

Friday 2nd October 2026

Right of the Month: 31 – the right to leisure, play and culture

School Value: Trust



Dear Parents and Carers,

October is **Black History Month**, and we are launching our Larry Achiampong, Relic Traveller project again this year. Each class will have a different art project to complete, and we will be exhibiting these in the hall after school on 20th October.

It is also the month for the **Restart a Heart** campaign.

Learn CPR, act fast, save lives



All Junior classes have taken part in a live lesson, learning about heart health and CPR. Thank you to Mrs Sheldon and pupil council for organising this for us. Please see the class blogs sites for your child's **Lifesaver Challenge**.

Our **Play Leaders** have been to Bishop Challoner this week for their training. Now fully fledged they will continue to support our outdoor play and learning activities at lunchtimes. Mr Trevor and I have also delivered training to all our pupil leadership groups today. This included exploring the qualities of a good leader, how to contribute to the leadership group and the job description, which they have taken home to share with parents/carers.



We are delighted that the **Living Streets Travel Tracker** is now back up and running for this term. Please do encourage your child to walk, wheel, scoot or cycle to school each day.

Woodthorpe currently has pupil places available in most year groups (except in Years 5 and 6). If you know anyone who has recently moved into the area and/or looking for a school place, please do let them know. Thank you.

Enjoy your weekend. Ms McGrath

Pupils of the Week

Rec: Evelyn – always working well in lessons

Y1: Isla – for working hard and settling well into Year 1 at Woodthorpe

Y2: Teddy – for a focused and confident start to Year 2 – excellent efforts particularly in maths.

Y3: Agnes – for demonstrating independence and resilience in maths and English (writing).

Y4: Tio – for great participation in learning and encouraging others.

Y5: Emma – for gaining confidence in asking for help and contributing in class. Her work is beautifully presented.

House Points Weekly Leaderboard

Brandwood – 735

Jasmin – 660

Dawberry – 651

Highbury – 637

Congratulations **Brandwood** House!

Attendance & Punctuality

21.09.26 - 25.09.26

Year Group	Present marks (%)	No of Lates
Reception	99.6	1
Year 1	99.1	5
Year 2	97.5	0
Year 3	95.6	5
Year 4	99.0	2
Year 5	99.3	4
Year 6	96.3	2
Average % / Total Lates	98.1	19

[Illness absence and staying healthy - YouTube](#)



Notices & Updates

Photo Day – Aperture Portraits – Consent required

Children will be having their individual & sibling photos on Wednesday 21st October. There will also be an opportunity for pre-school siblings to have their photos taken from 8.30 am. Please note, parental consent is required to have your child's photos taken and if not given, your child will not have any photos taken at this time. Therefore, please check your consent is correct on the Arbor App. ***Please see attached letter for further information.***

School Fund Contributions

School fund contributions would be most welcome, via Arbor £10 per term.

All donations go towards enhancing our pupils' learning environment, e.g. books for library, costumes for productions etc. Thank you in advance.

Outdoor Play and Learning

We would gratefully receive any of the following donations:

- Small cars track & road mat
- Duplo/large Lego
- Dinosaurs
- Dolls
- Soft toys
- Large pieces of material
- Picnic blankets/large mats
- Artificial lawn pieces (large preferably)

Healthy Snacks for Breaktimes

Please be reminded that we are a **NO NUTS** school. We also do not allow crisps, chocolate, sweets or cakes to be eaten at morning breaktimes as snacks. We appreciate that these items may be

included in lunchboxes from home, but we ask the children not to eat these as a breaktime snack. Infants receive free fruit/vegetables daily and Juniors are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to school if they get hungry. Thank you in advance for supporting us with this.

School Meals

Please see Summer Menu 2 – attached (Menu 1 & 3 also attached)

Diary for the Week

Monday 5th –

8.30 – 8.45 am Daily Mile

3.15 - 4.15 pm KS2 Handball/Dodgeball
(Inspired Sports – Richard Steadman)

Tuesday 6th –

Year 4 Educational Visit – Bewdley

3.15 - 4.15 pm KS2 Football (Premier Education)

Wednesday 7th –

8.30 – 8.45 am Wake Up Shake Up Dance

Author Visit – KS2

Guitar lessons

Thursday 8th –

8.30 – 8.45 am Daily Mile

Harvest Festival assembly (pupils only)

Keyboard lessons

3.15-4.15 Y1 – Y6 Street Dance

Friday 9th –

3.15 - 4.15 pm Y1 & Y2 Multi-Sports
(Premier Education)

No Brass lessons (will be an extra session on Monday 12th October)

World Mental Health Day (Saturday 10th)

Staff Training Days for 2026-27:

- 2nd November

- 4th January
- 12th February
- 6th May

Parent/Teacher meetings:

- 10th and 11th November
- 2nd and 3rd March



Woodthorpe Junior and Infant School

Health and Wellbeing Newsletter



Friday 2nd October 2026

Clubs and Activities



Position	Year Group	Distance Travelled
1 st	Year 3	7.10
2 nd	Year 1	6.19
3 rd	Reception	4.68
Joint 4 th	Year 2	4.38
Joint 4 th	Year 5	4.38
6 th	Year 6	3.17
7 th	Year 4	0.00
		29.9 miles

We just about managed to avoid the showers once again in our Daily Mile programme this week! The weather has been kind and enabled 36 children to get involved this week. Well done to Year 3 for being the most active – travelling 7.10 miles! It was brilliant to see children from Reception too! Don't forget that it takes place every Monday and Thursday morning at 08:30.

