

Family NewsBites



A round-up to keep you updated (5.7.23)

Summer Fete - This Thursday, 6th July, is our Summer Fete. The Fete is one of our our biggest fundraisers in the year, so thank you very much if you have donated a prize for the Tombola, dropped some wine into the office for the ever popular "Wine & Water" stall, sent in a box of chocolates, luxury food or jars for the Hampers or bought a bunch of Raffle Tickets. Your support is so appreciated. We've made up the hampers and sorted the Tombola prizes but we are continuing to collect bottles of wine right up until Thursday morning for our "Wine & Water" stall!! There's still time to make that last minute donation!

Fingers crossed the weather will hold out for us this Thursday as we are intending to set up the stalls on the playground. If not, we'll be in the Hall. The Fete opens at 10.15 am and closes at 11.45 am. The Raffle Draw will take place at 11.45 am so hopefully you can take home one of the winning prizes if you are still at school at this time?!

To reach the Fete, please come on site via the side gates. We'll be signing everyone in/out. All the entrances from the playground into the school building will be closed for visitors so if you need to use our 'facilities' whilst with us, please go to the main Reception. If you would like to take your child around the Fete with you, please ask a member of staff. The class will bring your child out to the playground to meet you. If you are unable to attend on Thursday, staff will accompany as many of our pupils around the Fete as they can during the morning.

Don't forget to send your child into school on Thursday with some pennies, as this event will be **CASH ONLY**. Thank you for your support with this.

As well as the Tombola, Wine & Water and prize draw, classes have also organised their own games and refreshments.

See you Thursday!



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Art Exhibition - The Art Exhibition at the Ariel Centre @ KEVICC, Totnes has officially opened! The exhibition is running until this Friday so please drop by any time between 9 am and 4 pm and have a look at the fantastic artwork on display. Our pupils have worked hard preparing some beautiful art to showcase their talents. Bravo everyone!



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Bags2School - We raised about £50 from the last collection! Thank you if you sent in a bag full of goodies!

Sports Day - It was a shame the weather was a little unkind to us last Friday, especially after so many weeks of hot sunshine. However, everyone thoroughly enjoyed the event and thank you to Callum for organising it. We'll get some photos from the day to you soon.

The PTFA purchased some ice lollies to help keep everyone cool but as the weather wasn't great, these never made it over to the field. So instead, we'll be sharing these with everyone on the last day of term.

Fundraising - A friend of Bidwell Brook School, Ben Tabb and his buddies, are supporting our playground fundraising by undertaking the Ultra Challenge South West Coast 50km in August. This trek is over difficult terrain so if you can, please click on the link and donate a few pounds: [Crowdfunding to help fundraise for the third stage of our Playground Project. Ultra Challenge South West Coast 50km for Bidwell Brook School, Devon. on JustGiving](#)

If you have a birthday coming up, you could also consider asking friends and families to donate to our playground appeal instead of buying a birthday present maybe?!! Just a thought. Every pound really makes a difference. Thank you.

Charity Coffee Morning - This half term, students from the Sixth Form department organised a charity coffee morning as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Everyone was very generous and the students raised £102.61 for their chosen charity, Animals In Distress. Well done guys!

Makaton Choir - Did you know that this term, BB has started a Makaton Choir?! The pupils and staff who are attending are really loving it!! Providing everyone is happy to do so, we really hope they'll be performing at the Fete this year alongside Chris and his Taiko drumming team.

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Upcoming Dates

until Friday 7th July - Art Exhibition, Ariel Centre, KEVICCS, from 9 am until 4 pm

Thursday 6th July - BB Summer Fete, 10.15 am - 11.45 am

Friday 7th July - NEU Teachers' Strike Day (selected classes closed)

Thursday 13th July - BB Leavers' Assembly 10 am

Thursday 13th July - Prom 6.30 pm - 9 pm

Friday 21st July - Last Day of Term (for pupils and staff)

Monday 4th - Wednesday 6th September - Staff Training Days

Thursday 7th September - Pupils return to BB

w/c 23rd October - Half term holiday

Monday 30th October - Pupils return to BB

Monday 27th November - Occasional Day - BB closed for one day

Friday 15th December - Last day of term

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Family Training Opportunity - We have received details of the following training session for families. The cost is £24. You may find this support/training useful but we would like to point out that we are just passing on this info on and are not recommending this company by doing so.

Supporting a Child with ADHD 2 hour online session



FACE Lead Facilitator, Jane Keyworth
is delivering this session on 20th July 2023
as a one off talk from 6pm to 8pm

Book Now Online via
facefamilyadvice.co.uk

HAF Programme - Details have already been sent out, but if you feel your child or young person would like to attend a club in the holiday and the club has SEN spaces, please follow this [link](#).

SEE YOU
Soon!

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence – particularly in terms of how it generates natural language – has seen significant development over the last six months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat, for example). One form of AI to become especially popular has been the ‘AI friend’ or chatbot, as children eagerly experiment with these new-found computer-generated companions. There are now numerous apps available with this ‘virtual friend’ functionality, with the likelihood of it being added to other successful platforms soon.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always be able to recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. So there's a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

D@*#!

REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could very likely hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn't always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it's being told or replying insensitively to a young user who's already struggling could potentially impact a child's emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they've been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour (as many originate from the USA or the UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview). This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours.

COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child's own powers of critical thinking, creativity and ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts are warning that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties, for instance).

Advice for Parents & Carers

CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If your child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they're aware of and how they're using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with your child and perhaps do your own research to ensure you think they're suitable. Once you're totally happy, you could sit with your young one and begin exploring AI chatbots together.

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If your child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space at home, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you'll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside your child to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it's appropriate. It's important to make sure that children are still getting plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we'd strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps your child can download and use. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It's unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it's probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to your child. In particular, emphasise that AI isn't a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something that isn't entirely impartial or accurate.

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.

