



Friday 21 June 2024

NEWS & VIEWS

Be the best you can be.

Executive Headteacher: Mr Jamie Foster

Headteacher's Comment:

A huge congratulations to the U15 girls football team (pictured right) who have reached the National football finals. The match is taking place on Monday July 8 with kick off at 1pm at Sixways Stadium, Worcester. We wish them the very best of luck against West Kirby Grammar School for this prestigious title.

From the seven hundred applications received for our Year 7 places, it was a delight to welcome the 292 families that will be joining the St. Martin's family in September. I was very proud to share our amazing student successes this year in sports, art and drama, as well as our academic achievements across the school. Our Year 11 and 13 students have worked incredibly hard and we look forward to celebrating their successes on results day.

Please be aware that we have our Year 6 induction days on Thursday 27 June and Friday 28 June. This will mean that parking will be very limited on site both before and after school due to Year 6 drop off and pick up. We would appreciate if you can consider this and kindly make alternative arrangements with your child where possible.

Lastly if you would like to thank a member of our amazing staff at the school, whether that is a teacher or a member of our non-teaching staff please click on the following link: <https://forms.office.com/e/u5zY3NN7vM>



Year 12 Subject Ambassadors

Our new Year 12 Subject Ambassadors for A Level and BTEC subjects have been selected. Congratulations to all students who will be assisting and representing their subjects. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to further develop their skill set and enhance their applications for university/apprenticeships or the work place. The role of subject ambassador embraces a number of varying roles and duties. Students will assist departments with school open evening events. They will also assist fellow students who may have subject specific questions or enquiries, or who may benefit from peer mentoring.



Subject ambassadors will also assist departments with induction days and further subject specific roles allocated within each department. We hope that students enjoy this enrichment opportunity and flourish in their newly appointed roles.



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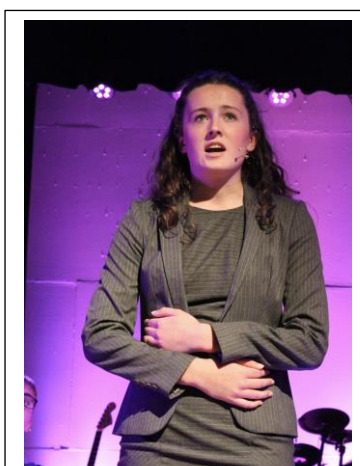
School of Rock Production

Since rehearsals began in February, the build up to our incredible lower school production culminated in two amazing shows performed to packed audiences on both nights. The show, based on the hugely popular Jack Black film, was turned into a full West End musical by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Over 100 students were involved in bringing this huge production to life taking on singing, acting and dancing roles with some students also showcasing their musical ability through the playing of live instruments. The cast and crew have worked incredibly hard to put the show together and it has been a pleasure to work with the students in rehearsals. Their enthusiasm and dedication earned both casts a well-deserved standing ovation on both nights and these performances reminded us just how much talent we have here at St Martin's.

Due to the large cast and number of roles, we were able to double cast the majority of the characters with performers from across years 7, 8 and 9. It would be impossible to name everyone as we had so many fabulous students involved but some of the anchors of the show included our leads Dewey Finn (played by Nicholas Morris and Charlie McCartney both Year 9) and Rosalie Mullins (April Wilks Year 9 and Louise Percival year 8). The entire cast performed with professionalism and the commitment to the show was evident in each individual performance. It is clear to see that these students are destined for great things in their futures whilst at St Martin's and beyond.

I must thank the staff and production team who have supported the process of putting on the performances especially as it was a full West End musical. Mr Williams, our Musical Director, and the Music department who worked tirelessly with the singers and musicians to ensure they sounded amazing and our technical manager, Miss Rahman, who oversaw the lighting and sound. I also need to thank our Sixth Form stars who gave up lunch times and after schools to help support our younger students. A huge thank you to Jack Liddicott (lighting and sound), Erika Jones (choreography), Charlotte Larter (choreography), Hannah Percival (singing), Benji Copping (singing), Yevai Benyure (costume), Bethan Young (stage management) and Daniel Whitmore (stage management). We are so lucky to have students who are willing to give up their time to support younger students and act as role models to them.

