



HOPTON C OF E PRIMARY ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2026

News

Dear Parent/Carers,

It has been a busy half term and it is lovely to see the weather start to warm up outside. We have recently had a visit for our OPAL project and it was lovely to share all the fantastic things we are doing outside at lunch times. Children are really enjoying dressing up, playing in the mud kitchen and our large sand pit has now been filled. We have also got a lunchtime club for gardening and it has been a delight to see the children's flowers growing now. We now plan to work on our grounds and want to create teepee's, pallet sheds and furniture, so if you do have any pallets or would be open to help us creating these if we provided the materials, then please do speak to Mrs Grimmer or myself.

We have said a sad farewell Mrs Gardner this term as she has taken on a post working with secondary aged children who are completing exams. We wish her all the best in her new role and will miss her.

We have extended our wrap around offer to theme the sessions this term. We know the children are looking forward to their cooking, science club and other sessions offered and are open to any other clubs that may be of interest which we can plan! Please do come and speak to me if you have any ideas.

Mrs Whiting - Head of School

Polite reminders

We politely ask that you do not park on the yellow lines outside school and to be mindful of residents living near to the school. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

Events

We celebrated World Book Day at Hopton with a range of reading based activities. Children dressed up as their favourite book character, we had a second hand book sale and we welcomed James Campbell to the school, which the children really enjoyed. We also had money workshops in KS2 from The Money Charity and children enjoyed taking part in The Spending Challenge, helping to develop financial skills.



We held science week in school and the children explored a range of science activities, such as building structures with spaghetti, balancing marshmallows and exploring the science behind gloop! They also completed a detective activity, using chromatography to analyse different inks. The children had a note written in black ink and they had to use filter paper and water to identify who could have written the note, from a choice of three suspects.



We also held a Superhero lunch for loved ones this week. We love to come together as a school family and it was fantastic to share lunch with our community!

Our forest school sessions are up and running and we welcomed in parents to have a joint session with their children in Willow class. I know fun was had all round and we are excited to be able to offer forest schools to all children by the end of the year.

The weather is getting warmer, so please do join us for our forest school sessions for 2-3 year olds. We are also holding nursery stay and play sessions so please do contact us to arrange a tour or a session.



Stay and Play

for 2-4 year olds



Forest School Session

Learn - Play - Grow



Session

Only £5 Per child

Spend time exploring nature with your child in a fun, playful setting!

Time: Fridays 10.15-11.45
Limited spaces available
Please phone the school
to book your space.

Hopton C of E Primary Academy
Thelnetham Road, Hopton, Diss IP22 2QY

Tel: 01953 681449

Email address:
office@hoptonacademy.co.uk



HOPTON NURSERY SCHOOL

**FULL TIME FREE NURSERY PLACES
AVAILABLE FOR 3 AND 4 YEAR OLDS**

Registration open now for **FREE FULL TIME*** places for children from the term after their third birthday.

Small, welcoming village school

Drawing club

Early reading

Forest schools weekly

Early Excellence classroom with brand new resources.

Come and join us for a stay and play on:

Tuesday 10th March 1:30-2

Monday 16th March 9:30-10

Tuesday 17th March 9:30-10

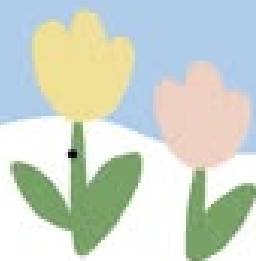
Please call or email us to book a tour or a stay and play.

Email: office@hoptonacademy.co.uk

Phone: 01953 681449

***terms and conditions apply**

Hopton C of E Primary Academy, Thelnetham Road, Hopton,
Diss, IP22 2QY



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azmi is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



Sources: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-53204505>
<https://www.4mat.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>

NOS
National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

AFTER SCHOOL

THEMED SESSIONS 3:30-4:30

MONDAY

Science



TUESDAY

Cooking



WEDNESDAY

Games



THURSDAY

Art



FRIDAY

Drama



£4 a session. Book wrap around care on Arbor by the Friday of the week before