

Children's Hospital School



'Better Together'



Executive: Headteacher: Mr S Deadman

Willow Bank School

Simmins Crescent

Leicester

LE2 9AH

Autumn 2024 Newsletter

Tel: 0116 2298137

Welcome to The Children's Hospital School newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about all the latest news across all our settings, Willow Bank School, Magpie Learning Centre, Leicester Royal Infirmary, The Beacon Unit and The Phoenix Learning Centre.

Dear Parents / Carers,

Our first newsletter of the school year is packed full of photos and news, highlighting what a great start to the term this has been. Having seen what's been going on across all the bases, I can't quite believe that so much has been organised in such a short time. A huge thank you to the staff who have dedicated their time to making this such a positive start.

We are very excited that this term has seen the opening of our newest provision in Hinckley – The Phoenix Learning Centre. I am very grateful to all the staff who have turned this space into such a welcoming environment for students in that area.

In the summer, our Year 11s received some great exam results and most have now moved into further study or employment. We know that when pupils arrive with us, many have missed a significant amount of school, but the hard work and determination shown means they can achieve and move on successfully to their next phase of education.

Once again this year, our school is taking part in a programme called 'Growing the Top' which is coordinated by Challenge Partners and specifically aimed at outstanding schools. We will be partnered with a group of similar schools to share best practice and engage in high-level training opportunities so we can further develop our school.

We strive to provide the same opportunities students would receive in any school, so it has been pleasing to see school trips going ahead already including a visit to Warwick Castle, local parks, boxing and even a trip on a canal boat. It was also great to hear about the successful work experience placements our Year 11s had a few weeks ago.

There have been a few new members of staff that joined us in September – Hannah, Adam and Alison at Willow Bank and Nicola at the Magpie.

Many thanks to everyone for your support so far this term. I hope you have a wonderful half-term break, whatever you may be doing.

Best wishes

Stephen Deadman



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NEWS FROM LEICESTER ROYAL INFIRMARY

Soft Touch Sessions

It has been wonderful to welcome back Soft Touch to the LRI this half term. Our students have loved learning new songs, listening to music and playing percussion instruments. The wards come alive with the sound of live music. It's not only fantastic for our children but also a highlight of the day for the parents and carers and the ward staff. A huge thank you to Lee and Camilla and we look forward to all the wonderful music opportunities next half term.



Classroom Displays



Our classroom is looking bright and inviting this half term showcasing our student's fabulous work. Our first display shows a collaborative piece of art where children were asked to produce a piece that describes themselves. So many fabulous ideas that together look amazing.



Our Autumn display shows off many different art techniques our children have learnt this half term. It is very important for our children to see their work celebrated and on display. Therefore, for the children who cannot come to the classroom, we always take a photograph of the display to share with them.

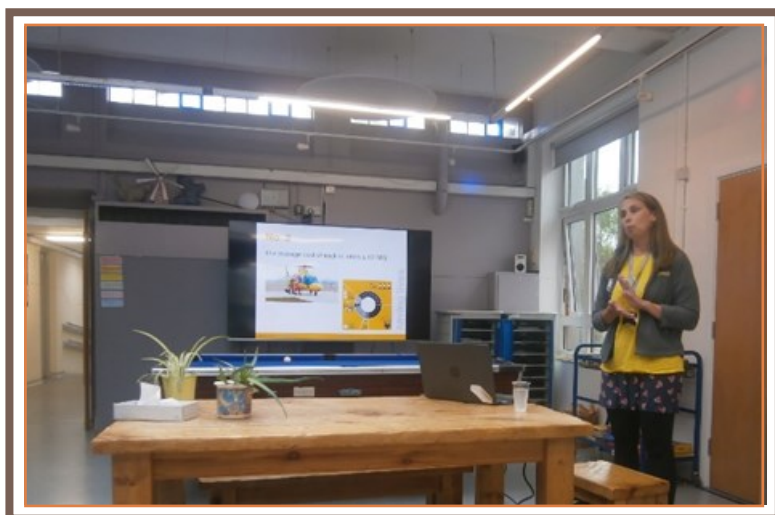


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NEWS FROM WILLOW BANK SCHOOL

Air Ambulance Visit

On Tuesday 3rd September the Air Ambulance service delivered an assembly to our students about the charity and what they offer, as well as how students can get involved in fundraising and careers. The students asked some excellent questions and enjoyed listening about the service.