Please note Wake-up Shake-up will be on Wednesdays for all year groups.

Red Ridge Residential – October 2026

The residential is only just over a week away now! Please check the Year 6 blog site for information on the itinerary and the kit list. The final memo will be going out at the beginning of next week. Any outstanding payments need to be cleared as a matter of urgency.

Year 5 Playleaders

Our playleaders in Year 5 travelled across to Bishop Challoner earlier this week to complete their playleader training. The session was led by Mr McDermott and provided the children with the skills they require for when their leadership starts from next week. The children represented the school magnificently and will make great playleaders this year! They also

received their certificates and badges this week.

Playleaders: Kayden, Adina, Rahma, Isla, Hadiya, Freya, Shahzaib, Amelle, Charlotte, Martha, Poppy Isla Mae



Year 6 Bronze Ambassadors

Our Bronze Ambassadors have been selected for the new academic year now too. They will have an important role in continuing to raise the profile of physical education, school sport and physical activity at Woodthorpe.

Bronze Ambassadors: Ammar, Ernest, James, Athea, Matilda

Living Streets' Travel Tracker

We relaunched our Travel Tracker this week! This is where children get to log how they travelled to school each day – active journeys are then rewarded with badges at the end of each month! (See attached letter for more details) This also supports the school's Travel Plan.





Woodthorpe Junior and Infant School Health and Wellbeing Newsletter



Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL)

Our OPAL play programme continues to go from strength to strength! It has been wonderful seeing the engagement from the children over the last few weeks. Many thanks to those families who have kindly donated resources so far.



Woodthorpe in the Community

Last weekend Ajuni (Y4) successfully passed her latest Shotokan Karate grading at Cocks Moors Woods. She passed her Purple & White Belt and advanced to Brown Belt. Amazing work Ajuni – well done!

Arthur, Jasper and Rafferty (Y4) represented Kings Heath Concorde last Sunday with their team winning 7-1. Well done boys! Great team effort!



Pupil Voice

"I really enjoyed playing the 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes' game at Bishop Challoner this week. I'm looking forward to looking after the children when I start my role next week!"

Rahma S (Y5) Playleader Training

Dates for your diary

Monday 5th October – The Daily Mile

KS2 Hockey Festival @ Wheelers Lane TC

Wednesday 7th October- Wake-up
Shake-up Dance

Thursday 8th October– The Daily Mile

Mental Health and Wellbeing Update



*See attached for enlarged version



Woodthorpe Junior and Infant School

Greenwood Close, Kings Heath,
Birmingham, B14 6ET

Headteacher: Ms L McGrath

 0121 464 5203

 enquiry@woodthorpe.drbignitemat.org

 www.woodthorpe.drbignitemat.org

2nd October 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER – Parental Consent required

On Wednesday 21st October, the photographer from Aperture Portraits will be in school to take individual photographs of the children and photographs with their siblings. If anyone would like their pre-school child's photograph taken with their brother or sister, the photographer will be in the hall to take these family photographs from 8.30 am.

Children will have their photo taken with their brothers and sisters in school and also individually, as individual photos will be uploaded onto Arbor, our Management Information System, and Class Charts.

Please ensure that you have completed the Parental Consent Form on the Arbor Portal/App no later than Monday 12th October, as without parent/carer consent, Aperture Portraits will not be allowed to take photographs of your child/ren at this time.

Class photos will be taken on Wednesday 24th February 2027.

Yours Sincerely

Ms L McGrath
Head Teacher

We are a proud
member of



Thursday 1st October 2026



Dear parent/carers,

Living Streets' **WOW – the walk to school challenge** is back to help encourage as many children as possible to experience the benefits of walking and wheeling to school.

As you know, WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day. If they travel actively (walk/wheel, cycle, scoot 'Park and Stride' or hop off) at least once a week for a month, they get rewarded with a badge. It's that easy!

What are the benefits of walking to school?

- Children feel happier and healthier
- They arrive at school refreshed and ready to learn
- Helps reduce congestion and pollution at the school gates

What if we can't walk to school?

'Park and Stride' can help your child earn their WOW badges if a parent or carer needs to drive to school. Park **ten minutes away** from the school and walk or wheel the remaining journey.

