

THORNHILL COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



 **Welcome** 

Welcome to Our New Year 8 Students

 **Welcome** 

As Head of Year 8, it is a great privilege to welcome our new Year 8 cohort to Thornhill College. Already I have been greatly impressed with how well our Year 8's have settled into the busy life of our school and how they have been getting involved with the many opportunities which our school provides.

Our Year 8's began their journey in Thornhill College with the wonderful summer school in August. It was truly marvellous seeing excited students fully immerse themselves into the many activities organised by teachers across a range of subject areas and across our campus. Seeing students reconnect with friends and forming new friendships was a major highlight of the summer school. Furthermore, it was wonderful getting to meet parents and guardians at the beginning of what I believe will be a fruitful relationship between school and home.

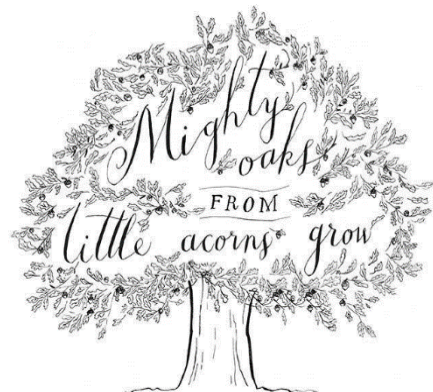
The beginning of term has already been a busy one with Year 8's settling into their new surroundings and meeting their subject teachers. Teachers have already commented on how well-mannered, courteous and positive our new Year 8's have been.

I have been personally impressed with the amount of Year 8's getting involved in Gaelic football, soccer and signing up to Drama club after school. I strongly encourage our Year 8s to get involved in our wider school activities and to use the opportunities which Thornhill College provides to enrich our students lives. I also wish to acknowledge and sincerely thank our Year 8 Form Teachers for the tremendous work they have done in helping our students transition from Primary to Post-Primary school. It is greatly appreciated.

Our Year 8's are at the beginning of their journey with us in Thornhill College and I encourage each of you to embrace every opportunity that comes your way. Thornhill College is now your school, and we are proud that you have chosen to be here with us. We look forward to sharing this exciting journey with you.

"From small acorns mighty oaks grow."

Mr Liam Morgan
Head of Year 8





Our Year 8's First Day & Summer School









Year 8 Summer Scheme



During the final days of August, we had the pleasure of welcoming our Year 8 students to Thornhill College to partake in the Summer Scheme which had a plethora of activities for our new Thornhill girls to enjoy.

Day 1 encompassed a host of events including being innovative in Technology and Design, being inspired by Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" in Art, experiencing the harmony of Mindfulness, getting competitive in Geo Games, being mesmerised by a Science Show, stepping out at céilí dancing and becoming our very own Mary Berry's in Home Economics. Our teaching staff enthused our Year 8s as they explored the vast range of experiences, and we thank them very much for their time and efforts.

On Day 2, there was an abundance of dance moves with a Just Dance competition with spot prizes awarded to those who impressed our Senior Prefect Team. Students also took part in a Treasure Hunt which helped them learn more about the school as well as find their way around before the 1st September fell. Our Movie afternoon was enjoyed by all as the girls devoured their ice-cream and chose treats from our sweetie cart while watching the charming and mischievous, "Matilda".

Our Junior, Middle, and Senior Prefect Teams were incredibly supportive and welcoming to our Year 8s over the two days; ensuring they knew where to go, creating bonds and informing them of what life at Thornhill is like. Our Senior Prefect Team even came back to help as a final farewell to Thornhill as they now head off on their exciting adventures after receiving their A-Level results. Many thanks to you all.

The Summer Scheme was a hive of activity, and we were delighted to see so many smiling faces where a host of memories, and the foundations of friendships were built.

Miss Laura Cullen-Byrne
Primary-Secondary School Links Co-ordinator



Summer Scheme!