Gateway College

On Wednesday 18th September Gateway College delivered a virtual assembly to our KS4 students. The college spoke about the courses on offer at the site, about the facilities and open days. This gave the students in year 11 a great opportunity to think about their post 16 options.



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Work Experience

Work experience week was a huge success. The year 11 students that went on placements did an amazing job and they should be very proud of themselves. Employers were impressed and the feedback was very positive. Here are some examples:

“Uses own initiative well. Has been friendly and personable. Acted appropriately and with professionalism”

“Staff have commented positively on her enthusiasm and responsible nature”.

The student has exceeded all expectations. She has worked hard and well, as part of a team. A pleasure to work with’

The student has been joyful to work with. She has undertaken all tasks within the centre with care and hard work. A pleasure to work with”.

“A fantastic week of supporting our year 2 pupils, thank you for your hard work!”

The student has been a pleasure. He is engaged, thoughtful and responsive.”

“Great attitude, shown willingness and very keen”

The Student has done a great job!”



Peter Le Marchant Trust Visits

The students engaged in a 'unbox your future' programme with Peter Le Marchant trust.

Angie Whitmore from PLMT came into school and 'unboxed' a large box full of things that represent the trust and explained what each item was. The students were very engaged throughout the whole session - they learned about the history of the canals, explored jobs roles at the trust and asked lots of questions at the end. They also happily accepted the free biscuits!



The following week, they went on a boat ride along the canal starting at their base in Loughborough. They learnt how to host a trip on the boat by making drinks using the gas kettles, steering the boat and even learnt how to go through the locks. They will now put what they learnt into practice when we go again on Thursday by hosting each other and running the boat in teams. All students will receive a certificate and will now be able to put this experience on their CVs!

Some students are already talking about potentially signing up to volunteer on the boat on weekends.



NEWS FROM THE MAGPIE

Macmillan

For Macmillan coffee morning, we took our CHS students across to Cooper House Residential Home. Our students were able to talk with the residents there and help serve them tea, coffee and cake. The residents shared some incredible stories about their lives in the local area and what it was like post war. Magpie raised £57 in aid of Macmillan. We hope to build on this connection in the community and take part in more activities in the home.



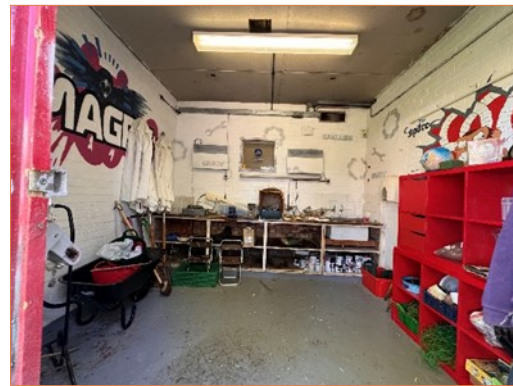
Hello Yellow day

To help raise awareness for youth mental health, Magpie organised a 'Hello Yellow' day for Young Minds. During the day the students took part in different activities, from baking lemon drizzle cake to doodling and a quiz. All staff came dressed in yellow and brought a selection of yellow foods for lunch. The day was to educate our students on what support services are available to them and where to find them. Young Minds are an amazing charity offering support to not only children and young people, but whoever knows them. Parents, carers and friends can access their support if they are worried about someone they know.



Gardening update

We have acquired a lovely new outdoor learning classroom!



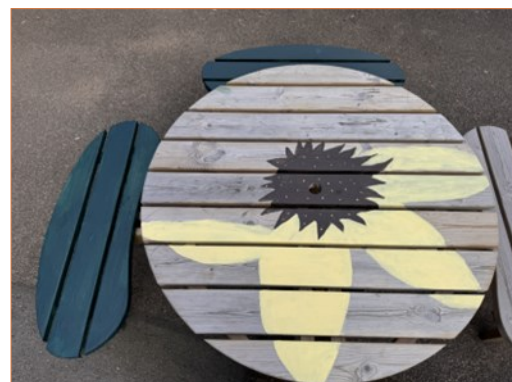
Students have been enjoying this space.... whittling wood to make elder beads and wands and sorting our wonderful crop of cooking apples. This half term our Tigers group have been helping to plan this area and we are hoping to give it a lick of paint and a jolly good clean.

