



Barnsole Bulletin



TERM 1 | WEEK 6 | Friday 17th October 2025

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the half-term break, I'd like to wish all of our Barnsole families a restful and enjoyable two week break. It's a much-needed time to relax and enjoy quality moments together. At the same time, I encourage you to blend that rest with a touch of learning — just a little — so that your child returns to school confident and ready. Over the break, regular reading can make all the difference. Whether your child reads a few pages per day from a favourite book, comic, or magazine, the habit of reading keeps vocabulary growing and minds active. Equally important is maintaining fluency with times tables. If your child has access to a device at home, they can log into their Times Table Rockstars account and practise those all-important multiplication facts a few minutes daily. Even short, consistent practice helps to preserve progress and avoid having to 'catch up' soon after we return. Of course, holidays shouldn't be entirely about schoolwork — children also need fun, new experiences and time to rest. I'm pleased to share that Medway Council and local partners are offering a range of mostly free or low-cost activities during the break.

- Through the MedwayGo Holiday Activities and Food programme, children can enjoy sport, art, drama, dance and more — with a free meal included for those eligible.
- Medway's heritage sites get involved too — for example, historical storytelling and creative workshops at Rochester Castle, or arts and craft sessions at museums.
- Many local parks are wonderful for wildlife walks or family picnics. Consider a visit to Riverside Country Park, which offers trails, birdwatching and peaceful natural spaces.
- Capstone Farm Country Park is also open daily, with woodlands, meadows and play areas to explore.

In short: enjoy the break, make time to read and practise for just a little each day, and take advantage of the lovely local events on offer. Wishing you all a safe, happy, and rewarding half-term. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for school.

Best wishes,
Mr J Smales



House Points (Overall Total for the Academic Year)



700

Invicta

617

Medway

452

Gordon

540

Adams





If you have concerns about a child in school, please contact one of the Safeguarding team:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jonathan Smales (Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Liz Kramer (Deputy Headteacher)

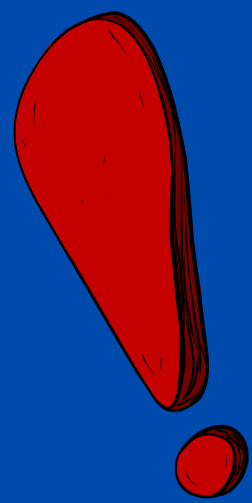
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Nicole Barber (Assistant Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Stephanie Tollervey (Assistant Headteacher)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Michelle Kagan (FLO)

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Helen Rixon (Office Manager)

If you are concerned about a child outside of school, either after school, at the weekends or during a school holiday, you can contact the following to report your concerns:



Helpful Contact Numbers

Medway Children Services – 01634 334466

Out of Hours Duty Team Medway – 03000 414141

NSPC – 0800 800 500

Police – 101

[Medway.gov.uk/mscb/](https://www.medway.gov.uk/mscb/)

Nursery

Nursery have started to do big write activities. They follow the instructions of the teacher and we all draw the same shapes together. We started with circles and swirls and as the year progresses we learn different shapes and pictures. If anybody has wallpaper they no longer need please could you donate it to the nursery as the children really benefit from these large group drawing activities. Thank you.



