



# St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy



## Newsbite

Dear all,

As we approach the half term break, we allow ourselves to reflect on the work of the past seven weeks. The children have worked incredibly hard and have achieved so much in a short period of time. Thank you to all parents who came to the parent meetings this week. It was lovely to share their learning and celebrate this with you.

The children are now looking forward to half term and spending time at home. They all deserve a good rest and a few late morning 'Get Ups'. I wish you all a very quiet and peaceful half term and I look forward to sharing next half terms learning with you.

Epiphany Mass  
Snow White -M and M Production  
Performance  
A virtue a week  
Healthy Choices workshops  
Trust Feast Celebration  
KS2 Cross Country Event

Macmillan Coffee Mornings  
Arts Award  
Willow Artist  
Fire and Rescue Talk  
Non-Uniform Days  
Chocolate Raffle  
Space Centre Visit

Safer Internet Day  
Mental Health Week  
Learning with Commando Joe  
Tree Warden Visit  
Class Assemblies  
Lunch with Adults

As always if you have any concerns or ideas that you would like to share with the school, please do contact me [cdedman@st-josephs.leicester.sch.uk](mailto:cdedman@st-josephs.leicester.sch.uk) or 0116 2416197 as I am continually seeking for ways to improve the learning experience for the children at St Josephs.

Kind Regards

Clair Dedman





## Safeguarding in the Holidays

# What to do if you are concerned about a child

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Child protection means protecting children from physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. It also means helping children to grow up into confident, healthy and happy adults. If you are concerned about the safety and welfare of a child in **Leicester city**, then please contact Leicester City Council or the Police, on the following telephone numbers.

### **Children and Young People's Service**

Telephone: **0116 454 1004** (open 24/7).

Post: Duty and Advice Service, Halford House, 91 Charles Street, Leicester. LE1 1HL

Members of the public could visit Customer Services at 91 Granby Street, Leicester LE1 6FB where a telephone will be available to contact the Duty and Advice Service, [Children's Social Care](#).

A social worker will talk to you about your concerns and will advise of any action required. The service is open 24 hours, 7 days a week, all year.

The service is also the first point of contact for all new referrals to children's services and will deal with anything that relates to city children.



At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to have an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

## 10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage...

### THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

### ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

### SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, when usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

### TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fall or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

### REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear 'gaming' they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

### A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

### PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

### THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

### TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity. It's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

### ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain: that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

### Meet Our Expert

Daniel Upcombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web2. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Rocket League and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the BBC of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VOX.



**National Online Safety**  
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/consult/condocs/gaming/gaming-children-and-young-people-report-2022.pdf>





Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland  
Health and Wellbeing Partnership

# Hey, how are you feeling?...

There are lots of things you can do to keep yourself well and feeling good, like:

- Getting a good night's sleep
- Doing something you enjoy like playing games
- Spending time with friends and family
- Exercising and eating well to look after your body
- Learning a new skill or taking on a challenge
- Helping other people
- Spending time outside in nature

**... I feel great! I am happy and healthy**

**... I'm okay, but I sometimes feel a bit worried or sad**

It's normal to feel this way. We all experience lots of emotions and these can change over time.

Try some of the things in the box above and talk to someone about how you're feeling. This could be your friends, a parent or carer - or a teacher or adult at school.

If you're struggling, it's important to speak to someone. People want to help you. If you need it, you or your parents or carer can support you to get professional help. A good place to start is by talking to a mental health and wellbeing lead or trusted adult at school, or your GP.

You can also find free and safe support on these websites:

- Kooth: [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)
- Health for Teens: [www.healthforteens.co.uk](http://www.healthforteens.co.uk)

**... I am struggling and need some help**

**... I am so upset or overwhelmed that I need help now**

If you need to speak to someone urgently, you or a parent or carer can call the Mental Health Central Access Point on **0808 800 3302** or **NHS 111**. The lines are open 24/7.

If there is an immediate or life-threatening emergency, call 999 or attend A&E. People are there and ready to help you now.



For more advice about mental health support for young people in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, scan the QR code.

<https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/news/new-emotional-health-support-poster-for-young-people-launched-in-time-for-childrens-mental-health-week-6-12-february-2023/>



## Online Safety & Gaming



Gaming refers to playing electronic games, whether through consoles, computers, tablets, smartphones or other devices. Gaming remains one of the most popular forms of entertainment, attracting a wide range of age groups from all across the world. Gaming is always looking to develop, often improving on graphical features, accessibility and user engagement as years go by.



Unlike many other forms of media, gaming brings a sense of challenge to the player. Usually there is a degree of skill involved that players need to develop in order to progress. Depending on the type of game, it can also offer players a platform where they can be imaginative and explore their own creativity.

Some games have rich storylines and characters that are engaging and memorable. Many players also use it as an opportunity to compete and socialise with other users whether it be in person or online. More often than not though, people game, because it is fun!

