

Newsletter



MEADOW PARK
SCHOOL

Message from the Headteacher

Dear parents and carers

I hope you all had a lovely half term break.

Thank you to all parents who have donated uniform - you have been very generous and it is very much appreciated. We continue to accept donations and support families who would like to swap items.

Year 11 have begun their final mock exams this week and I have been impressed with their conduct. I hope that they used the half term well to revise. Teachers are marking the mocks as quickly as they can to share the feedback with students. Our intervention programme continues to run and I would encourage students to make the most of this opportunity to receive support from their teachers.

Thank you to all families of the Year 9 students who have completed their Pathway forms to identify which subjects students would like to pick for their Key Stage 4 GCSEs. I reminded students in assembly today and explained that we will have to pick for them if anyone is unable to decide - hopefully this was enough encouragement for them to complete them!

A number of students from different year groups attended a careers apprenticeship roadshow this week where they learnt more about the possible options open to them when

they reach the end of either Year 11 or Year 13. I hope they found that useful.

Thursday next week is World Book Day and staff have planned a range of exciting activities linked to reading. Unlike primary school, we do not ask students to dress as a character, so they should attend school in normal school uniform. However, there may be an opportunity for them to spot some of the staff dressed as their favourite characters!

Next week a number of students are representing Meadow Park in sporting fixtures, and I know the whole school is behind them! I look forward to sharing the scores next week with you.

Finally, please can I remind you that students are not allowed to wear hoodies and these will be confiscated if seen. They should not be worn at school at any time, including break and lunchtime. All students were given a blazer free of charge and they should wear this. Please can you support us with this?

I wish you a lovely weekend.

Mrs Pettman
Headteacher

Nurturing Excellence, Growing Aspiration, Thriving Together



FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Issue: 28 February 2025

Pancake Day
Tuesday 4th March
Morning break
In the Diner



Crepes and American pancakes
Fillings
Golden Syrup
Lemon Juice & sugar
Nutella Hazelnut Spread
£1.20

Head of House Awards

The Head of House Awards were awarded to:



Suwalaha

Summer

Dirokhshan

Kieran

News from the Library!

It's nearly World Book Day, and we can't wait to get the celebrations underway. (Oh, alright - we've already started in the Library!) Look out for ...

Chillout Monday:

Chess Club

After school on Monday:

Dungeons & Dragons

Rowdy Tuesday:

Air, Land & Sea

After school on Tuesday:

Library open for revision, gaming etc

Geeky Wednesday:

Marvel Funkoverse - team up to try to stop Thanos (aka Mr Spencer)

WORLD BOOK DAY: Thursday 6 March 2025

Big Book Quiz - come and earn massive house points!

After school on Thursday:

Library open for revision, gaming etc

Creative Friday:

New drawing game

Happy reading ...


Mr Spencer and Mrs Dearden
Librarians

Enrichment Clubs - Spring Term


	Break	Lunch	After School
Monday	Basketball Sports Hall	Chillout Monday Library Book Club F17	KS3 Basketball Sports Hall Girls Basketball Small Gym Student Dungeons and Dragons LRC Fashion and Textiles T04 (10 spaces!) MPTC Rehearsals G16
Tuesday	Basketball Sports Hall	Rowdy Tuesday Library Chess Club F05 Y11 Girls Netball Sports Hall Science Club S05	Netball Small Gym Rugby Club Field KS3 Badminton Sports Hall Drop in Free and Easy LRC MPTC Rehearsals G16 Homework / Coursework Club F23
Wednesday	Basketball Sports Hall	Geeky Wednesday Library	(STAFF TRAINING)
Thursday	Basketball Sports Hall	Sporty Thursday Library Year 8/9 Girls Basketball Sports Hall	Badminton Sports Hall Trampolining Small Gym Robotics Club F18 (10 spaces!) Music Practice G16 Craft Club F23 Drop in Free and Easy LRC Homework / Coursework Club F23
Friday	Basketball Sports Hall	Creative Friday Library Crochet Club Wk1 G04 wk2 G08	KS4 Basketball Sports Hall KS3 Trampolining Small Gym