All that is left to say is thank you to everyone who has supported the show and we are already looking forward to next year's talent filled productions! Miss Barnes, **Director**.



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Excellent Work produced in Art by Year 7

7Seurat have submitted their 3D food homework task last week, which was to create a sculpture using recycled or found materials.

The work was outstanding.

Well done !



Student Leadership Team

Congratulations to our new Student Leadership Team.

Back row left to right – Assistant Head Boys Reggie Duff, Matthew Gillini, Flinn Charleston, Assistant Head Girl's Elizabeth Sadler, Hannah Percival, Erika Jones

Front row left to right – Deputy Head girl Tess Winter, Head Girl Elvienne Squire, Head Boy Blaydon Stuart, Deputy Head Boy Harry Savill.



Dates for the Diary

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 24.06.2024 – 28.06.2024 | – Year 10 & 12 PPE Tech Exam Drama Space |
| 24.06.2024 – | – Year 10 Food Nutrition NEA 2 PPE Exam |
| 25.06.2024 – | – Year 10 Food & Nutrition NEA PPE Exam |
| | – Year 9 GL Assessment English & Maths |
| 26.06.2024 – | – Summer Concert |
| | – Immunisations Catch up |
| 27.06.2024 – 28.06.2024 | – Year 6 induction days |
| | – Uniform selling event |
| 27.06.2024 | – Year 12 Kings College Electrical Eng. Visit |
| 28.06.2024 | – Year 12 taster day |
| | – A Level Art and Photography Moderation |

For PE fixtures please follow: Instagram @stmartinsschpe
or [click here](#) for further PE updates



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SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

June 2024 – Issue 2

Be the best you can be.

Executive Headteacher: Mr Jamie Foster

This monthly safeguarding update is going to concentrate on four subject matters: screen addiction, school avoidance, managing anxiety in children and young people (Young Minds) and sextortion. These are subjects that are discussed with students throughout the academic year to make them more resilient, confident and able to negotiate some of life's challenges.

If you have any concerns or would like more information then please do contact one of the safeguarding team or your child's Head of Year.



Support for students moving on

As we come towards the end of the academic year, many children will be moving on, some within the school and others to new places. Almost all young people will feel anxious to some extent and for some this anxiety can become overwhelming. Young Minds has really helpful information and advice for understanding and supporting a young person with anxiety, including resources to signpost them to.

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/professional/resources/supporting-a-young-person-struggling-with-anxiety/>



What is "Sextortion"

'Sextortion' is the short name for 'financially motivated sexual extortion'. It is a type of online blackmail where criminals threaten to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about you. They may be trying to take money from you or forcing you to do something else you don't want to.

Anyone can be a victim of sextortion, however, young people aged between 14 to 18 and adults aged under 30 are often most at risk

In many of the reported cases, fake online profiles are made using stolen or fake images of people who befriend individuals online.

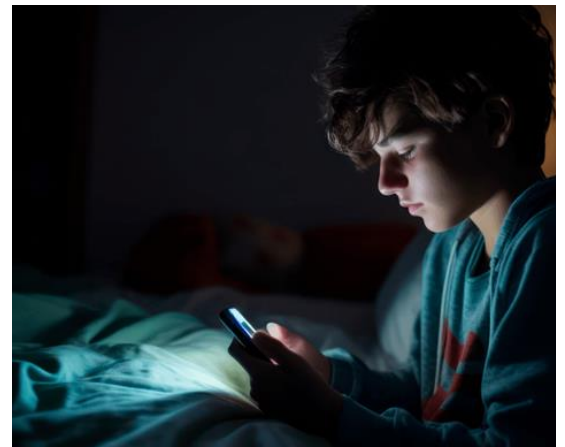
In some cases, the scammers will use an artificially created photo of the person to blackmail them out of money or to get them to do something. In other instances, they will build a relationship with that person later persuading them to send an image or video which they will then use against them.

These scammers are often a part of organised crime groups based overseas.

Sexual Extortion cases have been on the rise and a worrying increase of reports show the impact it is having on the younger generation.