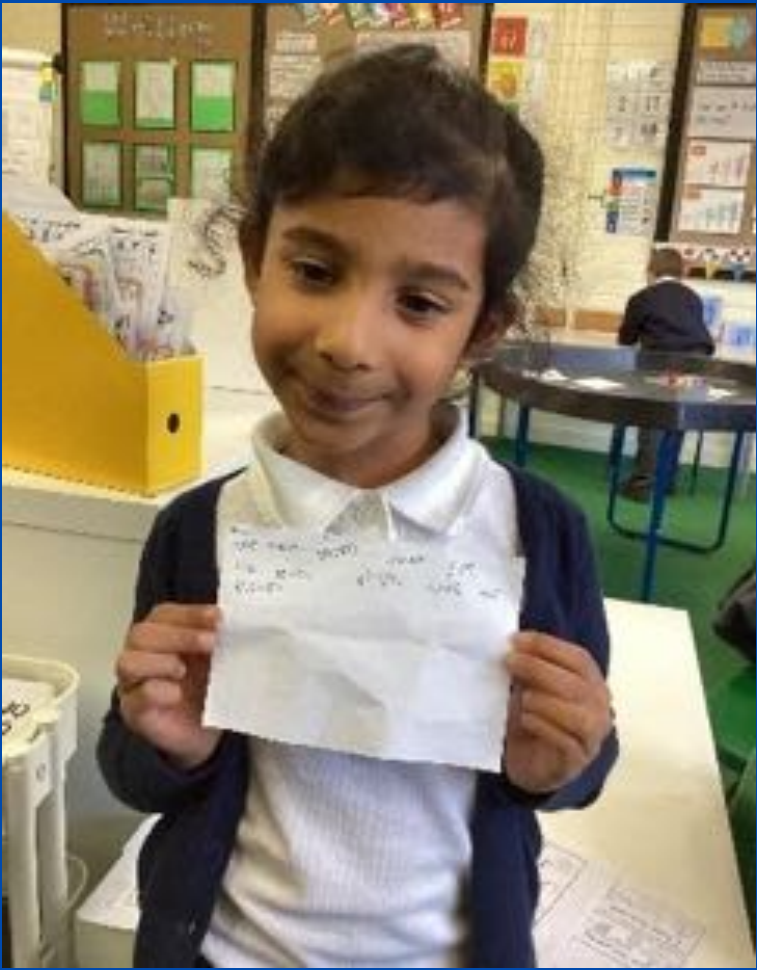
Year R

We have had a brilliant start to our Reception year. We have enjoyed making new friends and exploring our outside area. The children have enjoyed exploring the new sand and have been making lots of lovely sandcastles. We have enjoyed being mathematicians and making patterns as well as practising our counting. Have a lovely half term and we can't wait to see you all refreshed and ready for Term 2!