Spring term extracurricular clubs

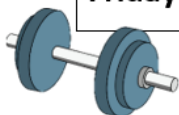
Feb → April



	Break time	After school
Monday	Basketball – sports hall	KS3 Basketball – Sports Hall (GSK) KS3 Girls Basketball – Small Gym (LTA)
Tuesday	Basketball – sports hall	Rugby (All years) – Field (LTA) Y7 Swimming – Alan Higgs Centre (GFR) Netball – Sports Hall (RCR) KS3 Football – Field (ASN)
Wednesday	Basketball – sports hall	STAFF MEETINGS
Thursday	Basketball – sports hall	Badminton – Sports Hall (GSK) KS4 Football – Field (ASN) Trampolining – Small Gym (GFR)
Friday	Basketball – sports hall	KS4 Basketball – Sports Hall (RMV)



After School from 3:15 – 4:15. PE kit must be worn for all clubs



New Parent App and School Communication

Please sign up to our new parent portal MyChildAtSchool (MCAS).



DON'T FORGET to enable push notifications for the MyChildAtSchool app on your phone so you can see all emails and letters the school sends you.

All schools in the Trust are using Bromcom and MCAS so for Meadow Park School, it means MCAS replaces School Synergy.

MCAS is now live, so as soon as you sign up you will be able to see your child's information. As School Synergy is linked to our old MIS it is no longer updating, therefore in order to view your child's timetable, see their attendance and behaviour points you will need to sign up to MCAS.

You have access to all the same information as you had in School Synergy. MCAS allows us to securely share your child's/children's achievement points, attendance, school reports, letters and school diary whenever you wish. The portal also provides general useful information about the school such as flash announcements. This will be our **primary means of communication** with you, from now on. Please make sure you enable notifications for MCAS as this is the way we will send you emails and letters.

To login to the MCAS Parent Portal, we have enabled you to 'self-sign on'. All you will need for this is your email address that the school has on record for you. Enter the school postcode CV34BD (without a space) or use our identifier 15028. Search for Meadow Park School.

School Communication

All communication from school is now via Bromcom and if you sign up to the parent portal MCAS then you will receive notifications from the school via the app. You can view all letters and emails, past and present, in MCAS. If you don't have the app then you will receive a normal email. Please add '15028@bromcomcloud.com' to your address book in order to prevent messages being blocked by your spam/junk filters.

How to Self-Sign Up for Parents

Parents and carers can access the MCAS Parent Login screen in two ways:

1. From within your web browser type **www.mychildatschool.com**
2. Download the free **MyChildAtSchool** parent app from either the Apple App Store or Google Play.

When you use the parent portal for the first time you will need to Sign-Up. Full instructions have been emailed home or they can be found on our website.

If you require any assistance logging in for the first time, please contact the School Office by emailing admin@meadowparkschool.com or telephone 02476 302580.

Uniform



Green school blazer



Grey V-neck sweater



Tie



Skirt



Trousers

School shoes guidance

Plain black with no logos
No high heels, 'sliders', boots, sling back or open-toed shoes
Black leather or leather effect

TRAINERS AND CANVAS SHOES (VANS/CONVERSE) ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE



Spring Term 2025

Teacher Inset Days	Monday 6th January & Tuesday 7th January
Term Starts	Wednesday 8th January
Half Term	Saturday 15th February – Sunday 23rd February
Last Day of Term	Friday 11th April
Easter Holiday	Saturday 12th April – Sunday 27th April

Summer Term 2025

Term Starts	Monday 28th April
May Day Bank Holiday	Monday 5th May
Half Term	Saturday 24th May – June 1st June
Last Day of Term	Friday 18th July
Summer Holiday Starts	Saturday 19th July

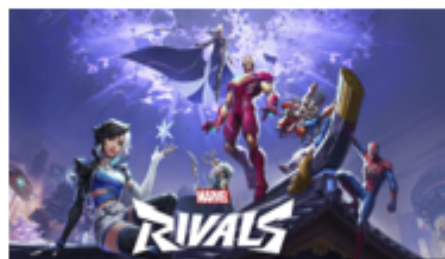
What Parents need to know about WhatsApp, Marvel Rivals and Useful Safety Apps!



