes, the main one being its occurrence and cause. As of now scientists are still not completely sure what causes it but believe it's likely the result of a combination of genetic factors; we now know there is more than 50 genes where a small difference in your DNA code can change your chance of developing type 1 diabetes. Its cause is not the common misconception, a result of diet; but is uncontrollable and is developed at birth.

Type 1 results in the body not having the ability to make the hormone insulin. Without insulin the level of glucose in blood becomes too high resulting in regular doses of insulin being required to be taken to manage blood glucose levels. This can be achieved through several treatments such as a blood glucose meter, a continuous glucose monitor, fresh glucose sensing, insulin injections and an insulin pump.

Having heard from a variety of families who came to the clubs most recent event we have gathered that the club offers support for both parents and children alike. Bit in addition to this it also promotes social inclusion and interaction where there is complete understanding between everyone there. We hope that through fundraising for the charity and raising awareness of their fantastic work, we can make a contribution to the wonderfully inclusive and supportive environment they offer for those living with type 1 diabetes.

JDRF is an international type 1 diabetes charity and funder of world-class medical research to cure, prevent and treat type 1 diabetes. They are hosting a 'Discovery Day' event on Saturday the 13th of May starting at 10am; the event will consist of panels with whom life with type 1 will be discussed. There are athletes attending to speak on behalf of themselves, their journey and how they managed their success alongside having type 1 and lots of games and activities for children. All are welcome to come along and enjoy what the event has to offer.

Fianait Bryson (Year 14)

Type 1 Diabetes Discovery Event & Technology Exhibition: Derry~Londonderry



This event is free and open to anyone affected by type 1 diabetes. During the event you will learn about the latest developments in type 1 research, hear from speakers knowledgeable about type 1 and meet other people and families living with the condition. You can also attend the technology exhibition at a time that suits you (10.00am - 14:30pm).

Saturday 13 May 2023
10:00 - 14:30
Registration @ 9:30

Ulster University - Magee Campus, MU Building
Northland Road
Derry-Londonderry
BT48 7J

For more information please contact outreach@jdrf.org.uk

Register on [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)



JDRF IMPROVING
LIVES.
CURING
TYPE 1
DIABETES.

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All promotions must be payed on the day of purchase

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Don't Miss out on our June / July Promotion!
Includes
Pre-School, Primary School and High School

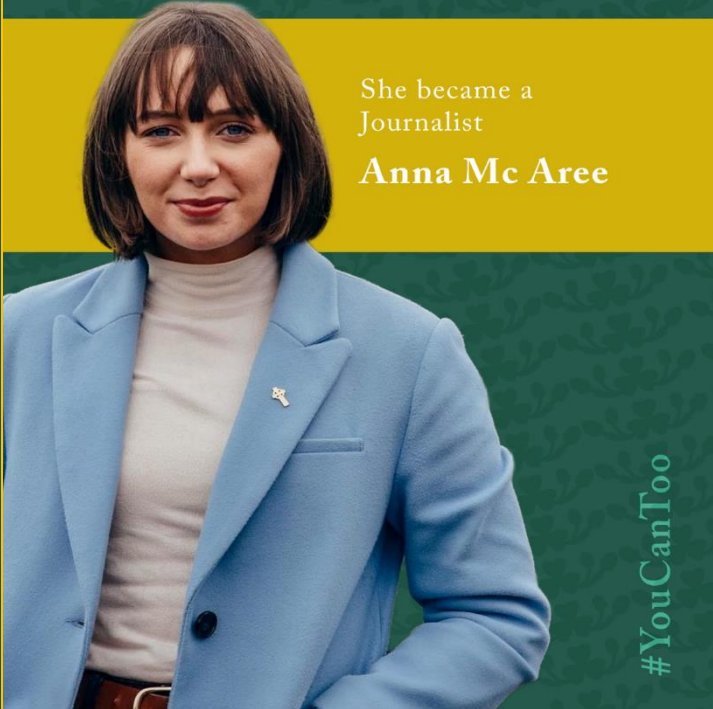
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Exchanges can be made until the end of August

THE ONE STOP SCHOOL WEAR SHOP
All promotions and deals must be paid on the day of purchase