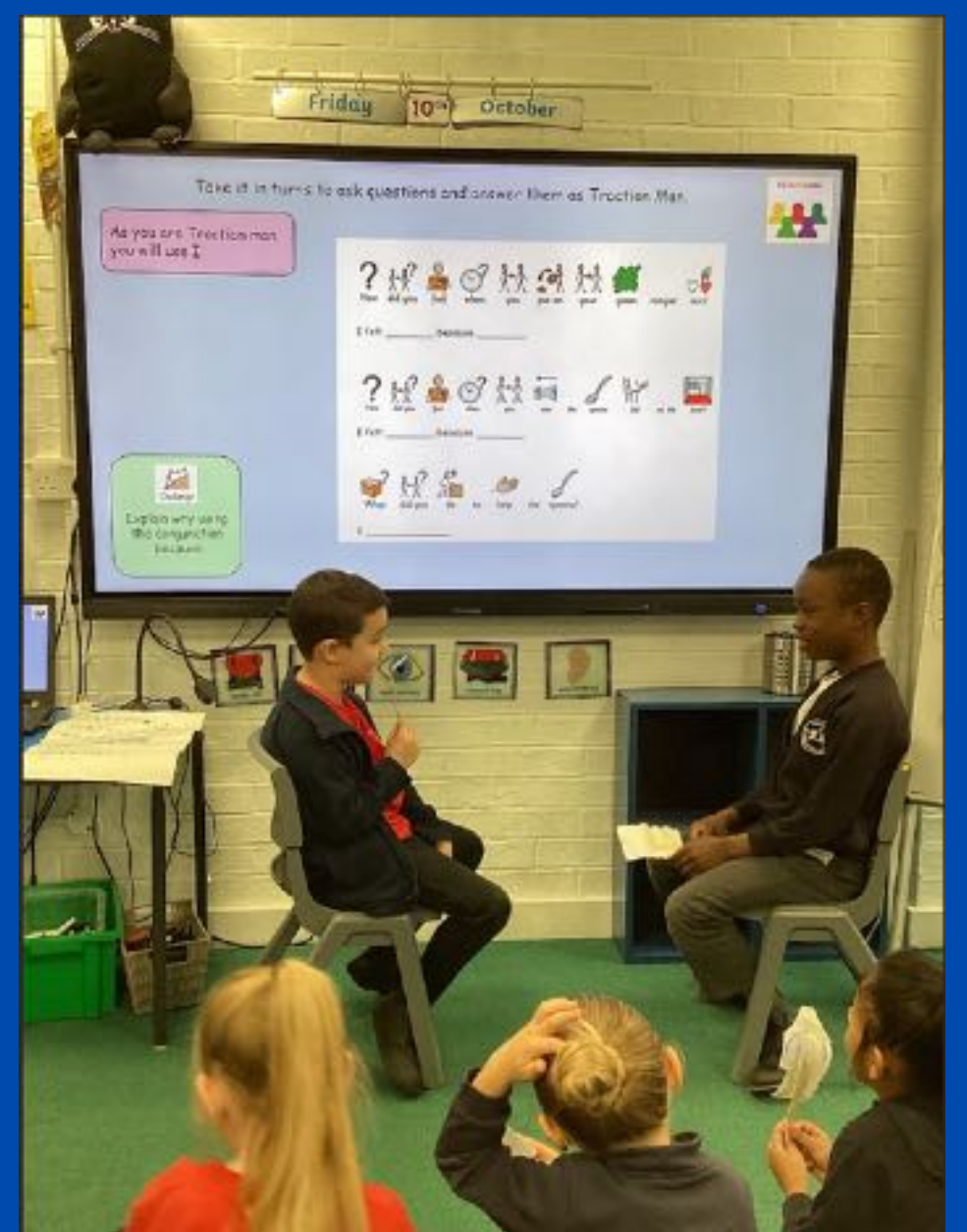
Year 1

In Year One, we have been learning about numbers, numbers everywhere! We have explored how numbers work by using 'Part-Part-Whole Models' to break them down and understand their relationships. We've also been delving into where numbers should be placed on number lines, helping us to see their order and value more clearly. It's been an exciting journey discovering different ways to represent these.



Year 2

In Year 2, we have been immersed in the exciting world of Traction Man. The children have taken part in role-play activities and discussions that have really allowed their imaginations to flourish. They particularly excelled during our hot seating sessions, where they asked insightful questions about Traction Man's feelings, especially regarding the green romper suit and saving the spoons. This engagement has resulted in some wonderful diary entries and impressive writing in English lessons.



Year 3

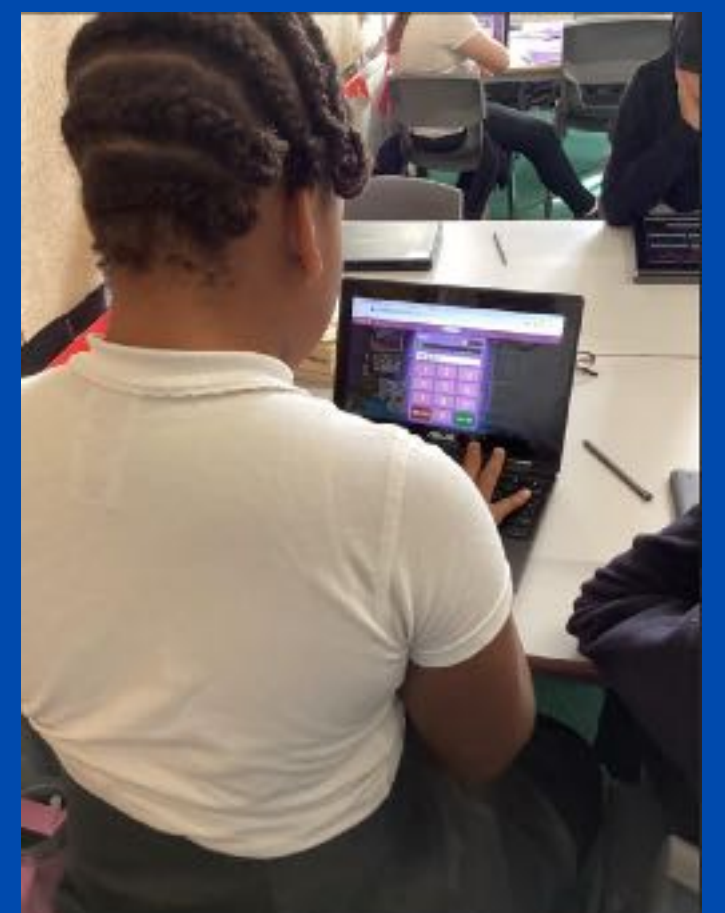
As we come towards the end of our Stone Age topic, the children used their creativity to build their own Stone Age tools! We have also written diaries about being in the Stone Age themselves! We will continue to dive through the ages, moving to the Bronze Age.



