

Family Newsletter



July 2023



Now that the Summer Term has come to an end, the last week or so has been a time of reflection on the last few months of the academic year.

In June, we welcomed the Ofsted Inspectors into school and I was so pleased they could see just how happy and genuinely enthusiastic the pupils are when they are learning at school. It was good the Inspection Team also recognised the excellent quality of our teaching and learning practices. The Governors and I are very proud of our "Good" Ofsted report and I hope you enjoyed reading it.

There were also lots of events happening in the last couple of weeks of term. Sports Day was unfortunately a little on the showery side, but the weather did not dampen spirits. Thank you to Callum for organising the day.

We were blessed with dry weather for the School Fete which raised about £1,500 in total.

Thank you for purchasing raffle tickets, donating prizes and coming along on the day.

Your continued support is very much appreciated.

The Prom and the Leavers' Assembly brought a tear to the eye as we said goodbye and good luck to students leaving us this year. We also said goodbye to a few members of staff, including Lynne, who has been a member of our SLT Business Team for longer than I can remember, Tom, and Lily and Zoe on the teaching team. We wish them all well for the future.

In a few weeks' time we'll be starting another academic year. We have some training days booked at the start of September but look forward to seeing the pupils return on Thursday 7th September.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer break.

NOTABLE DATES

Monday 4th September -
Staff Training Day

Tuesday 5th September -
Staff Training Day

Wednesday 6th September -
Staff Training Day

Thursday 7th September -
Pupils return

Tuesday 19th / Wednesday
20th September - Parents'
Evenings

w/c 23rd October - Half
Term

Friday 17th November -
Children In Need Day

Monday 27th November -
Occasional Day

Friday 15th December - Term
ends

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Message from Steven Finnemore - Chair of Governors

Governors have been busy over the last term working with Nikki and the Senior Leadership Team to make sure the Federation is on a sound footing as we go into the next year and to prepare for OFSTED. As you probably know, this was a good thing as we have had OFSTED visit both schools and Governors would like to thank all staff for the hard work in getting both schools a Good rating. This is no mean achievement and the inspector was impressed with how happy the children were and the level of education provided across the Federation.

Governors have attended student councils, careers fairs, whole school meetings and summer fetes, and we will continue to do this, along with a schedule of Monitoring Walks throughout the academic year. Doing this allows Governors to meet with parents, staff and pupils, and look at premises issues. The Student Council also recently made a wonderful video for Governors, talking about a variety of their experiences in our schools.

We have had the opportunity to recruit several new Governors in the Summer Term. Gemma Rolstone and Jodie Came have joined alongside a new staff governor, Jordon Conibere. Jordan is taking over from Tom Bates who is leaving the Federation for a new job, but will remain as a co-opted Governor. Two long term Governors, Deb Norman and Su Aves are also stepping down from the end of summer term. We still have a couple of vacancies and we are looking at bringing the board up to full strength early in September.

More info about the Governors can be found on our website; <http://learntolivefederation.co.uk/governors/>

All the governors hope you have a lovely summer and we look forward to seeing you and your children in the new academic year.

Steven Finnemore, Chair of Governors

The logo for Bidwell Brook School is a circular emblem. It features a green tree on a small island in the center, with a blue and white wavy line representing a brook flowing around it. The text "Bidwell Brook" is written in a blue, curved font along the top inner edge of the circle, and "School" is written in a blue, curved font along the bottom inner edge. The entire logo is set against a white background.

Summer Reading Challenge 2023

Ready, Set, Read!

Presented by The Reading Agency.
Delivered in partnership with libraries.

Illustrations by Loretta Schauer and logo artwork by Uzzie Everard. All © The Reading Agency 2023.



<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>

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Victa's parent website has some excellent play ideas. The charity is VI based but suitable for lots of children. You can browse the activities, which are broken down into touch, light, sound, movement and balance, smell, taste and ideas for toys here: [The world of play! - victaparents.org.uk](https://victaparents.org.uk)

Play ideas: [Space blanket play ideas - victaparents.org.uk](https://victaparents.org.uk) and [Chiffon scarf play ideas - victaparents.org.uk](https://victaparents.org.uk)

The main page has lots of things for older children inc grants for assistive tech for home: [VICTA | Children and young adults who are blind or partially sighted](https://victa.org.uk)

Exeter Phoenix - Young & Animated+ is a 6 week course designed for autistic young people. The course provides fun and detailed exploration of digital and stop motion animation whilst providing flexibility to suit participants interests.