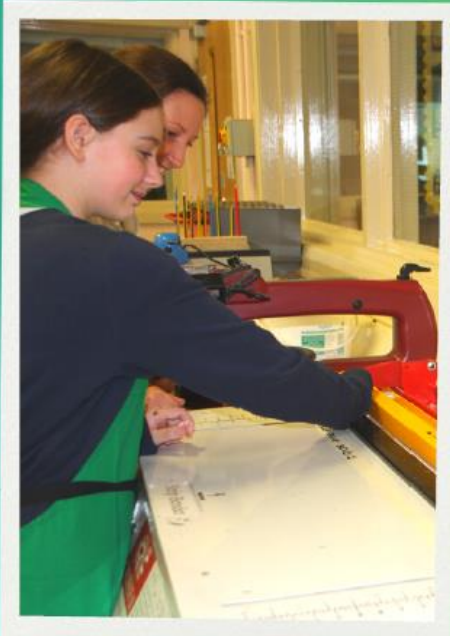


Thornhill College @ThornhillDerry
Thornhill College Summer Scheme 2023



Thornhill College @ThornhillDerry
Thornhill College Summer Scheme 2023







Year 8 Class Prefects



Libby Owen 8A

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

I found my first few weeks of Thornhill really good. The first time I came to the school to start I was very excited. I wasn't nervous for some reason because I felt like I was going to like it anyway!

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

I did enjoy it because I met a lot of friends there. There were so many fun activities to do and you got to know your way around the school.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

Art or Maths! Art is fun as we get to listen to music and our maths teacher is very nice and makes maths fun to learn.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

My big sister Ellie has helped me settle in by helping me find my way around and has encouraged me, explained stuff to me and I just know she is there if I need her.

Lucy Brown 8B

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

It was a bit hard finding my way around at first but I'm getting used to it.

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

Yes, I did attend the summer school. I really did enjoy the experience. I made some friends which helped me settle in on the first day.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

I have really liked Science with Mr. White. Science has always been my favourite subject and I was very excited for science. I find it every interesting.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

I already had two sisters at Thornhill and they told me everything about it and what to do.

Maria Pirone 8C

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

It's amazing! It really is! I'm so happy that I chose Thornhill to be my school and that Thornhill chose me!

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

I did and I think that it really helped me build friendships and get to know my form class.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

I really like Art because it is such a relaxing subject and I like that we get to listen to music.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

I think that the summer scheme helped a lot with that. I really liked that we had buddies to help us find our way around.

Ellie Craig 8D

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

My first few weeks have been great but a little stressful trying not to get lost!

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

I did enjoy the summer school because I made new friends and got to learn a few things about Thornhill College.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

Irish has been my favourite because my teacher is very kind and gives you lollipops!

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

My class buddy has helped me settle in. Heidi has helped me get to know my way to classes and was very helpful. I am very proud because she is my sister.



Year 8 Class Prefects



Ava Kirby 8E

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

My first weeks were excellent and I'm happy at Thornhill College. The teachers are amazing.

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

The summer school was amazing and it allowed me to see the facilities that the school has.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

My favourite subject has been English with Mrs. Walls because she is so funny and kind.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

Knowing I'm with my friends and sister has really helped me settle in.

Aoibhe McGowan 8F

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

At first I didn't know anyone, but everyone in Thornhill was kind it is an honour to be a part of the school. Now I love my friends!

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

Yes, I liked the idea meeting new people and hoping to become their friends! The subjects were so fun!

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

I find Science and Art my top two! Science as it is exciting to learn. Art because we can show our unique side.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

My Form teacher Mrs Quigg. The way she helped us find our feet and she is so caring.

Ellie King 8G

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

I love Thornhill College so far. I Like all of my teachers and subjects and I can't wait to see what's ahead of me.

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

I did attend the summer school in August. I loved it and had so much fun too!

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

Art has been my favourite subject so far because you can learn all different techniques and you can learn how to draw really cool stuff.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

My Form teacher has helped me settle into Thornhill College and so has all my teachers.

Farrah Kirby 8H

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

I have loved my first few weeks at Thornhill so much. I loved meeting my teachers and trying new subjects and making new friends.

