

THIS WEEKS WHOLE SCHOOL FOCUS : DEMOCRACY

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm delighted to bring to you the first issue of The Romney Record. This regular parent bulletin will be full of useful information about the life of the school alongside guidance and information regarding the hot topics of parenting. This issue focuses on the importance of a positive start to the school year and how you can support your child during the transition back into school life. At SWR we are committed to working with our families to secure the best possible outcomes for your children.

Our annual open evening is on Thursday 22nd September, and we are really looking forward to sharing our wonderful community with prospective students and their parents. Many of our students will be asked to support the school on open evening by acting as tour guides and parking attendants and by helping in departments, we would appreciate your support with this. We look forward to seeing our Year 7 students and their parents and carers on Thursday for our Year 7 BBQ.

I'm hopeful that you will find 'The Romney Record' useful as you navigate being a parent as part of our SWR Community.

Mr. P. Dillon
Associate Assistant Headteacher



APP OF THE WEEK – WHATSAPP



Whatsapp

Age rating: 16+

Please see a 'Parents guide to WhatsApp' from National Online Safety on the next page

HAVE YOUR SAY

Please follow the link and complete this week's short survey:

<https://forms.office.com/r/tcbFuRGUYc>

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

After learning of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II this week our community came together in a whole school assembly, led by Mr Bell, to celebrate the Queen's life.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY / TERM ONE

15th September - Year 7 Parent and Staff BBQ

22nd September - Open Evening

26th & 27th September - Open Mornings

29th September - Year 11 History trip to Goodrich Castle

30th September - Whole school walk

3rd October - Whole School Photographs

6th October - Year 11 Parent Information Evening

20th October - Year 7 Parent Information Evening

21st October - Term ends



A FRESH START

The beginning of the academic year is an exciting time for any school community, and we know that students and their parents and carers will be keen to ensure a positive start. You can support your child by ensuring they come to school on time each day, with the correct uniform and equipment.

Getting back into the swing of the school week can be a challenge for many. A good routine can help young people know what to expect and gives them a sense of security. Included below are things to consider to ensure your child is ready to make the most of each day at school:

- Bedtimes - One of the first things to go over the summer holidays are regular bedtimes. Sleep is so important! Ensuring a consistent bedtime can improve the quality of sleep and make bedtimes a bit easier! Don't forget to remove devices from your children at bedtime to avoid late night scrolling!
- Morning planning - Mornings can be busy and chaotic in many households. Having a clear plan from getting out of bed to leaving the house can lower stress levels for everyone. Preparing lunches, uniform and packing bags the night before can really help!
- Set expectations now - If screentime and healthy food choices have gone by the wayside over the summer, start setting (and enforcing) these expectations now.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP



WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service, with around two billion users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls. Its end-to-end encryption means messages can only be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp can read them. Updates to its privacy policy in 2021 (involving sharing data with parent company Facebook) caused millions to leave the app, but the new policy was widely misinterpreted – it only related to WhatsApp's business features, not to personal messages.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SCAMS

Fraudsters occasionally send WhatsApp messages pretending to offer prizes – encouraging the user to click on a link to win. Other common scams involve warning someone that their WhatsApp subscription has run out (aiming to dupe them into disclosing payment details) or impersonating a friend or relative and asking for money to be transferred to help with an emergency.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Users can set WhatsApp messages to disappear in 24 hours, 7 days or 90 days by default. Photos and videos can also be instructed to disappear after the recipient has viewed them. These files can't be saved or forwarded – so if your child was sent an inappropriate message, it would be difficult to prove any wrongdoing. However, the receiver can take a screenshot and save that as evidence.

ENABLING FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp has unfortunately been linked to accelerating the spread of dangerous rumours. In India in 2018, some outbreaks of mob violence appear to have been sparked by false allegations being shared on the app. WhatsApp itself took steps to prevent its users circulating hazardous theories and speculation in the early weeks of the Covid-19 pandemic.

POTENTIAL CYBERBULLYING

Group chat and video calls are great for connecting with multiple people in WhatsApp, but there is always the potential for someone's feelings to be hurt by an unkind comment or joke. The 'only admins' feature gives the admin(s) of a group control over who can send messages. They can, for example, block people from posting in a chat, which could make a child feel excluded and upset.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a WhatsApp chat, you only need the mobile number of the person you want to message (the other person also needs to have the app). WhatsApp can access the address book on someone's device and recognise which of their contacts also use the app. So if your child has ever given their phone number to someone they don't know, that person could use it to contact them via WhatsApp.

LOCATION SHARING

The 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, allowing friends to see their movements. WhatsApp describes it as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." It is a useful method for a young person to let loved ones know they're safe – but if they used it in a chat with people they don't know, they would be exposing their location to them, too.

Advice for Parents & Carers

[CLICK HERE](#)

CREATE A SAFE PROFILE

Even though someone would need a child's phone number to add them as a contact, it's also worth altering a young person's profile settings to restrict who can see their photo and status. The options are 'everyone', 'my contacts' and 'nobody' – choosing one of the latter two ensures that your child's profile is better protected.



EXPLAIN ABOUT BLOCKING

If your child receives spam or offensive messages, calls or files from a contact, they should block them using 'settings' in the chat. Communication from a blocked contact won't show up on their device and stays undelivered. Blocking someone does not remove them from your child's contact list – so they also need to be deleted from the address book.



REPORT POTENTIAL SCAMS

Young people shouldn't engage with any message that looks suspicious or too good to be true. When your child receives a message from an unknown number for the first time, they'll be given the option to report it as spam. If the sender claims to be a friend or relative, call that person on their usual number to verify it really is them, or if it's someone trying to trick your child.



LEAVE A GROUP

If your child is in a group chat that is making them feel uncomfortable, or has been added to a group that they don't want to be part of, they can use WhatsApp's group settings to leave. If someone exits a group, the admin can add them back in once; if they leave a second time, it is permanent.



THINK ABOUT LOCATION

If your child needs to use the 'live location' function to show you or one of their friends where they are, advise them to share their location only for as long as they need to. WhatsApp gives a range of 'live location' options, and your child should manually stop sharing their position as soon as it is no longer needed.



DELETE ACCIDENTAL MESSAGES

If your child posts a message they want to delete, WhatsApp allows the user seven minutes to erase a message. Tap and hold on the message, choose 'delete' and then 'delete for everyone.' However, it's important to remember that recipients may have seen (and taken a screenshot of) a message before it was deleted.



CHECK THE FACTS

You can now fact-check WhatsApp messages that have been forwarded at least five times, by double-tapping the magnifying glass icon to the right of the message. From there, your child can launch a Google search and decide for themselves whether the message was true or not.



Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks: a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.