It is a great space to shelter from the elements, store our gardening equipment and hold outdoor learning lessons in.

If you visit Willow Bank School in the coming weeks please take a handful of our cooking apples, for an apple pie or yummy crumble. And if you have 50p to spare why not grab a nice lavender bundle.harvested and made by our KS3 class at The Magpie.



Hopefully...if the rain holds off, by the next newsletter we shall have a completed painting to show you, fingers crossed!



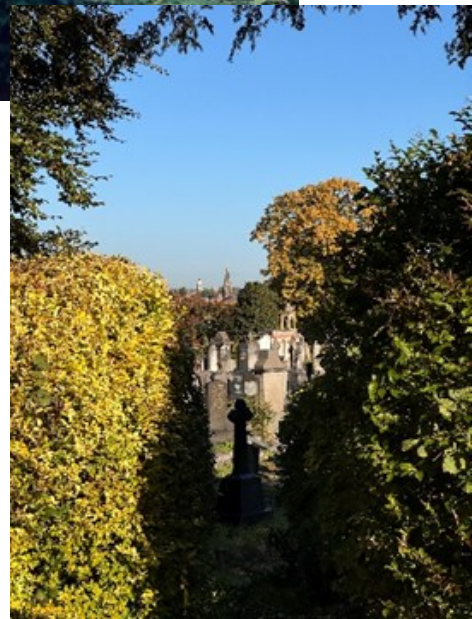
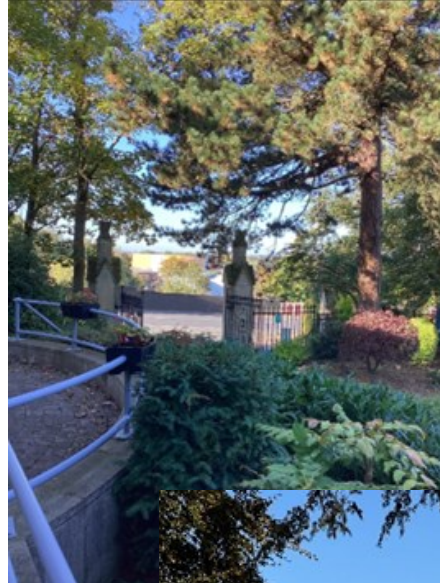
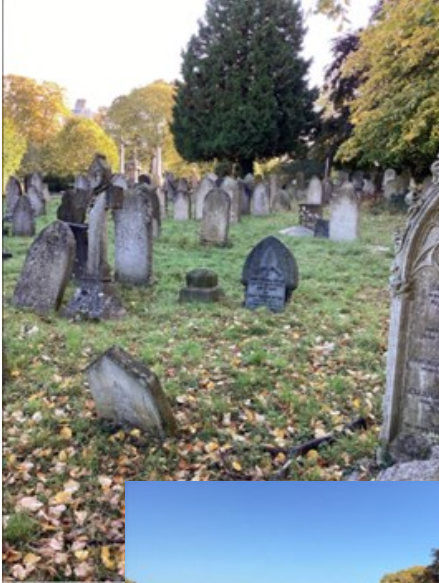
Victory Show

The students at the Magpie took part in a trip to the Victory Show in Cosby at the start of term. We had a fantastic morning on site, viewing WWII vehicles, artefacts and camps and learning from the fabulous re-enactors there. We even got to sit inside an armoured personnel carrier and an US Army jeep. Mr McDonald particularly enjoyed sitting on the 1940s motorcycle and pretending to be Steve McQueen in the Great Escape....



Cemetery

For our next trip, we're visiting Welford Road Cemetery to support our English learning- we've been working hard in class reading 'the Graveyard Book' and we're hoping to get some inspiration from our walk around the site to complete our own creative writing. We can also learn some local history- the cemetery is the burial place of travel agent Thomas Cook, suffragette Alice Hawkins and many other Leicester luminaries.



New Foxes

We have welcomed our new group of Foxes. They have made an amazing start and have settled in well. They had their first week of breaking in activities where they baked, did quizzes, crafts and team building exercises.