We've all heard of WhatsApp, it's one of the most popular messaging apps in the world – and since 2024 it is now accessible to users as young as 13. With end-to-end encryption preventing even the platform itself from viewing any messages that users send on it, this app has been regularly utilised by those looking to keep their conversations private.

Unfortunately, the service poses several risks to its younger users – from misinformation and bullying to potential criminal exploitation – and it's vital that parents understand these concerns and how to address them. The attached free guide delves into the online safety risks of WhatsApp and offers expert advice on how to safeguard any young people who use the platform.

With Marvel's latest Capatin America film release, the MCU is as popular as ever and linked with a video game it's sure to be a hit. It's estimated 40 million users (lots being young people) are playing this game (PEGI 12 rating). The game is free – to play on PC and current-generation consoles but does feature microtransactions that allow players to spend real money on cosmetic items for their characters. Please read the attached guide for some helpful information about keeping this game fun and safe.



Useful Apps for Safety!



A useful App that has a FREE level of use, enabling families to have shared accounts that can track and monitor each other to ensure you know where your family are at all times in case of an emergency. There are enhanced features (at a cost) but this app has proven itself popular with families – so please take a look and see if it's right for you.

<https://www.life360.com/uk/>



HOLLIE GUARD - Promoted by West Midlands Police as a way to increase your safety whilst walking alone. Please visit the website for more information on this FREE App.

Available on Google Play Store and Apple IOS.

<https://hollieguard.com/>

Stay Safe!

Paul Rule
Child Protection Officer &
Senior Pastoral Support Manager

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

With more than two billion active users, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. The UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging, but for the time being, this controversial feature remains.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting money transfer because of a supposed 'emergency' – plus a more subtle technique: using a real-looking message by attempting to log in to your account from (using or mimicking) a call or text to ask you to repeat the code sent to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user they want to message. Therefore, if a child has one given, their number will be accessible to anyone who has it. That person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that the child might be added to a group chat or community (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allow news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a 'Forwarded many times' label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they're just received is far from an original – and might not be entirely factual, either.

CHAT LOCK AND SECRET CODES

In 2022, WhatsApp introduced a feature that lets users keep their chats in a separate 'locked state' where, once locked, their phone's passcode, fingerprint or face ID, there is an additional feature – 'Secret Code' – where users set a unique password for locked chats. Unfortunately, this creates the potential for young people to hide conversations and content they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of.

VIEW ONCE CONTENT

The ability to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate material or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't report them later to see any evidence of it. However, people used to be able to screenshot this disappearing content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, offering protection of privacy.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's Live Location feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child is safe while out, for example. However, anyone in a user's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journey to their mobile regularly.

Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval. You can also permission to my contacts or my contacts group. Additionally, if a child needs to use Live Location, emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Discuss with the child about how they're using WhatsApp, making sure they know you only have their safety at heart. If you spot a locked chat or folder, you might want to talk about the sort of content they're stored in there, why they're taking it, and why they want to keep those chats hidden. Also, if children send any 'view once' content, it would be helpful to ask them why.

DISCUSS GROUP CHATS

Make children aware that there could be members of a group that they don't know well and that levels can be misinterpreted. Encourage them to leave a group if they feel uncomfortable, to report to you if conversations turn towards bullying, and to report to you if they are in an inappropriate group chat. Make sure they know that it's OK to leave a group chat if it makes them uncomfortable – or for any reason, in fact.

