



# Sixth Sense

## Which Week?

This Week: Tuesday 5th Dec (Week 2)

Next Week: Monday 11th Dec (Week 1)

## Laptop-Mishap!

Apologies for the laptops not being available to you on Friday.

This was not as a result of anything Sixth Form had done but was an issue related to the IT server of the service provider. The Academy's IT Services Team have already contacted them last week and therefore this should be resolved by Tuesday when you return. As ever, if you notice an issue, please feed this forward to Mr Bowers. Once again: ***THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE RESOURCE, SO ALL OF US NEED TO LOOK AFTER IT!***



## Staff Training Day

### Monday 4th December

All Sixth Form students will return us as normal for 8.30am on Tuesday morning (5th Dec).

## Bragging Rights!

### 6th Form Quiz Ranking:

1. **Mr Bartlam's** Form: **Year 12** Form (Mean score = 17.75pts)
2. **Mr Hinsley's** Form: **Year 13** Form (Mean score = 17pts)

### Barry the Cactus 'Oscar' Award to Students of the Month

Incredibly, two Yr12 student have been awarded a 'Barry' this month, that, for both year groups, is being awarded in recognition of our best attending students. Watch this space for final 'Barry' of 2023, coming in December!

**Year 12:** Lewis Smith, Yasin Jalloh

**Year 13:** Rada Calin



## Recommendation of the week (Sport and Exercise Science or History): Sport and the British Podcast

This week's recommendation is for our BTEC Sport and Exercise Science students, A Level History students, or indeed anyone interested in 'knowing their onions'(!) regarding sport and it's origins.

This BBC podcast, hosted by none other than Clare Balding does an exceptional job at boiling the origins of key moments in the growth and development of sport into 15 minute chunks that would fit neatly into any study period or indeed, bus ride home.

Follow the link to explore the BBC podcast online or access via your podcast provider: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01bf42n/episodes/downloads>



## National Online Safety: Group Chats



Occurring through messaging apps, on social media and in online games, group chats are among the most popular ways that young people engage with their peers online. Involving, by definition, three or more individuals, these groups allow users to send messages, images and videos to everyone in one place. While they are useful for helping friends, people with shared interests or members of a club to communicate and coordinate activities, they can also leave young people feeling excluded and bullied – as well as providing opportunities for inappropriate content to be shared and viewed.

In the guide on page 2, you'll find tips on a number of potential risks such as bullying, inappropriate content and unknown members.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

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## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### BULLYING

Unkind comments or images which are purposely aimed at an individual can be shared freely in a group chat – allowing and often encouraging others to join in the bullying behaviour. If this content is shared in a group of their peers (especially a larger group), it serves to amplify the hurt, embarrassment, anxiety and isolation that the victim feels.

### EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

This common issue with group chats can happen in several ways: starting a new group, for instance, but deliberately excluding a certain child. Likewise, the chat may take place on an app which one child doesn't have access to, meaning they can't be involved. A child can also feel isolated when a group chat is used to discuss or share images from an event that everyone else but them attended.

### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some discussions in group chats may include inappropriate words, swearing and unsuitable images or videos. These could be viewed by your child if they are part of that group, whether they actively engage in it or not. Some chat apps have a disappearing message function, so your child may be unable to report something they've seen because it can only be viewed once or for a short time.

### SHARING GROUP CONTENT

It's important to remember that – while the content of the chat is private between those in the group – individual users can easily share a message, photo or video with others outside of the group or screenshot what's been posted. The risk of something your child intended as private becoming public (and potentially going viral) is higher if there are people they don't know well in the group.

### UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Within larger group chats, it's more likely your child will be communicating with people they don't really know. These strangers may be friends of the host, but not necessarily friendly toward your child. It's wise for young people not to share personal details and stay aware that they have no control over the messages and images they share after they've put them online.

### NOTIFICATIONS AND FOMO

A drawback of large group chats is the sheer number of notifications. Every time someone in the group messages, your child's device will be 'pinged' with an alert; potentially, this could mean hundreds of notifications a day. Not only is this highly distracting, but young people's fear of missing out on the latest conversation results in increased screen time as they try to keep up with the chat.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats are often an arena for young people to gain social status. This could cause them to do or say things on impulse, which could upset others in the group. Encourage your child to consider how other people might feel if they engaged in this behaviour. If your child does upset a member of their group chat, support them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

### GIVE SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Remind your child that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded in a group chat, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their hurt feelings and help to put them back in control by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. On a related note, you could also empower your child to speak up if they're in a chat where others are being picked on.

### BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If your child is in a chat where inappropriate content is being shared, advise them to block the users sending the material, report them to the host app or platform and exit the group. If any of this content could be putting a minor at risk, contact the police. Emphasise to your child that it's OK for them to simply leave any group chat that they don't feel comfortable being a part of.

### PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

In any online communication, it's vital for young people to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Discuss the importance of not revealing identifiable details like their address, their school or photos that they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they lose control of where it may end up and how it might be used.

### AVOID INVITING STRANGERS

Sadly, many individuals online hide their true identity to gain a child's trust – for example, to gather information on them, to exchange inappropriate content or to coax them into doing things they aren't comfortable with. Ensure your child understands why they shouldn't add people they don't know to a group chat – and, especially, to never accept a group chat invitation from a stranger.

### SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Having a phone or tablet bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be a massive irritation and distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to your child that they can still be part of the group chat, but that it would be healthier for them to turn off or mute the notifications and catch up with the conversation at a time which better suits them.

## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland 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 sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Source: <https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers-what-you-need-to-know-about-group-chats>