Year 4

This week, Year 4 have been fully immersing themselves in the legendary tale of Beowulf! We took to shore in Viking boats, journeyed to Denmark, and bravely prepared to defeat the great monster Grendel. After dining and boasting in the great hall alongside fellow warriors, we awaited the creature's arrival—ready for battle!

This exciting experience has inspired our diary writing, where we have been recording events from Beowulf's perspective. In addition to our English adventures, we've been continuing our piano lessons with Mrs Tutty and practising our times tables on TTRS.



Year 5

This week, Year 5 have continued their exciting learning about Ancient Egypt by exploring the question: What happened to a pharaoh when they died? We discovered the fascinating rituals of mummification and the Egyptians' strong beliefs about the afterlife. To help us understand the process even better, we acted out each step of mummification — from removing the organs to wrapping the body in linen. Earlier this term, we also began our own mummification experiment using fish and this week we finally checked on them to see how well they had been preserved! It was a fun (and slightly smelly!) way to see history come to life.



Year 6

This term in Design & Technology, Year 6 got hands-on with healthy eating by making their very own smoothies! Thinking carefully about including whole foods, the children experimented with three delicious recipes across the year group: Tropical, Creamy and Berry.

From chopping and preparing the ingredients to blending them into a tasty treat, they enjoyed every step of the process. Of course, the final part – and most important – was the taste test, where everyone got to sample their fruity creations.





PHONICS WORKSHOPS

We are excited to invite you to a special event at Barnsole where we will be sharing how we teach Little Wandle phonics in classes, followed by an opportunity to watch teachers delivering phonics learning to your children. Understanding how children learn to read and write is a key part of their educational journey, and we would like to offer an opportunity for you to see firsthand the interactive approach and activities that we use to support your children's reading development. Look out for the Google form to sign up if you are a parent of a Year 1 or Reception child.

- A presentations will take place on Wednesday 5th November at 9:00am for parents of Year 1 and Reception children, followed up in your child's class.

To sign up please complete this google form:

<https://forms.gle/LTEdevNS7tMJ3Qrp7>

Reminder

Our school and Trust operates a zero-debt policy. Therefore, all wraparound care sessions must be booked and paid for at least 24 hours in advance. Please check your child's MCAS account and pay any outstanding debt. Moving forward if your child's account is in debt, we will not be able to admit them to any wraparound care sessions until the debt is cleared. The school office will be contacting you either to assist with making payment or ask you to collect your child.

Wraparound care is an additional, non-compulsory service. Continued booking without payment may result in a review of the offer of these provisions to you in the future.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.

Parent Information – Uniform Reminder



School Uniform

Please can we remind parents of our school uniform policy. Please take the time to read this on our school website.

Jewellery & Hair Accessories

Earrings – plain Studs only

Hair bands or hair ties should be plain colours and small

No necklaces, bracelets or any other item of jewellery is allowed

Items of Religious Significance

Children from the Sikh community are allowed to wear a kara, which is a steel or iron bracelet. As part of the Sikh faith, the kara must not be removed.

Head coverings (hijab) should be plain navy blue or black without any embellishments, patterns or additional decorations.

PE Days

For PE Days, children should be wearing black shorts, leggings or tracksuit bottoms. T-shirt in the colour of your child's house team or a plain white t-shirt and Black trainers (no bright ones).

On the days that the children have PE they can come to school already their PE kit. It is essential that all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child's name, including coats and PE kit.

U12 GIRLS BASKETBALL TRAINING SCHOOL YEAR 5 & 6



#GIRLSGOTGAME

DAY: MONDAY & TUESDAY
VENUE: CHATHAM GRAMMAR
TIME: 17:30-19:00

SESSIONS WILL OFFER GIRLS A POSITIVE OUTLET DELIVERING SKILLS BOTH ON & OFF THE COURT INCLUDING GREATER CONFIDENCE, INCREASED FOCUS, ENHANCED TEAM WORKING SKILLS, RESILIENCE AND IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH.

@KENTCRUSADERSBB



GILL.JAMES@KENTCRUSADERS.CO.UK



SOCCER SCHOOLS OCTOBER HALF TERM

21st 22nd 23rd October

3 Days Of Football Fun and Games

Official GFC First Team Training Ground

Boys & Girls

9:00am - 3:00pm

5-14 Year Olds



Just £20 a day when book before the 4th of October!!

A FANTASTIC ENVIRONMENT TO ENJOY FOOTBALL, LEARN & GET ACTIVE!