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

I really enjoyed the summer school. It was a great way to make friends and to get to know the school before school started.

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

My favourite subject so far is Geography. I love learning about the world and everything around me and the environment.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

My friends, the teachers and staff have helped me settle into Thornhill.



Year 8 Class Prefects



Aideen Mullan 8J

How would you describe your first few weeks as a student in Thornhill College?

My first week as very exciting, fun and a tiny bit scary!

Did you attend the Summer School in August? If so, did you enjoy this experience?

Yes, I did attend the summer school. It was incredible! Everyone was kind and friendly!

What has been your favourite subject so far? Why?

My favourite subject so far is Art. I love using my imagination and being creative with my ideas.

What has helped you settle into Thornhill College?

All the teachers were kind, friendly, respectful and polite. I am glad to be in a class with my friends Ellen and Norah.



University Roadshow



On Thursday 21st September we welcomed the University Roadshow to Thornhill College. The roadshow offered our Year 13 and 14 students the fantastic opportunity to engage with representative from a wide range of UK universities including: The University of Dundee, The University of Stirling, The University of Liverpool, The University of Aberdeen, Northumbria University, Edge Hill University, Lancaster University and York St John University and The University of Cumbria.



Congratulations

A-Level Prizegiving

Congratulations

We were delighted to welcome back a number of our Class of 2023 for our A-Level Prizegiving Ceremony on Wednesday 6th September to acknowledge their wonderful achievements. Our guest speaker, Mrs Faustina Graham, Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate gave an inspiring speech encouraging our students to be the very best version of themselves as they leave us to follow their own individual career paths and to seize the opportunities which hard work, a positive outlook and generous spirit will bring their way.



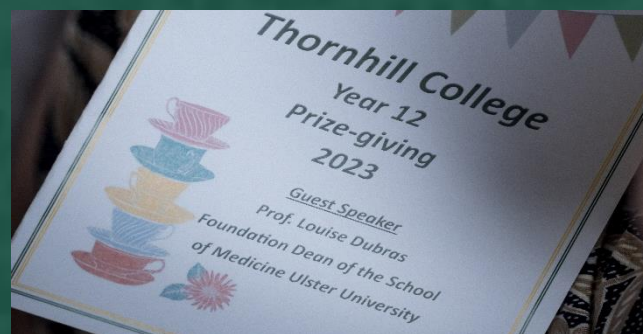


Congratulations

GCSE Prizegiving

Congratulations

We were delighted to celebrate our GCSE Prizegiving Ceremony on Thursday 7th September, acknowledging the fantastic achievements of our current Year 13 students. Our guest speaker Professor Louise Dubras, Foundation Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Ulster, gave an inspiring speech encouraging our students to make the most of their time at school and all the opportunities it presents and to play their role in being a strong advocate for others through their involvement in their school and local communities.







Uniform Shop



We are pleased to inform you that we have a fully stocked uniform shop now available in school. We have a wide range of blazers, skirts, jumpers, shirts in all sizes. This is open to all students and can be accessed throughout the school year.

If your child outgrows an item or misplaces it, then please get her to speak to her form teacher and arrangements will be made for her to collect a replacement item. Donations of uniforms items are always welcomed.



DO YOUR BIT! UNiCYCLE IT!

THORNHILL
COLLEGE



PLEASE DONATE ANY ITEMS OF UNIFORM THAT NO LONGER FIT BUT ARE STILL IN GOOD CONDITION.

ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE WASHED & HANDED INTO THE SCHOOL OFFICE.

OUR FREE UNIFORM COLLECTION SHOP IS OPEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



Safeguarding Soundbite



We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our Child Protection Team here at Thornhill College. We want you to know that we care about you and we want you to feel happy and safe at school.

If you have any concerns about yourself or another person in our school community, you can talk to us or any other member of staff that you feel comfortable talking to. The safety of the pupils in Thornhill is our paramount concern. We treat all individuals in our school with respect and also provide a safe environment for any individual to talk openly.



SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Mrs O Donnelly
Vice Principal
Designated Teacher

Mrs S Byrne
Senior Teacher
Deputy Designated
Teacher

Ms N Johnston
SENCO
Deputy Designated
Teacher

Ms S Mallett
Principal
Deputy Designated
Teacher

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN THE ROLE OF EVERY ADULT



La Semaine des Langues 2023



Our 'Semaine des Langues' began with our now traditional 'Petit-déjeuner français' in the school canteen. Our school community were invited to enjoy freshly baked croissants and pains au chocolat from 8.30am-9.15am - a perfect way to start the day! Our Yr13 French students helped serve all those who attended and were delighted to greet everyone with a happy 'Bonjour, comment ça va?'

Later on La Journée Européenne des Langues, 26 September, some Yr 9 French students excelled in showing their knowledge of Europe, European countries and languages by claiming all top 3 prizes in an online EDL Quiz in which 110 students from across the Northwest area took part.

Later in the week, students continued their celebration of EDL by creating and writing postcards in French and English. These have been sent to schools in a number of countries in Europe including France, Finland, Italy, Romania, Portugal and Poland.

Each day our whole-school Assemblies celebrated the wealth of talent and success in our Languages Departments and gave students a chance to consider the many benefits of studying modern languages in our ever-changing world. Many activities were completed throughout the week in Spanish, French and Irish Language Classes, again further highlighting the much sought-after skills, enhanced by language learning, that universities and employers favour.

The highlight of our 'Semaine des Langues' was, without doubt, our fantastic Year 8 Bake Off 4 Languages! We were amazed at the array of cakes produced showing such creativity, imagination, camaraderie and above all, enthusiasm for languages! It was such a difficult competition to judge and all those who entered are to be commended for their fabulous bakes!

Hopefully these photos will help to show the impressive amount of time, effort and careful thought that went into each and every one of the bakes. Everyone should be very proud of what they produced, we certainly are!

Massive congratulations to the winning cakes and bakes - it was a very difficult decision to make and involved a lot of discussion among the judging panel!

"When I awoke, I was excited to see all the cakes for Languages Week. I was really impressed with all the cakes, they were really good." (Year 8 Pupil)

"I baked my cake a few days before then I decorated it. It was a tiny bit hard to put the decorations on, but it was worth it in the end." (Year 8 Pupil)

"I enjoyed taking part in the Bake Off 4 Languages. It was a lot of work and it took me 3 days. I was very proud of how it looked." (Year 8 Pupil)









WE CARE ABOUT

YOU!



1

Childline
0800 1111



2

Lifeline
0808 808 8000

3

Samaritans
0845 790 9090



4

Barnardo's
0800 1577015



5

Aware NI
028 9035 7820
info@aware-ni.org



Safer Schools N.I.



SAFER
SCHOOLS NI

We would like to encourage all members of our school community to download Safer Schools App NI. This app is to assist schools to safeguard children and young people when online.

The Safer Schools NI app is a one-stop-shop digital library of age-appropriate safeguarding resources for teachers, parents/carers and young people.

The Safer Schools NI app is free to download at the App store and Google Play stores for teachers, parents/carers and children & young people. As a parent/carer you should use the unique login code for Thornhill College which is **5067**.

Mass at St Eugene's Cathedral

Well done to our Year 9 representatives who attended a special Mass on Thursday the 14th of September at St Eugene's Cathedral. This mass was to celebrate the arrival of the relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis and to mark the beginning of the school year. The girls were exemplary in their behaviour and were wonderful ambassadors for Thornhill College.



Mercy Moments Awards


The Mercy Award is awarded to pupils demonstrating and living out our Mercy Values of: Compassion, Respect, Integrity, Justice, Hope and Joy. Congratulations to our September winners

- Year 8: Corah, Emily, Mary-Kate, Lily, Darcie, Eva, Lilybeth, Freya, Layna Rae
- Year 9: Aoife
- Year 10: Erin, Faye and Rose
- Year 12: Sarah
- Year 14: Eimear



Drama

Our A-Level Performing Arts students enjoyed working with masks at the recent 'A Day to Play' workshop in Playhouse Theatre.