Upcoming trips and events;

National Memorial Arboretum – Friday 8th November

Children in Need – Friday 15th November

Ice Skating and Christmas Jumper Day – Thursday 12th December

Christmas Dinner – Tuesday 17th December

Christmas Carols and church visit – Friday 20th December



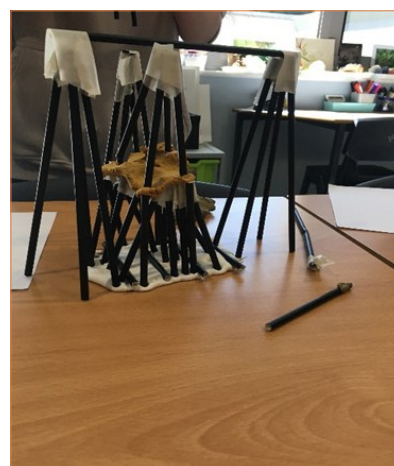
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NEWS FROM THE BEACON

We have had a busy month at the Beacon. Our new timetable has been increased and we now offer four sessions of school per day. On a Tuesday afternoon we have PE, and this has proved to be a huge success. The young people have taken part in a variety of activities, from volleyball and golf to curling.



In Enterprise we have been looking at key skills needed to become entrepreneurs and the young people have decided to make various items to sell to raise money for Loros. The team building activities have been fun and the straw towers provided a great opportunity for collaborative learning.



On Thursdays, we now have a STEM session for our key stage three and four students. Last week our students were set the challenge to build igloos out of sugar cubes and glue.



On Wednesday afternoons Pedestrian have been coming in to help the young people create their own music using the Logic software.



This month the theme for our calm table is “birds”. Our students have also been creating autumn pom poms for our themed tree in the classroom.



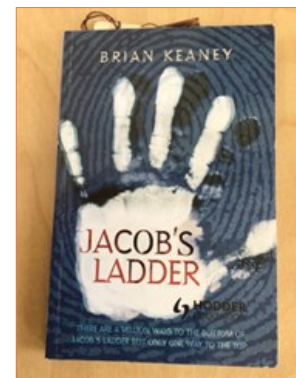
Last week, school took part in the Macmillan coffee morning held on the ward. A grand total of £64.00 was raised. The students made delicious treats to add to the array of cakes on display.

NEWS FROM THE PHOENIX

We have had a great few weeks at the Phoenix Learning Centre. Our students have settled well and are enjoying engaging in lessons and are participating in lots of activities.



During uplift we are working towards the Autumn and Halloween PawPrint badges. We have thought about the human skeleton, and we have made Autumnal bookmarks. We are using our bookmarks, as staff and students are reading 'Jacob's Ladder.' We are sharing our thoughts in our Monday morning Book club.

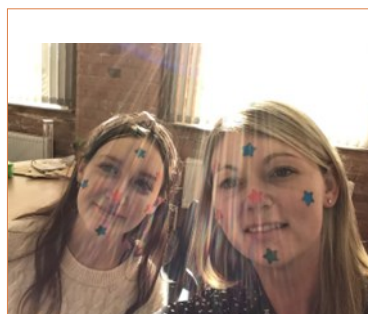


During messy senses students have enjoyed creating a tissue scene on canvas, making and painting pots and making glittery slime.



As part of Get Active we have enjoyed walks in the community to the local park where we have played table tennis and catch with velcro paddles. We have taken part in the Halloween Walk around Hinckley centre and purchased items for our Halloween dress up day coming up soon.

We are also participating in Group Theraplay® sessions having lots of fun together.



NEWS FROM THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL SCHOOL

The Governing Body - Welcome

Welcome back to the new academic year. This is an introduction to who the Governors of The Children's Hospital are and what we do.

What is the role of the Governing Body?

It is the Governor's responsibility to oversee the school in three key areas:

- Strategic direction
- Robust accountability
- Ensuring financial probity

Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise from their professional lives to the governing board, working together to provide independent oversight of the management and operation of a school, with the aim of improving the quality of education provided and raising standards.

Governors meet throughout the academic year, at Full Governor meetings as well as Committee meetings. These enable the Governors to be presented with regular updates about the school, as well as the opportunity to challenge school leaders. In addition Governors undertake visits across the school, meeting staff and students, and ensuring priority areas are monitored carefully. Governors also enjoy visiting the school for social events such as MacMillan coffee morning and Christmas lunch!

Who are the Governors?