BOOK NOW!



PRICING: £25.00 PER DAY - £66 FOR 3 DAYS
WWW.GILLINGHAMFOOTBALLCLUB.COM

Supporting a Child with ADHD



Challenge the stereotypes and get practical help

Monday 13th October 10-11:30am

Tuesday 11th November 7-8:30pm

90 minute session. Recording available for 48hrs

£24.

Available to book now
facefamilyadvice.co.uk



TERM TIME ONLY

JOIN OUR SATURDAY MUSIC CENTRE

AGES 5 - 18

EVERYONE WELCOME

COMPLETE BEGINNERS TO
ADVANCED MUSICIANS

RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL



DISCOVER MORE

www.medwaymusicassociation.co.uk



MMA's Free Online Music Technology Sessions

Open to ages 9-18

Join our virtual sessions

Tuesday 16:30 - 17:30 (term time only)

For full details visit

www.medwaymusicassociation.co.uk

MEDWAY MUSIC ASSOCIATION





Apply for a Primary and Secondary School place for September 2026



Primary School applications

The deadline for applications to be submitted for national offer day for primary school is 15th January 2026. Please be advised that if your child attends Barnsole Nursery it is NOT an automatic admission into Yr R.

To apply, visit this link:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1059/applying_for_a_primary_school_place/3

Secondary School applications

Wednesday 15 October 2025	Results of the Medway Test.
Friday 31 October 2025	Secondary school applications close.
Monday 2 March 2026	Offers sent to parents and carers.
Friday 27 March 2026	Deadline for accepting/refusing offers, waiting requests and appeal requests.
Monday 20 April 2026	Re-allocation of school places and processing of late applications.
Monday 31 August 2026	End of admissions process and waiting lists close.

To apply, visit this link:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1061/applying_for_a_secondary_school_place



Class Attendance for the year so far ...

Infants

Saturn - 97%
Mercury - 97%
Neptune - 96%
Jupiter - 94%
Mercury - 94%
Comet - 93%
Moonbeams - 92%
Venus - 91%
Mars - 88%



Juniors

Oberon - 98%
Apollo - 96%
Icarus - 95%
Phoenix - 97%
Juno - 94%
Titan - 95%
Capricorn - 94%
Aquarius - 95%
Aquila - 92%
Dragon - 91%
Orion - 89%
Pegasus - 93%
Polaris - 94%

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 16th October	Autumn Term 1 Ends
HALF TERM	Friday 17 th October - 31st October
Monday 3 rd November	SCHOOL RETURNS
Wednesday 5 th November	Parents Consultation Meetings (3.40pm-5.30pm) <i>Bookings are available via the MCAS app</i>
Wednesday 12 th November	Parents Consultation Meetings (3.40pm-5.30pm) <i>Bookings are available via the MCAS app</i>
Friday 14th November	Children in Need <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 5 th December	Yr 6 African Dance Workshop <i>(Payment to be made via the MCAS app)</i>
Monday 8 th December	Yr 4 Christmas Carol Concert (10am-11a,) Yr 1 Christmas Carol Concert (1.30-2.30pm) <i>Third Avenue Church</i>
Tuesday 9 th December	Yr 5 Christmas Carol Concert (10am-11am) Yr 2 Christmas Carol Concert (1.30pm-2.30pm) <i>Third Avenue Church</i>
Wednesday 10 th December	Yr 6 Christmas Carol Concert (10am-11am) <i>Third Avenue Church</i>
Thursday 11 th December	Yr 3 Christmas Carol Concert (10am-11am) <i>Third Avenue Church</i>
Friday 12 th December	Year R Nativity (10am-11am) <i>Third Avenue Church</i>
Friday 12 th December	Non-Uniform Day <i>Donations to the Christmas Fayre - further information to follow</i>
Wednesday 17 th December	Barnsole Christmas Fayre (3.30-5.00pm) KS2 Hall
Friday 19 th December	Autumn Term 2 Ends
CHRISTMAS BREAK	Monday 22nd December-Friday 2nd January 2026

