



### Achievement Assembly

Our achievement assembly celebrated children who have thoroughly "enjoyed learning" this week. Well done to the following children:

**Reception:** Mollie    **Year 1:** Isobella    **Year 2:** William A  
**Year 3:** Jaxon    **Year 4:** Harry B    **Year 5:** William K    **Year 6:** Scarlett

### Celebrating Attendance

Whole school attendance is currently at 95.6%  
Well done to Year 6 for best attendance this week at 99%!

### Date for Diary

- February half term 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>
- Tues 4<sup>th</sup> March - Shrove Tuesday @ breakfast club (must be booked by 17<sup>th</sup> February)
- Tues 4<sup>th</sup> March - Y3 DT Parent/Carer workshop 2pm to 3.25pm
- Wed 5<sup>th</sup> March - World Book Day plus special lunch (menu on website calendar)
- Mon 24<sup>th</sup> March - Easter celebration @ Birtley Methodist Church
- Mon 31<sup>st</sup> March - Reception class trip to Hall Hill Farm
- Thur 10<sup>th</sup> April - Easter Celebration special lunch (menu on website calendar)
- Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April - Break up for Easter - Returning Mon 28<sup>th</sup> April

### Rights Respecting

Article 7: I have the right to a name and belong to a country. Governments should make sure I have a legally registered name and a nationality. Children have the right to know who their parents are.



### Children's mental health week

We raised £125.20. Thank you. Place2Be an organisation who supports children's mental health check out their website for further information <https://www.place2be.org.uk/>

### Late to school?

Please bring your child into school via the main entrance, you will need to check in your child via the Reception iPad - Click on "Pupils" in the top left hand corner, Late Arrival, put your child's first name then tab across to then add surname, Teacher - you can add year group ie: R for Reception, then a number for all other year groups eg: 1 for Year 1, finally add a reason for being late. The KS1 doors close at 8.50am, KS2 at 8.55am prompt.

### Eschools help?

If you need some information on Eschool please check out our website - Parents - Eschools Help - [Portobello Primary School - Eschools Help](#) check out the you tube videos too below:

### Valentines Day at Lunch

Thank you to our wonderful catering team, Angela, Helen and Sarah for making lunch on Valentine's Day special. The tables were set, there was valentine's confetti and bunting to make the hall look amazing. Children thoroughly enjoyed their special valentine's inspired biscuits/cookies too.





### PPS Lego Leaguers

Last week, the school's mixed Key Stage 2 STEM team, the PPS Lego Leaguers, competed in the regional First Lego League robotics competition at Nissan. The team had the exciting challenge of presenting an inspirational project to a panel of judges, showcasing their innovative ideas on how to save the world's oceans. They also faced off against other schools, including secondary schools, in coding their team robot, Montey 2.0, to complete a variety of missions in this year's "Submerged" field challenge.

Thanks to their creativity, determination, and teamwork, the PPS Lego Leaguers earned an impressive second place, missing out on first by just 10 points. Their outstanding skill and performance also earned them the prestigious Nissan FLL Trophy. WE couldn't be prouder of their remarkable achievement! At the end of the day the team became Nissan award winners giving PPS STEM their fourth trophy this year. Amazing work team!

### Safer Internet Day 2025

This week we celebrated Safer Internet Day across school. Each class took part in a coding activity and explored this year's theme 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself from online scams. We revisited our school SMART safety rules and celebrated our Computing learning. Well done everyone!

### Breakfast Club are celebrating Shrove Tuesday on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March.

Pancakes galore will be served with fresh fruit toppings, with a choice of chocolate sauce, maple syrup or lemon juice.

Usual breakfast club food items available too!

Pay for breakfast club? Please book by Midday Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 😊





At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

## EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

## CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

## SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

## UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

## PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

## SKewed PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

### VERIFICATION STAMPS

Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

### ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

### REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

### Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE ([www.raiseducation.org.uk](https://www.raiseducation.org.uk)) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/online-relationships-dating-apps>

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