### Benefits of Gaming

- 1 Can develop critical and creative skills
- 2 Can bring educational benefit and awareness
- 3 Is available to most audiences and family members
- 4 Is an easy and accessible way to socialise with others



### Considerations for Gaming

- 1 Have awareness of appropriate age restrictions
- 2 Parental awareness around purchasing
- 3 Active discussions around socialising safely
- 4 Reporting harmful or offensive content online

### Socialising Online

A staple of gaming is the community that surrounds it. Groups and audiences can gather around a specific game, character or theme to build specific fan bases that can interact with each other. Young people may like to socialise online because:

- 1 It gives them a platform to be with friends outside of school
- 2 There is usually a competitive element at play, which can feel rewarding
- 3 It can build confidence and social skills which may not be attainable physically
- 4 It gives opportunity to young people who have difficulty socialising with friends and others



### Reporting and Blocking

Gaming communities can range from supportive and educational, to toxic and harmful. In some instances, it can even lead towards more radical content being promoted. When faced with something or someone being harmful online, make sure young people know how to:

- 1 Report the player or piece of content
- 2 Mute or block the player
- 3 Manage their privacy settings or communication options
- 4 Speak with a trusted adult for support



To find out more about Gaming visit the SWGfL hub:  
[swgfl.org.uk/topics/gaming/](http://swgfl.org.uk/topics/gaming/)

or scan the QR code



### Further Support

Professionals Online Safety Helpline: [saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline](http://saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline)

Harmful Sexual Behaviour Support Service: [swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service/](http://swgfl.org.uk/harmful-sexual-behaviour-support-service/)

Report Harmful Content:  
[reportharmfulcontent.com](http://reportharmfulcontent.com)







## Dates for the Diary

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 2023 | Back to School Mass 2-3pm All Welcome                                     |
| Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March        | World Book Day  |
| Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> March         | Open Morning 9- 10.30am – Please sign in at the front office and sign out |
| Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> March         | St Joseph's Day Mass 2-3pm All Welcome                                    |
| Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> March         | Wear Blue – Raising Money for Lourdes                                     |
| Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> March      | Easter Production   |

**Leicester's 2023  
St. Patrick's Day  
Celebration Parade**

**SUNDAY 12TH MARCH  
12 NOON**

New Walk LE1 6HW next to Holy Cross Church

**Everyone welcome  
Craig will be ninety  
Live music &  
dancing galore**

Call us on 2769186 or text 07733897561  
Facebook: @Leicesterparade2023  
@TheEmeraldCentre  
Twitter: @EmeraldCentre

Government of Ireland  
Emigrant Support Programme  
An Bhean Uachtaráin Eanáir 2023  
Department of Heritage Affairs and Trade

EST. 1947

## The Emerald Centre

I would like to share this flyer with you as it was shared with me during parents evening this week. Our school council have already expressed an interest in supporting this event – in support of this charity organisation.

'The Emerald Centre delivers a wide range of activities to vulnerable local people and The Irish Community in Leicestershire. These include senior citizens lunch clubs, social activities, sports (includes soccer, Gaelic football, Irish dance, music for people of all ages).' Charity Commission.

## School Dinners

### Message from Leicester City Catering

'As you are aware, there have been and continue to be significant increases across food, energy and labour. We have held off over the last several months with implementing any increases, however the cost pressures are not sustainable, especially if we are going to continue to provide a service which supports schools and parents

and ensures we provide a good quality and nutritious food to the children.' **Email, City Catering, 22.01.23**

Unfortunately, this will mean for the children in Nursery(F1) and KS2, who enjoy a school dinner, there will be an increase of 16p to the daily price– and therefore the daily cost of a school dinner will be £2.50 from the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.



## St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

I understand that this is an additional cost for many of our families, particularly in this current climate, but I hope that you understand.

If you are experiencing financial difficulty, as always, please do contact me to talk through any concerns as I may be able to support or sign post you to help.



### CALLING CATHOLIC TEACHERS

*Do you know somebody who is a practising Catholic and who is a teacher or senior leader working in a school outside of the Catholic sector? The Diocese of Nottingham along with the Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts is leading a virtual information session about working in a Catholic school on **Wednesday 29 March** from 7.00pm – 8.30pm.*

*For further information, please contact: Julie Sweeney at the Diocesan Education Service ([julie.sweeney@nottingham-des.org.uk](mailto:julie.sweeney@nottingham-des.org.uk)).*



## Trust Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, Divine Creator, true source of light and fountain of wisdom! Pour forth your light upon our schools and take away any darkness which covers us. Grant our young people open minds to understand, the clarity to comprehend, and abundant grace in expressing themselves.

Guide the beginning of our work, direct its progress, and bring it to successful completion. This we ask through Jesus Christ, true God and true man, living and reigning with You and the Father, forever and ever.

Amen.

## Attendance

Whole school attendance to date is 92.1% which is slightly below the National Average of 93.4%

As a school we **all** need to play our part, ensuring that our children are in school on time and at school for as many days possible. I understand that from time-to-time children may be poorly, have hospital and dental appointments but we all need to try to ensure that children are maximising their learning time.

| Class          | Attendance (Class % this year to date) |
|----------------|--|
| Mrs Bailey     | 92.5%                                  |
| Mrs Abel       | 92.9%                                  |
| Mrs Franklin   | 91.6%                                  |
| Mrs Cartwright | 93.4%                                  |
| Mr Challoner   | 90.2%                                  |
| Mrs Darby      | 94.0%                                  |
| Mrs Stack      | 94.3%                                  |
| Mrs Murray     | 94.9%                                  |

The results above are for the whole class and each child will have their own attendance percentage.

Congratulations Mrs Murry and your class – Keep up the attendance!

