

## **Sytchampton Endowed Primary School**

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16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Dear Parents and Families,

Here is a roundup of this week's news – it feels quite a short letter this week, but it's definitely felt quite a busy week in school!

### **Year 6 SATs**

Our Year 6s have done a super job this week, working hard to complete their SATs papers. We are really proud of them for the hard work they've put in and sensible attitude they've shown. The papers were all collected this morning and we will receive the results in July.

### **Book Fair**

We are extremely grateful to everyone in our school community for the way you have supported the book fair. Thanks to your generosity we have raised almost £500 which we can spend on books for our children to encourage them to develop a love and enjoyment of reading.

### **Foodbank**

Just in case anyone ever needs it, the school is now registered to issue Foodbank vouchers. If you require this service please come and have a confidential conversation with either myself or Mrs Bishop.

### **Celebration Assemblies**

Celebration assemblies for this term will be on:

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June**

**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July**

Have a lovely weekend,

Miss Templeton and Staff

**Diary Dates (these will be added to over time)**

Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> – Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 6 SATs week
<b><i>Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May – Half Term – School Closed</i></b>	
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	INSET Day – School Closed
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Celebration Assembly – <b>Parents Welcome</b>
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> June	PTA Father's Day Gift Room
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> June	PTA Colour Run
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July	Sports Day (confirmed date!)
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Celebration Assembly – <b>Parents Welcome</b>
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	Whole School Trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

### SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

### GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

### ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

### PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

### ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase, which is typically around £15. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

### HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

### TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

### RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

### PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

### Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



We regularly get sent links to organisations that offer help to parents, children and families going through difficult times. We thought it would be helpful to add these at the bottom of the newsletter each week, in case there is anything you would like to find out more about. As always, please do make an appointment at the office if there is any way we can help. We will keep this list updated with services that get in contact with the school.

**CAMHS** (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) - Providing a range of wellbeing and mental health support to children, young people and their families across Herefordshire and Worcestershire <https://camhs.hacw.nhs.uk/>

**Lumi Nova** - An engaging child-led, parent/guardian supported therapeutic intervention that can be used on most smartphones or tablets. It facilitates graded exposures (the active ingredient of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) with psychoeducation to empower 7–12-year-olds with mild to moderate needs to learn to self-manage fears, worries and anxiety.  
<https://luminova.app/handw>

**Melo** – Melo takes an innovative and flexible approach to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people aged 0-25 years. It will provide a wide range of services designed to meet individual mental health needs.

Melo :: Onside, Worcestershire & Herefordshire <https://www.onside-advocacy.org.uk/melo>

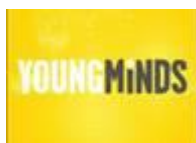
**WEST** (wellbeing and Emotional support teams in schools) An in schools service is designed to help children and young people ages 5-18 years access mental health and wellbeing support early on in educational settings. It's all about ensuring children and young people can get access to the right help as early as possible. <https://camhs.hacw.nhs.uk/west/>

- [Family Lives](#)



**Phone:** 0808 800 2222

**Hours:** 9am – 9pm Monday to Friday.  
10am – 3pm on weekends.



- [YoungMinds Parent Helpline](#)

**Phone:** 0808 802 5544



- [Action for Children](#)

**Phone:** 0300 123 2112

**Hours:** Vary (see website)