Travel & Tourism Trip to Titanic Quarter

On Wednesday 20th September, our Year 14 Travel & Tourism students made the journey to Belfast City to explore the Iconic Titanic Belfast building and the surrounding Maritime Mile. The fieldtrip was related to their unit of work focusing on the Scale, Scope and Appeal of Visitor Attractions.



Manchester United Foundation



Our next cohort of Manchester United Foundation Female Development pupils have been selected. The year 8 pupils are Ndjatche Mc Guinness 8C, Ava Higgins 8A and Saoirse Martin 8C. The students will attend training sessions every Tuesday afternoon at the Ulster University Magee Campus for the 2023/2024 academic year. They will focus on the benefits of physical fitness, wellbeing and soccer skills. They will be working with the Manchester United Foundation team and students from across the Foyle Learning Community.

Two of our Year 10 students Lucy Brown 10D and Meabh McCloskey 10E have been selected to represent Thornhill College as Manchester United Foundation Community Ambassadors. They will meet with the Mayor of Derry at a ceremony formally launching the Ambassador Programme in September. The Ambassadors will work on community-based projects alongside students from across the Foyle Learning Community. Year 11 student Eamair Mc Cormick has been invited to return to the Ambassador team as a mentor.

Junior Prefect Team

Our Junior Prefect Team will launch their Leadership Development Journey 2023/2024 with the annual visit to the Guildhall to meet the current Mayor of Derry, Mrs Patricia Logue in October. They will be treated to a tour of the Guildhall and meet Mayor Logue in her chambers.



ENGINEERING AT QUEEN'S



FOR YEAR 11, 12 & 13 STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS
THURSDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2023
TIME: 6pm - 9pm
ON CAMPUS
SCAN TO REGISTER



History Department News

The History Department would like to wish Dr Jefferies well on his retirement and hope that he is taking in the sites of Italy.

Secondly, we want to wish Aoife Sargent every success at Cambridge as she embarks upon her History degree, we are absolutely delighted that she secured the grades needed to pursue her dream. It was so thoroughly deserved. Mr Deane and Mrs Quigg are adamant that she dedicates her first Historical book to them!

Watch out Michelangelo! Our Year 9 pupils have been learning about the great artists of the Renaissance. 9-D even had the opportunity to paint like Michelangelo did in the Sistine Chapel, no easy task!

Where's the treasure? Year 10 pupils embraced the challenge of the Industrial Revolution Treasure Hunt. They showed great research and communication skills as they fed back to their classmates.

Congratulations to our History Pupils of the Week - Kathleen, Rebecca and Mary-Kate. Keep up the great effort ladies!



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about THE DANGERS OF VAPING

Data collected for ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) shows an increase in 11 to 17-year-olds experimenting with vaping: from 7.7% in 2022 to 11.6% in 2023. It's concerning that these age-restricted products are getting into the hands of under 18s as most contain nicotine, which can be detrimental to brain development and cause long-term addiction. Some schools have reported students having their focus in lessons affected by nicotine cravings; vaping in school toilets; and even trying vapes found in their local park. Raising awareness of the risks among young people could help to prevent these problems from escalating and reduce the number of young vapers.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

NICOTINE ADDICTION

Since they were initially developed to help people stop smoking, the vast majority of vape liquids contain nicotine. Not only is this a highly addictive stimulant, but it can also have detrimental effects on brain development in the under-25s. Nicotine can decrease the ability to pay attention, weaken impulse control, affect mood and increase the likelihood of substance addiction as an adult.

WHAT IS VAPING?

Vapes contain a liquid (vape juice/e-liquid) that is heated by a battery and evaporates, creating a chemical vapour which the user inhales. They can be disposable (once the liquid or battery runs out, the vape is thrown away) or rechargeable (the user replaces the liquid and recharges the battery on demand). Most vape liquids contain nicotine and other chemicals.