Dates for the Diary

Monday 5th January	SCHOOL RETURNS
Thursday 15 th January	School Census (Special Menu)
Tuesday 10 th February	Yr R and Yr 6 Height, Weight and Measure
Friday 13th February	Spring Term 1 ends
HALF TERM	Monday 16th February-Friday 20th February
Monday 23rd February	SCHOOL RETURNS
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day <i>Further information to follow</i>
Thursday 11 th March-Wednesday 18 th March	Scholastic Book Fair <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 13 th March	Red Nose Day <i>Further information to follow</i>
Friday 20th March	INSET DAY
Wednesday 25 th March	Parents Consultation Meetings 3.30pm-5.30pm <i>Further details to follow</i>
Wednesday 1 st April	Parents Consultation Meetings 3.30pm-5.30pm <i>Further details to follow</i>
Thursday 2nd April	Spring Term 2 ends
Friday 3rd April-Friday 17th April	Easter Holidays
Monday 20th April	SCHOOL RETURNS
Monday 4th May	May Bank Holiday
Monday 11 th May-Thursday 14 th May	Yr 6 SATs Week
Monday 25th May-Friday 29th May	May Half Term
Monday 1 st June	School Returns
Wednesday 8 th July	Summer Fayre
Tuesday 21st July	End of School Year



The Medway Skills Academy is BACK!

We had so much fun in our first year, we just can't wait to do it all over again - and we would love you to come and join us!

It's a 10 week course of fun activities for children aged 7-11, every Saturday morning, from 10am-1pm, at Featherby in Gillingham.



We're talking sports, robotics, art, cooking and drama - oh, and we haven't told you the best bit yet...



It's completely **FREE!**



Look out for more details and information on how to sign up in September. We're so excited to get started!...

Engineering
Minds



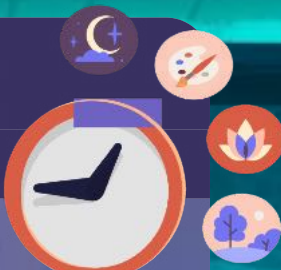
10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

DEALING WITH TRAUMATIC & CHALLENGING EVENTS

Children and young people may face a wide range of traumatic or challenging events – from bereavement and illness to bullying, family breakdowns, or witnessing violence. These experiences can affect their mental health, behaviour, relationships, and academic progress. With the right support from trusted adults, children can begin to feel safe, rebuild resilience, and develop healthy coping strategies. This guide offers practical and empathetic ways to provide support and promote positive outcomes.

1 A PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENT

Children who have experienced trauma often feel unsafe or uncertain. Creating routines, setting clear expectations, and maintaining consistency can help restore a sense of security. This structure offers reassurance and helps children feel more in control of their surroundings.



2 USE LANGUAGE THAT MATCHES THEIR AGE

Speak clearly and sensitively, choosing words that are appropriate for the child's age. Avoid overwhelming them with too much information at once. Offer gentle, honest explanations and focus on reassurance, especially when talking about difficult or sensitive subjects.



3 TRAUMA AND THE BODY

Mention briefly that trauma can show up in physical ways, such as changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, or as physical aches and pains. Consider this before labelling behaviour as 'difficult' or 'lazy'. Some children may become withdrawn, while others may be more outwardly challenging. Highlight that there's no 'one way' children respond.



4 AVOID RETELLING OR RELIVING TRAUMA

Children sometimes get asked to explain or repeat their experience multiple times. Striking a balance of when to listen and when to gently redirect can help to avoid unnecessary re-traumatisation. Acknowledge, but don't probe for detail unless safeguarding procedures require it.



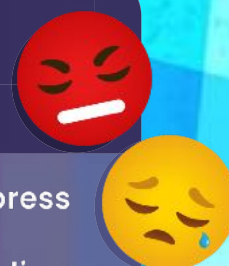
5 AVOID DISMISSING OR MINIMISING FEELINGS

Seemingly well-meaning comments like "It's not that bad" or "You're okay" may shut down children's emotional expression and are often not helpful. Instead, acknowledge what they're feeling, even if it seems small. Validating a child's emotions helps them feel seen and encourages open communication in future.



6 UNDERSTAND HOW THEY'RE FEELING

Many children don't have the words to express their emotions, especially during distress. Supporting them to name what they're feeling – such as angry, scared or sad – builds emotional literacy. Tools like emotion charts, drawing, or storytelling can help externalise feelings in a safe, manageable way.



7 BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN RESPONSES

Children pick up on adult emotions and reactions, often mirroring them. Staying calm, even in challenging situations, helps children feel more secure. Practising your own self-regulation is an important way to model healthy stress management and encourages children to do the same.