'The Revenge Porn Helpline' reported that they received 54% more sextortion reports in 2023 than the previous year. The number of reports doubled last year reaching 19,000 cases where over a third of them were specifically sexual extortion incidents, of these, 93% were cases reported by men. The Internet Watch Foundation shared similar results where 91% of the cases they dealt with were male.

Females are often depicted as the victim. However, recent data shows that it is more likely that men are being targeted, especially teenage males.



If you need help or support
Reach Out via Email to our Safeguarding Team
reachout@st-martins.essex.sch.uk



Why is sextortion a problem?

The impact that this can have on a victim can be life changing. Those who do give in to demands often continue to be extorted - becoming a cycle.

It can have a continuing impact on:

- Mental Health – anxiety, depression, guilt
- Relationships – lack of trust, social exclusion
- Physical Health – lack of sleep, stress, changes in eating habits

In certain cases, it can even lead to more severe consequences

What if this happens to you?

If you've sent a nude, and you're worried, Childline advises:

- Ask for the message to be deleted
- Don't reply to threats
- Talk to someone you trust
- Use **Report Remove** to get it removed from the internet
- Report what's happened (CEOP)
- Get help with how you're feeling



St Martin's Safeguarding Team



Mrs McGorrell
DDSL



Mrs Tatman
DHT/DSL



Mrs Wilson
DDSL



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

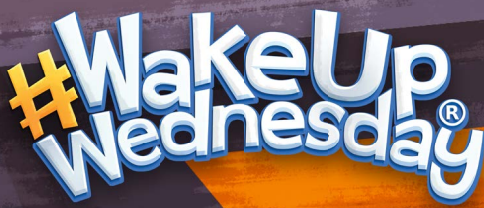
Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech - related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?



47% of parents said they thought their children spent too much time in front of screens

What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION



HEALTH & WELLBEING

Children as young as 13 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially recognised gaming addiction as a modern disease. The condition was confirmed as part of their International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which serves as an international standard for diagnosing and treating health conditions.

LACK OF SLEEP

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.



CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ADVICE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes', explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face to face interactions.

APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

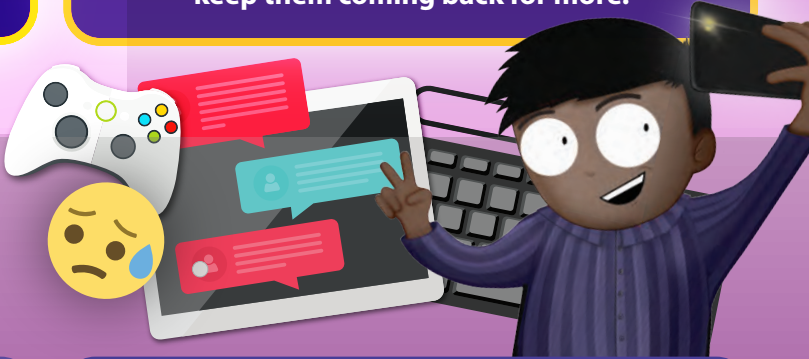
Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



National Online Safety®



Top Tips for Parents



LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

LESS TIME MEANS LESS EXPOSURE

There are many risks associated with devices, such as cyberbullying, grooming, sexting, viewing inappropriate content etc. Less time spent on a screen means that a child will be less exposed to these risks.

MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focussed the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

ENCOURAGE ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES

It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their Outdoor activities to show your support.

STATISTICS

52% of children aged **3-4** go online for nearly **9hrs** a week

82% of children aged **5-7** go online for nearly **9.5hrs** a week

93% of children aged **8-11** go online for nearly **13.5hrs** a week

99% of children aged **12-15** go online for nearly **20.5hrs** a week

Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018

SOURCES: <https://www.independent.co.uk>, Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk>, <http://uk.businessinsider.com/how-app-developers-keep-us-addicted-to-our-smartphones>, Journal of Youth Studies: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/tech/one-five-kids-losing-sleep-9653986>, University of Leeds: https://medhealth.leeds.ac.uk/news/article/1296/lack_of_sleep_damaging_for_children