Thornhill College
Past Pupils

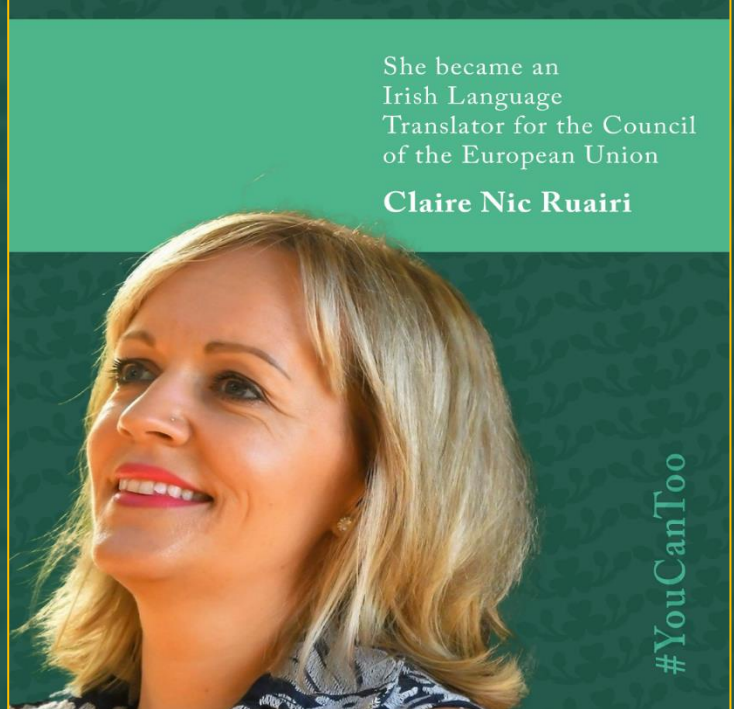


She became a
Journalist
Anna Mc Aree

#YouCanToo



Thornhill College
Past Pupils



She became an
Irish Language
Translator for the Council
of the European Union
Claire Nic Ruairi

#YouCanToo

Ten top tips for STRONGER PASSWORDS

Passwords continue to be the most common way to prove our identity online. A combination of a username and a password known only to the user provides access to our online accounts and data – and hopefully keeps unauthorised individuals out. As a security measure, though, passwords are relatively weak. People are often predictable in how we choose our passwords, for example – making them less secure. With increasing volumes of usernames and passwords being leaked online, what can we do to keep our data more secure? Here are our top tips for stronger passwords.

BE UNPREDICTABLE

We often choose passwords which are easy to remember, featuring the name of our favourite sports team or favourite film, for instance. Those are predictable passwords. Cyber criminals will routinely try various combinations of passwords relating to sports teams, actors, musical artists and the like – and they often focus on these during major sporting events or around high-profile movie releases.

AVOID GETTING PERSONAL

Many of us use passwords relating to our family, such as children's names or favoured holiday destinations. The problem here is that we also typically post about our holidays and our family on social media – making that information potentially visible to cyber criminals and supplying them with clues which could help them in narrowing down possible passwords we might have set.

NEW PLATFORM, NEW PASSWORD

Where cyber criminals gain access to an online service through a data breach, they often use the data they've stolen to try and access the victim's other accounts. This is because the criminals know that, for convenience, people often use the same password across different services. When we reuse passwords, our security is only as strong as the weakest site where we've used it.

LONGER IS STRONGER

Our passwords are often stored by online services in an encrypted format. In case the service suffers a data breach, the strength of this encryption, however, is dependent on the length of the password you've selected. If your password is only a short one, cyber criminals are significantly more likely to be able to break the encryption and identify your password.

CHECK SOCIAL MEDIA VISIBILITY

Staying up to date with friends and relatives on social media is part of everyday life now. We need to ensure, though, that we limit who can see our posts via each platform's privacy settings. It's also wise to consider what we're posting and if it's really safe to share online. If we restrict what cyber criminals can see, we reduce the chance of them using that information to identify our passwords.

Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



Source: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/>

CCTV
IN OPERATION

'DOUBLE LOCK' YOUR DATA

It's possible that cyber criminals may eventually discover your username and password. Enabling multi-factor authentication (MFA) on your accounts, however, reduces the chance of them obtaining access to your data, as they'd also require a code which is provided via an app, SMS message or email. MFA isn't infallible, but it does definitely provide extra protection and security.

DELETE UNUSED ACCOUNTS

Data breaches occur when cyber criminals gain access to an online service and all the data contained within it – including usernames and passwords. Whenever you stop using a service, it's wise to make sure that you delete your entire account and not just the actual app. If the service no longer has your data, there's zero risk of it being leaked should they suffer a data breach in the future.

TRY PASSWORD MANAGERS

Even though most of us have numerous online accounts to manage these days, it's advantageous to avoid password re-use. Specialist password management software (like Dashlane or OnePassword, among others) can help by storing a different password for every online service that you have an account with: the only one you or child will need to remember is the single master password.

GET CREATIVE

The British government's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommends the 'three random words' technique. This method helps you create a password which is unique, complex and long – yet which is memorable enough to stay in your mind ("FourBlueShoes", for example). The NCSC website, incidentally, also offers plenty of other useful information relating to personal cyber security.