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content that is too personal to be shared more widely, even publicly on social media. Encourage children to consider how an impulsive message or forwarding might damage their reputation or upset others who sent something to them in confidence.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Ashworth is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and online behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MARVEL RIVALS



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Marvel Rivals launched in December 2024 and amassed a player count of nearly 150,000 in mere weeks. This player versus player (PvP) shooter packs in a host of recognisable comic-book characters, pitting two teams of six against each other. Despite the game's cartoonish nature, there are several potential risks for parents and educators to be aware of.

IN-GAME CHAT

While chat allows players to speak to teammates and opponents within the game, but in a multiplayer environment, some conversations can become unpleasant. That chat is equally prominent among those playing on PS5 and will be shown on the side of the screen. Moderation on chat is relatively low, so it's important to recognise that potentially inappropriate messages could arrive at any time.

IN-GAME PURCHASES

While Marvel Rivals is free, there is an in-game store, adding characters akin to recognisable movies and comic-book titles. Each season also includes a \$10 Battle Pass (worth like three each in Fortnite and Call of Duty), offering a series of exclusive cosmetic items. These prices don't appear to be too high, but they can be purchased every two weeks, meaning it could add up to a lot of money.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With over a huge player base, it's impossible to predict where your child will be meeting up with or playing against. They're already certain to run into strangers through voice and text chat, for starters. Most of these people will just be ordinary gamers enjoying the action, but there is the risk of some users behaving inappropriately with younger players – either intentionally, or because they don't realise that they're speaking to a child.

Violent Content

There's no gore in Marvel Rivals, and the violence depicted is comparatively cartoonish – but the playable characters available vary between more traditional superheroes and supervillains, and figures like Black Widow and The Punisher, who use more realistic weapons. Also the game's nature as a shooter, this may make some parents and carers uncomfortable as some players will be firing these weapons at each other.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

The game includes some language and mature themes in the dialogue, which could expose youngsters to content unsuitable for their age, detracting from a safe and family-friendly gaming experience. As we mentioned previously, the content of the in-game chat could also be age-inappropriate, meaning there's something to make them to potentially harmful content.

FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

The inclusion of iconic characters might make Marvel Rivals appear more approachable than other games in the genre, with recognisable heroes and villains like Spider-Man and Venom. This could lead to more interest from younger players, increasing the likelihood of children playing the game without properly understanding the risks.

Advice for Parents & Educators

FOLLOW ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating for Marvel Rivals says the game shouldn't be played by anyone under 13. Most children of that age will be able to appreciate the moral messages of the rest of the characters. People can play as Iron, the Destroyer of Death, for example, while also ensuring that the violence, however cartoonish, won't overwhelm them.

MONITOR OR TURN OFF CHAT

Voice and text chat can both be adjusted within the in-game settings. If you're particularly concerned about exposing children and young people to them, however, you can disable both forms of chat in the game's settings. If a child wants to play alongside friends, remind them that they can use their contact's party chat feature or host a call on a third-party service like Discord.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

The game's inclusion of fan-favourite characters like Iron Man and the Hulk, plus its increasing popularity, means that younger Marvel fans will likely be eager to see what the fuss is about. Once it's clear, consider playing Marvel Rivals yourself to gauge how you feel about a child playing it. Alternatively, you could let them play against the game's AI in Practice Mode, until they're old enough to compete online.

DISCONNECT PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents should ensure that no payment options – such as debit cards – are linked to the game, to prevent unauthorised purchases and charges. Children can be tempted by in-game offers without fully understanding the costs. Removing payment methods could help limit in-game spending and limit a sense of financial awareness, teaching young people to be careful with their money.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Greenham is Deputy Editor of the Daily Mail and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tech, he's also a parent and therefore understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, he has been published on sites including BBC, Techradar and plenty others.



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THRIVING TOGETHER