LACK OF AWARENESS

A proportion of young people tend to view vapes as harmless, mainly because of the products' appearance and the perception (often strengthened on social media) that "vaping is cool" and on trend. In many instances, young people don't fully appreciate the concept of addiction: that is, they aren't adequately aware of the risk of becoming hooked on nicotine before trying a vape.

POTENTIAL TOXICITY

Many vape liquids have been found to contain "heavy" metals such as lead, tin, nickel and (in some cases) mercury – all of which are toxic. These metals often take the form of tiny shards inside a device's liquid tank, which are then inhaled into the body. Some media reports have suggested these metals are particularly prevalent in illegally imported vapes which don't comply with UK regulations.

UNCLEAR LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

The liquids in vapes also contain solvents, which can create carcinogens at the point of evaporation. Vapes were only introduced into the UK in 2005 – and, because of the relatively short timeframe involved, there is insufficient medical evidence to assess the long-term harms that regular inhalation of these chemical fluids might have on the human body.

ATTRACTIVE PACKAGING

The packaging of many disposable vapes is very appealing to young people, frequently echoing the colours and flavours of the sweets or fizzy drinks they're used to buying. There's a relative lack of regulation around vape marketing, and vaping is often depicted positively on social media – which can lead young people to develop favourable views of vaping and overlook the possible harms.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In the UK alone, around 1.3 million disposable vapes go to landfill every week. Due to such significant numbers of these products not being recycled, their components – a lithium battery and a chemical liquid – pose a toxic risk to the environment, the ecosystem and wildlife. Vapes are also predominantly made of plastic and metal; materials that, of course, do not naturally decompose.

WIDER HEALTH CONCERNS

Studies are already showing a link between vaping and oral health problems such as tooth decay and gum disease. This is because vaping reduces the amount of saliva in the mouth, while increasing bacteria – resulting in bad breath and a build-up of plaque. There are also concerns that, in some users, vaping could lead to the development of asthma, a persistent cough and breathing difficulties.

UNREGULATED VAPING PRODUCTS

The number of retailers willing to sell vapes to under-18s is a worry, as the chance of these products being unregulated (and therefore containing illegal chemicals and higher levels of nicotine) is high. A related concern is that the mechanisms inside unregulated products are unlikely to have been tested and safety checked – presenting a possible fire risk if the liquid and battery come into contact.

SCARCE INFORMATION

The lack of information about the ingredients and potentially harmful chemicals in a vape is troubling. Some vape fluids (unregulated in the UK) contain traces of nuts, which can cause an allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. To date, medical warnings aren't required on vape packaging – with only medical disclaimers being found on the websites of the various brands.

VAGUE INGREDIENTS LISTS

Early research has suggested that the chemicals used to produce some strawberry and banana flavour e-liquids can kill cells in the blood vessels and heart. These ingredients aren't identified on the packaging, instead falling under the umbrella term "natural and artificial flavourings". Such vague listings mean that consumers aren't aware of the liquid's content so can't identify potential risks.

Meet Our Expert

Run by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service (commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council), Catch Your Breath is a school-based project aimed at young people. Its goal is to embed a proactive, coordinated approach among both primary and secondary schools in discouraging smoking and vaping behaviours.



HEALTHY SCHOOLS
CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH

The National College

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-65809926>



www.thenationalcollege.co.uk



@thenatcollege



/thenationalcollege

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 27.09.2023

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
16+

in UK and Europe;
rest of the world 13+

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original... and might not be entirely factual, either.

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safe on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers ...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know *never* to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval: you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

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.



...HEY OSCAR...



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://blog.whatsapp.com/an-open-letter> | <https://faq.whatsapp.com/1077018839582332> | https://faq.whatsapp.com/361005806189245/?helptref=hc_innov | <https://www.whatsapp.com/security> | <https://blog.whatsapp.com/chat-lock-making-your-most-intimate-conversations-even-more-private> | <https://www.aura.com/learn/whatsapp-scams>



@natonlinesafety



/NationalOnlineSafety



@nationalonlinesafety



@national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 20.09.2023