

# St Martin's Newsletter



AUTUMN TERM - Friday 15<sup>th</sup> September

## Free School Meals & Vouchers

If your circumstances have changed and you think you may be entitled to **Free School Meals** we advise all parents to **complete** the online **application form** – If your child receives **universal free school meals** in **KS1** you will **not** receive vouchers during the school holidays unless you have applied.

<https://cyp.halton.gov.uk/Synergy/Link/SynergyWeb/Parents/default.aspx>

## Competition

On **8th October Mrs Crew** will be running a half marathon and to **raise funds** for school we are holding a competition to **design a race t-shirt** for her to wear. Entry fee is **£1** and the winning design will be printed – **Mrs Crew** will wear one and the winner will get a version in their size. Forms will be sent home today and all entries must be in by **Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September** in order to give time to print. Payment for the competition is to be made on **gateway**.

## Online Safety

This week's safety advice is how to set boundaries around gaming and is attached with this newsletter.

## Parent Governors

**Thank you** to the parents who have expressed an interest in becoming a **governor**. Nominations are now closed. If a ballot is required voting forms will be sent out on Monday, if not the new governors will be informed and announce next week.

## Talk Halton

**Halton** are focussing on developing **children's speech, language and communication skills** across the borough and have developed a **communication hub**  
<https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/EducationandFamilies/FamiliesInformationService/talkhalton/talkhalton.aspx> to support parents and families in doing this.

## Attendance

Year R - 95% 2 Lates

Year 1 - 98% 11 Lates

Year 2 - 92% 9 Lates

Year 3 - 93% 3 Lates

Year 4 - 97% 9 Lates

Year 5 - 93% 5 Lates

Year 6 - 98% 9 Lates

6 classes with less than 10 lates 😊

**\*Well done to year 4, this weeks Dojo Champs\***

Anyone who comes into school after 8:50am is marked as late. Please try to be an attendance



## McMillan Coffee Morning

On **Friday 22nd September** the school council will be hosting a **McMillan coffee morning** to raise money for this cause that affects so many of us. We would appreciate it if children could bring in **1 pack of cakes** each by **Thursday 21st**. Thank you for your support.



## St Martin's Stars

**Well done to everyone who got a certificate this week.**

Purple Tie certificates are given for children who embody our rules of being Kind Respectful and Responsible.

Year R – Ellenor MK

Carolyn J

Year 1 – Dylan W & Olivia HG

Alice W

Year 2 – Harper MK & Elsie C

Vanessa K

Year 3 – Damien C & Heidi W

Lillie-Rose J

Year 4 – Laurence J & Blossom J

Eva N

Year 5 – Alex J & William P

Freya F

Year 6 – Ralph R & Eliza-Mae P

Halle F

# Top Tips for SETTING BOUNDARIES AROUND GAMING

If your child loves video games, then you'll probably be aware that how long they spend gaming – and what they're actually playing – can occasionally become a source of concern or conflict. The UK's trade body for interactive entertainment, Ukie, has recently launched a campaign to promote safer and more responsible gaming among young people – with parents and carers helping by setting sensible and fair boundaries. Our guide has tips on key areas where you could agree some healthy ground rules for your child's gaming activity.

## PROMOTE SAFER GAME CHOICES

Deciding which online games are OK – and which should be avoided – is tricky. Some titles allow children to cooperate or compete with strangers, which creates potential risks. Watching your child play online for a while could provide more insight into a particular game, while the parental controls on most consoles allow you to limit who can chat to your child or send them friend requests. Remind your child of the hazards around strangers online when you discuss this boundary with them.

## ENCOURAGE REGULAR BREAKS

Help your child understand the need to take regular breaks, playing in shorter bursts rather than marathon sessions. Bear in mind that some games (such as role-playing games) require time investment from the player, while others (online team games, for example) can't be stopped or paused at a moment's notice. A quick break every hour or so is good practice, and you could suggest some things to do in these breaks, such as having a drink of water or getting some fresh air.

## AGREE SPENDING LIMITS

There's no doubt that gaming can be expensive, and younger players often don't realise how much paying for digital items and subscriptions can add up to. Many young gamers love to buy new skins or upgrades for their character, so you could settle on a fixed amount that your child is allowed to spend on in-game items each week or month. This sort of boundary will not only help your child to manage their expectations but will also make you more aware of the price of these items.

## DISCUSS AGE RATINGS

Children often ignore the age ratings on games – or are unaware they even exist. If you're happy with your child playing a particular game even though it's rated above their age, then establish that as a boundary: emphasise that you've made an exception, and talk about what age ratings mean and why they're important. You could add context to this boundary by browsing games' boxes together while shopping, discussing why some games might have earned certain age ratings.

## Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer specialising in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. He has also written 15 guidebooks for children, covering games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft. With work published by the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247, he has reviewed more than 50 games and products over the past year.



## FACTOR IN FRIENDS

If your child is a keen video gamer, the chances are that they'll have other gamers among their social circle, too. When friends visit, do they instantly dash to their console or computer? You could put boundaries in place before their guests arrive by agreeing on a length of gaming time. Bear in mind, though, that they may try to extend this once they're together. Try coming up with activities or challenges for them during screen breaks – if they join in, they earn a little extra time on their game.

## ENJOY GAMING TOGETHER

Setting time aside to play video games together can be an enjoyable bonding exercise. Undeniably, some young gamers may be less enthusiastic about a parent or carer joining in, but it can be a productive way of encouraging them to share their hobby with you. Setting goals or tasks might be useful: if they love Minecraft, choose something to build together; if Fortnite's their favourite, ask to try out some of the fun game modes, like Prop Hunt, which don't require high skill levels.

## TALK ABOUT EMOTIONS

Help your child to monitor their emotions as they play. Discuss what is (and isn't) an acceptable level of competitiveness to show while gaming. Are they allowed to trash talk other players, for example? Can they notice when they get angry if they lose? Do they think these emotions are healthy? Some games can provoke anger, but others can bring joy, humour and the thrill of overcoming a challenge. Try to steer your child towards games that tend to produce these more positive feelings.

## BE PREPARED FOR TROLLS

A frequent problem when gaming online is other players who are deliberately troublesome. Make sure your child knows how to report and block someone who makes their experience a negative one. Between you, decide if or how they should deal with these online trolls. Talk about where your child's boundaries are in terms of what they think is acceptable: what behaviour by other users is merely frustrating, and what crosses the line to become upsetting or abusive.

Source: <https://hipal.app/about/privacy.html>