Lynne Folwell	Chair of Governors
Jill Townsend	Curriculum & Standards Committee Chair
Bryan Freeman	Finance, Premises and Personnel Committee Chair
Stephen Deadman	Headteacher
Christine Sullivan	
Tracey Lawrence	
Nikki Igoe	
Jo Parfitt	
Raj-Gill Harrison	
Charlotte Williams	
Naj Hassan	

More details about the Governing Body can be found on the school website [here](#).

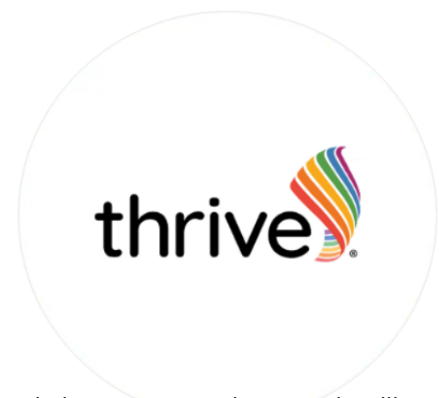
Contacting the Chair/Governors

If you would like to make contact with the Chair of Governors then please contact the school either by:

Emailing clerk@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk, who will be happy to forward on your correspondence. Write, using the Willow Bank postal address.



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THRIVE TIPS FOR PARENTS

At CHS we use the Thrive Approach, which is a trauma-informed approach that helps to improve the mental wellbeing of young people. There are many different strategies we use in our approach that we want to share with parents as a way to increase your knowledge and skills to support your young person at home. In Thrive we use what we call the Vital Relational Functions (VRF's). The VRF's are listed below:

- Validation
- Attunement
- Containment
- Regulation

Over the next few newsletters, we will explain each of these in further detail, which you may find helpful when supporting your young person.

WHAT IS VALIDATION?

Emotional validation is all about recognising, understanding and expressing acceptance of another person's feelings. By doing this, you're creating space for that person to experience these emotions and process things without fear of judgement or rejection. You make them feel like their feelings matter.

WHAT NOT TO SAY

- It could be worse
- Don't think too much about it
- Well, I would feel like/think of it like this
- Just move on

- Let's talk about something else
- Try to put this in perspective
- You're taking X too seriously
- You could have avoided this if you did...

TRY THIS INSTEAD...

- Can you tell me more about that?
- What was that like for you?
- How do you feel about that?
- I can understand why you feel that way
- I can tell this is really important to you
- What a frustrating/upsetting situation

- I want to make sure I'm understanding correctly.
 - What I'm hearing is...
- I can see your efforts here
- I appreciate your honesty here
- What you're saying makes sense
- That must have been a horrible feeling

Validating a person's emotional experience doesn't always mean you're in agreement or have the same beliefs as the other person. It means, you're acknowledging their emotional response and giving them a safe space to just feel their feelings. This form of empathetic communication will help you build stronger, more emotionally safe relationships.

You can find further information on validation here: <https://blog.smilingmind.com.au/the-art-of-emotional-validation#:~:text=Emotional%20validation%20is%20all%20about,feel%20like%20their%20feelings%20matter>



Year 11 Summer 2025 Examinations

The summer 2025 national exam timetable has now been published. Please use the QR code which will take you to the EXAMS page on the school website. You will find the timetable along with other useful documents and guidance relating to examinations. Further information will follow in due course. Contact: exams@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Your children may be eligible for free school meals if you receive:

- > income support
- > income-based jobseekers allowance
- > income-related employment and support allowance
- > support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- > child tax credit (providing you're not also entitled to working tax credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- > the guarantee element of state pension credit
- > working tax credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for working tax credit
- > Universal Credit with annual net earned income of less than £7,400

Applying could also help your school get extra funding through the Government's Pupil Premium scheme.

Visit: <https://freeschoolmeals.leicester.gov.uk>
[Free School Meals | Leicestershire County Council](#)

Please contact Jayne Lister (details below) if you need assistance

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER CONTACT DETAILS

Jayne Lister

Family Support Worker - Children's Hospital School

07961 397 364

jlister@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk

Jayne will be working one day per week during the summer holiday.

Or contact safeguarding@childrenshospitalschool.leicester.sch.uk

The Household Support Grant (HSG) has been launched for the final time in the County on 03/06/2024. If County families are struggling with Household fuel bills and are in debt, plus are in receipt of certain benefits, Jayne can support them to apply. The HSG will continue until the money 'runs out'.