YOUNG & ANIMATED+ SATURDAY – SEPTEMBER 6 WEEK COURSE

SAT 09 SEP 2023 - SAT 14 OCT 2023

CATEGORY

COURSES & WORKSHOPS

EXETER PHOENIX

SOFTWARE TRAINING

YOUNG PEOPLE

OTHER INFORMATION

Ages 12-15

PRICE

£210*

TIME

1.30pm - 3.30pm



STAY SAFE ONLINE THIS SUMMER



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

WAPP

AGE RESTRICTION

12+

on the App Store;
'Everyone' on Google Play

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Developed in Germany, this social networking app is called 'W App' in the Apple Store and Google Play but is also branded as 'Slay' in some territories. Aimed primarily at teens and marketed as a 'zero-negativity' zone, it asks users to connect with others from their school. They are then asked a positive question (such as "Who is the nicest person?") and shown four people from their school to choose from. All users from a school can appear in the poll: not just those a child is friends with. The app is mainly anonymous – but does offer clues to reveal who selected you for each question.

LIBRARY

FAKE ACCOUNTS

There is no verification when signing up to W App. Once someone joins, they can see all users at their school and add them if they wish. Users provide their name, gender, school and grade – but are also able to change these (aside from their name) as often as they like. This concerned our expert: predators could potentially keep attempting to build connections with children at different schools.

PROFILE OVERSHARING

Young people tend to have multiple social media accounts, so it's vital their identity is protected online. By default, W App shares someone's school and grade, while users choose whether to share their full name, photo and other social accounts. Most people appear to select this – making it easier for someone to build up a picture of who they are, what they enjoy and where they go to school.

SPAMMING CONTACTS

The app's activity feed notifies a user when they have been put forward for a poll. They're then given the option to reveal the initial of the person who nominated them, by inviting a friend to join the app. The friend doesn't have to sign up, but they will receive a 'get the app now' text, followed by a link. This process could result in texts being continually sent to a child's contacts.

CATFISHING RISKS

As well as invented fake accounts, users could also sign up and pretend to be someone else from their school. By joining under another person's name (possibly with their photo), they can take part in polls while masquerading as that other person. Some polls hint at an attraction or crush, which – if deliberately misused by imposters – could result in misunderstandings and embarrassment for teens.

SUBSCRIPTION COSTS

W App is free to download and use, but there is also a 'gold membership' package (costing £4.99 per week) available. Subscribing allows users to reveal the names of people who selected them in polls (slightly defeating the point of it being an anonymous app), gives unlimited hints and offers exclusive play modes – all of which may tempt a curious young user into spending their money.

REPEATED USE

Like most other social media platforms, W App wants users to log in regularly. Every time someone completes a set of 12 polls, they earn virtual coins. These can be cashed in for perks such as being included in random polls (so that more users will see them) or adding their name to their crush's poll. This may not seem much of an incentive currently, but that may alter as the app evolves.

Advice for Parents & Carers

DISCUSS FRIEND REQUESTS

Talk to your child about the risk of sharing their other social accounts, especially on anonymous platforms where there is no verification – so a user could be anyone. If someone they don't normally talk to at school approaches your child via W App and suggests connecting on TikTok, Snapchat or Instagram, emphasise that it's safest to confirm it with that person face to face before accepting or replying.

BE MINDFUL OF REJECTION

The polls in W App are designed to be complimentary rather than negative. However, never being nominated or picked by their peers could leave a child – especially a status-conscious teen – feeling ignored and isolated. If you think that W App is having this effect on your child, it might be time for a supportive reminder that social media doesn't reflect someone's true worth or popularity.

PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

It's crucial that trusted adults regularly remind children about the importance of not sharing too much of their personal information online (and demonstrate it on their own social accounts, where possible). W App automatically displays the user's school on their profile – but if your child does want to use the app, you can advise them to only enter their first name and not to upload an image of their face.

DO SOME 'APP ADMIN'

Before letting your child download W App, you may want to (via their device's settings) disable the option to make in-app purchases: £4.99 per week for the subscription can soon mount up. Likewise, if a friend's use of W App is causing your child to be inundated with texts inviting them to sign up too, you could suggest asking that friend to stop selecting your child's name from their contacts list.

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.



NOS
National
Online
Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/w-app-anonymous-polls/id1645858841> | <https://www.slay.cool/>
<https://techcrunch.com/2023/01/19/german-teens-went-crazy-for-this-compliments-app-and-now-vcs-are-backing-its-next-phase/>

Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD) - Event

Children & Family Health Devon (CFHD) provide specialist services for physical and mental health to children and young people across Devon.

Following a redesign of these services, you are invited to join us to learn more about the newly designed pathways of care.

This event is your opportunity to ask questions, learn about the new model, and share your feedback.

- Discover our exciting new pathways of care service model.
- Meet our friendly team of experts.
- Get your questions answered.
- Share your valuable feedback.
- Enjoy complimentary refreshments.

Your voice matters, and we want to hear from you!

SAVE THE DATE

Torbay, South and West
Devon
19th September 2023

Exeter, East and Mid
20th September 2023

North
22nd September 2023

Venues and times to be confirmed