STAY VIGILANT

The best way to protect your accounts and your data is to be vigilant and careful. If you receive an email or text message that's unusual or unexpected, treat it as suspicious until you're able to verify whether it's genuine and safe. Starting from a position of vigilance and caution will reduce the likelihood of you or your child being tricked by a malicious email, text or phone call.

 **National Online Safety®**
#WakeUpWednesday

Helping children and young people with MANAGING DEVICE STRESS AND ANXIETY

The internet and advances in the capability of digital devices have afforded us arguably the fastest period of technological and social evolution in living memory: creating opportunities for us to interact with people anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. It's also, however, blurred safety boundaries and added new stresses for young people, who are often less aware of the hidden hazards. With almost half of 10-15-year-olds experiencing bullying online and algorithms pushing content in front of our children every day, it's important to know how to address some of these challenges.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

LIVING ONLINE

The internet is awash with sophisticated algorithms that learn from our online behaviour and try to predict our wants and needs. That's very helpful in some respects, but it can make the online world difficult for children and young people to negotiate. Content can be brought to them at any time – it may not always be appropriate, and children may not have the ability or the support to deal with it.

PUSHY NOTIFICATIONS

Content is also directed at us through notifications from our apps: letting us know we have a new message or social post to read, for example. While that's useful in some circumstances, it conditions us to keep going back online (and is designed to do so) and can be a near-constant demand on your child's attention. As such alerts become more common, are we experiencing an 'attack of the pings'?

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

There are now so many ways we can communicate online in real time (like instant messaging apps) or with a delay (such as on social media) that it's possible to be constantly in conversation. Young people often prefer quickfire exchanges of text – but using fewer words can cause distressing miscommunications through the lack of non-verbal cues like facial expressions or tone of voice.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

As devices allow access to immediate external help in challenging situations, it's a concern that children may not be developing the inner confidence to work things out for themselves. Likewise, group membership is hugely important to young people – both in digital and 'real' life – and being excluded from online conversations can cause damaging feelings of loneliness and isolation.

DISGUISED DISTRESS

Children often haven't yet developed the emotional resources to deal with many of the setbacks of everyday life, so identifying when it's specifically something online that's worried them can be tricky. A certain level of stress is a normal response to a problem; it spurs us into action to keep ourselves safe. If the stress is excessive, though, it can feel overwhelming and potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

ANTI-SOCIAL SOCIALS

Social media can bring people together in hugely positive ways. Sadly, it *does* also have a darker side, including 'flame war' arguments which can escalate quickly and have hurtful consequences. With so many people looking on, 'group shaming' situations are also common – while there are continual opportunities for young people to compare themselves negatively with other social media users.

Advice for Parents & Carers

LEARN THE BASICS

It's impossible to keep up with every online change or every new app. The best option is to make yourself aware of the fundamentals of how the internet operates, so you can help your child to grasp how – and why – content reaches them. Devices and the digital world can be confusing, so learning to understand them better will give you the confidence to talk to your child about them.

PUSH DISTRACTIONS AWAY

Notifications to our phones and tablets can be helpful, but they sometimes make one wonder who's really in charge: the person or the device? Checking our phone as soon as it goes off is an easy habit to fall into – especially for young people. Try switching off non-essential alerts on your devices and encourage your child to do the same; you should both feel less triggered and more in control.

KEEP CHECKING IN

Healthy emotional regulation balances three systems: threat, drive and grounding. Down the various rabbit holes of the internet, however, that balance can easily slip away – so it's important to help your child manage their emotions when they're online. Check in with them regularly when they're on their device, and remember that 'distraction' and 'relaxation' aren't always the same thing.

TALK IT OUT

If a child mentions a comment that's been directed at them in a text chat or on social media, it may sound minor but can actually have a much bigger effect than we realise. In our evolved brains, any perceived threat can get internalised while our body reacts as if we were in physical danger – raising stress levels. It's always worth encouraging your child to get any concerns out in the open.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

This is tricky – and may depend on the child's age – but any sudden change in behaviour is worth looking out for. If your child seems to be checking their phone or tablet more, doesn't want to be parted from them, or appears unusually secretive, anxious or withdrawn, it could be a sign that something is amiss in relation to their device – and, possibly, that they're in need of extra support.

BE KIND: UNWIND

Be kind to yourselves as parents and carers. Remember that we're all in the same boat, trying to safely guide our children through this complex, fast-moving digital environment. Getting into the habit of having natural, relaxed conversations with your child about their online life (and yours) can level the playing field and make it far easier for them to open up to you about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with and offers bespoke training to businesses and organisations, supporting positive and effective online communications – often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the various mediums.



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Source: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/report/the-big-ask-big-answers/>
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/childrens-online-behaviour-trends-and-risks/wales/years-ending-march-2020>

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