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INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

USEFUL WEBSITES



For any drug related problems
questions or issues.

www.talktofrank.com



For drug and alcohol related support

www.Turning-point.co.uk/services/leicester

ONLINE SAFETY



Talk

Chat to their child about their online world, just as they'd ask about their day at school, such as discussing the apps, social networks and websites their child uses.



Explore

Explore and understand the apps, games and sites their child uses and get to know their child's online world better, such as making a list of their child's favourites.



Agree

Make sure they are a good role model and agree common ground rules and boundaries with their family, such as which websites and apps are okay and not okay to use and why, times they are allowed online and what they are allowed to do.



Manage

Make use of the technology. Adapt privacy settings and use parental controls where necessary. Set rewards if their child sticks to the agreements and allow them more freedom as they mature and develop.



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INFORMATION FOR PARENTS



Children's Hospital School – Term Dates 2024/2025

Term No 1: 37 days (7 weeks 2 days)	
Schools Open	Wednesday 28 August 2024
Schools Close	Thursday 17 October 2024
INSET day (closed to pupils)	Friday 18 October 2024
Autumn Half Term Holiday	Monday 21 October 2024 to Friday 25 October 2024

Term No 2: 39 days (7 weeks 4 days)	
Schools Open	Monday 28 October 2024
INSET day (closed to pupils)	Monday 25 November 2024
Schools Close	Friday 20 December 2024
Christmas & New Year Holiday	Monday 23 December 2024 to Friday 3 January 2025

Term No 3: 30 days (6 weeks)	
Schools Open	Monday 6 January 2025
Schools Close	Friday 14 February 2025
Spring Half Term Holiday	Monday 17 February 2025 to Friday 21 February 2025

Term No 4: 35 days (7 weeks)	
Schools Open	Monday 24 February 2025
Schools Close	Friday 11 April 2025
Easter Holidays	Monday 14 April 2025 to Friday 25 April 2025

Term No 5: 19 days (3 weeks 4 days)	
Schools Open	Monday 28 April 2025
May Bank Holiday (schools closed)	Monday 5 May 2025
Schools Close	Friday 23 May 2025
Summer Half Term Holiday	Monday 26 May 2025 to Friday 30 May 2025

Term No 6: 30 days (6 weeks)	
Schools Open	Monday 2 June 2025
Schools Close	Friday 11 July 2025
Summer Holiday begins	Monday 14 July 2025

190 Pupil Days



Children's Hospital School

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Do you need support and advice about the benefits you are receiving?

Jags Katwa

Supporting.Families@dwp.gov.uk

07776 166327

Supporting Families Employment Adviser (Department for Work and Pensions)

Leicester City Council

Early help and social care contact

If your message requires action to safeguard a child or young person please contact the appropriate Local Authority for Children's Early Help or Social Care or the relevant emergency service(s):

Leicester City - 0116 454 1004

Leicestershire - 0116 305 0005

Rutland - 01572 758 407

CAP – Central Access Point

A reminder of the emergency contact number for CAP mental health support for adults and children:

0808 800 3302, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Children's Hospital School

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Online Safety and Social Media

Understanding online safety is tricky for everyone. As a school we want to provide you with some advice to help you learn about how to consider the safety and wellbeing of your child when they are online as well as a family. On our school website and in school newsletters you can find ideas about keeping your child safe by **Talking** to them about their online activities, **Explore** what Apps and platforms they are using, **Agree** a safety plan and time they can use their device as well as **Manage** the settings and internet connection.

Research by Dr S Nuichani OBE and Dr S Jones at the Leicester Royal Infirmary has identified the challenges digital devices have on children's health and wellbeing. They have produced tips for managing healthier screen time.

At CHS we have filtering (ekte) and monitoring (securus) in place on school devices to protect students. There are Privacy and Safety Checklists from the UK Safer Internet Centre for Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok. You can find others checklist for different platforms online. If you would like a paper copy, please get in touch.



Our eLearning team may be able to offer some technical support about changes to settings.

Have a fantastic half term and we will see you back on Monday 28th October 2024. Please remember **Friday 18th October is a Teacher Training Day** and we will not be open to students.



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