8 SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

While many children benefit from everyday emotional support, some will need more specialised help. If symptoms persist, worsen, or disrupt their daily life, consult with school safeguarding leads, a GP, or a mental health professional. Early intervention can prevent long-term difficulties and support healthy recovery.



9 MAINTAIN CONNECTION

Isolation can worsen the impact of trauma. Encourage involvement in group activities, praise their efforts, and ensure they feel like a valued part of the school or family community. Meaningful connection with trusted adults and peers builds resilience and a sense of belonging.



10 BE PATIENT – HEALING TAKES TIME

There's no quick fix for emotional recovery. Children may have good days and setbacks, and progress may not always be visible or linear. Your ongoing support, patience, and presence can help them move forward at their own pace, knowing they are not alone.



Meet Our Expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school by integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture, and systems. She has been a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about EA SPORTS FC 26



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AN ANNUAL RELEASE SCHEDULE

As was the case with the last two EA Sports FC games and the FIFA series before it, the franchise rolls out once a year with updated squads and new features. This can make it expensive to keep up with, particularly when so many dedicated players are keen to get their hands on the latest edition.



VOICE CHAT

Voice chat can be enabled across all platforms, meaning young people can speak to anyone they play with or against. While it can be switched off, some children will no doubt want to speak to their friends while they play. This also means they may encounter strangers much older than them, which can expose them to inappropriate language or behaviours.



IN-GAME PURCHASES THROUGH ULTIMATE TEAM

Ultimate Team is the big draw for EA Sports FC, letting players spend real money on packs that they can open to build a squad of the world's best players. They're not always easy to obtain, and new, improved versions of players will be regularly added as limited-time offerings. Young people could feel pressured into spending money and experience fear of missing out.



SCAMMERS IN ULTIMATE TEAM

Ultimate Team is managed by EA itself, but that hasn't stopped scammers from looking to dupe players out of money and in-game coins. Some scammers sell their accounts, which is a violation of EA's terms of service, while others will 'sell' coins - something the developer is still working to crack down on. Some try to gain access to others' accounts, potentially giving them access to payment information.



POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION

While EA Sports FC is potentially addictive, thanks to its fast-paced gameplay and mirroring of the real-world skill and glamour of football, Ultimate Team's focus on limited-time rewards and the lottery of winning packs can make it feel closer to gambling than gaming, which may lead to addiction and impulsive spending of money.



Advice for Parents & Educators

PREPARE FOR ANOTHER GAME IN A YEAR

The annual-release cadence aligns with the return of the school year, and can be a great way to incentivise good behaviour at the start of term. If children are applying themselves and preparing for a new year of school, or were particularly well behaved in the summer, EA Sports FC 26 could make a great reward.



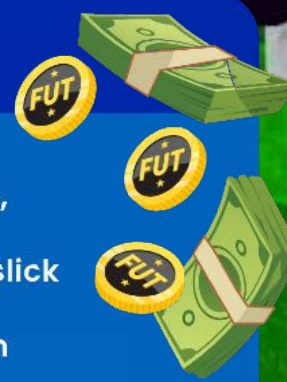
MONITOR VOICE CHAT

As in-game chat is open, be sure to adjust the settings in EA Sports FC 26 to lock it down. If children want to chat with their friends while they play, consider setting up a safe space for them to call, to allow them to play without fear of outsiders.



LIMIT SPENDING

If you're worried about children accidentally spending real money in Ultimate Team, whether in game or on the EA Sports FC companion app, don't link a payment card to their account. Reclaiming funds can be a mountain to climb, and the dopamine hit of opening flashy packs with slick animations means one purchase can lead to another very quickly. It's also worth adding a prepaid card if you'd prefer them to make their own choices with their budget.



BE VIGILANT

As with last year, there are ways to keep scammers at bay. Ensure passwords are locked down, and consider using a password manager application to keep them secure. EA will never contact players through the game itself, so be vigilant with incoming messages, and block and report suspected spam. EA will contact players by email if needed, but they will never ask for usernames or passwords. Players should also avoid buying in-game currency from unofficial websites - doing so can lead to accounts being banned and could cost players money in the process.



Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is an experienced freelance writer and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for seven years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. He's also a tech and fitness writer and has been published at sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/ea-sports-fc-26>