If using public transport, hop off **at least ten minutes away** and walk the rest of the way (recorded as 'other' on the WOW Travel Tracker).

Where walking to school isn't an option, we work with schools to establish a bespoke approach to WOW that works best for their pupils' needs. If you have any questions on the adaptability of WOW or have suggestions of how we can improve, we would love to hear your thoughts. Please email walktoschool@livingstreets.org.uk.

Tell us about your experiences of travelling to school and you could win a £200 shopping voucher: surveymonkey.com/r/ParentWOW.

The WOW badges

There are 11 new WOW badges to earn, one for every month of the school year. Each badge has been designed by a pupil as part of our annual WOW Badge Design Competition.

WOW 2026/27 encourages pupils to **Walk the Senses**, with badges depicting everything from scooters to sunflowers. The badges are made in Cornwall from material that was otherwise destined for landfill, including fridge trays, plastic plates and yoghurt pot off-cuts. For more information, visit: livingstreets.org.uk/recycling.

Last year, over 2,000 schools across the UK enjoyed the benefits of walking to school with WOW. Will you join us?

If you have any questions about the programme, please contact Mr Trevor, or find more information and useful videos at: livingstreets.org.uk/wowlaunch Regular updates will also be available within the school's weekly 'Health and Wellbeing' newsletter.

Let's swap those school runs for school walks.

Living Streets

EXPLANATION OF TRAVEL MODES ON THE WOW TRAVEL TRACKER



Cycle: Select this icon if you have cycled all the way to school. 'Cycle' counts as an active journey and contributes towards earning a badge.

Other: This icon counts as an active travel trip and will contribute towards earning a badge. Choose this for any active journey that does not fit into the other categories.



Walk/Wheel: Select this icon if you have walked or wheeled all the way to school. We support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to enjoy walking. This icon includes pupils walking with the use of mobility aids, including wheelchairs or wheeled walkers. 'Walk/ Wheel' counts as an active journey and contributes towards earning a badge.



Taxi: Select this icon if you travel by taxi the whole way to school. 'Taxi' does not count as an active journey so it will not contribute towards earning a badge.



Park and Stride: Park and Stride is a great way for pupils who live too far away from school to still earn a badge. Simply park the car at least 10 minutes away from school and complete the journey by foot, wheelchair, bike or scooter (any active mode of travel used to complete the journey counts!). 'Park and Stride' counts as an active journey and contributes towards earning a badge.

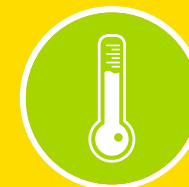


Bus: Select this icon if you took the bus (including school bus) or used public transport to get to school. 'Bus' does not count as an active journey, so it will not contribute towards earning a badge. If you choose to use public transport but still want to earn a badge, you can hop off at least 10 minutes from school and walk the rest of the way. If you choose to do so, instead of 'Bus' select 'Other'.



Scooter/Skate: Select this icon if you came all the way to school by scooter, skateboard, etc. 'Scooter/Skate' counts as an active journey and contributes towards earning a badge.

Driven: Select this icon if you drove all the way to school. 'Driven' does not count as an active journey so it will not contribute towards earning a badge.



Absent: Select this icon for any pupils who are absent (for every day of their absence). It is important absences are recorded correctly to give pupils a fair chance to earn a badge.

Delete: If you accidentally select the wrong travel mode, use the delete icon to clear it and start again.





LIVING

STREETS

LET'S
WALK TO
SCHOOL

2026/27

WOW

the WALK
TO SCHOOL
challenge

WALK THE SENSES

livingstreets.org.uk/wowlaunch

IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH,
PROTECT THE PLANET,
WALK TO SCHOOL WITH WOW



This poster is produced with vegetable-based inks and made of material from well-managed FSC®-certified forests and from recycled materials.

Get involved on social media:

#WALKTOSCHOOL f LIVINGSTREETSUK 🦋 @LIVINGSTREETS

Living Streets (The Pedestrians' Association) is a Registered Charity No. 1108448 (England and Wales) and SC039808 (Scotland), Company Limited by Guarantee (England & Wales), Company Registration No. 5368409.



Summer Menu Week 1

13th April, 4th May, 25th May, 15th June, 6th July, 7th Sept, 28th Sept, 19th Oct 2026

WEEK ONE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main - Option 1	Fajita Chicken	Beef Lasagne	Roast Beef in Gravy	Chicken Curry	Fish Goujons
Vegetables	Vegetable Medley	Carrots	Mixed Vegetables	Mixed Vegetables	Peas
Sides	White Rice	Baked Potato Wedges	Golden Roast Potatoes	Wholegrain Rice	Oven Chips
Main - Option 2	Macaroni Cheese	Chickpea Curry	Cheese & Onion Pie	Lentil Bolognaise	Vegetable Lasagne
Vegetables	Sweetcorn	Cauliflower	Mixed Vegetables	Mixed Vegetables	Peas
Sides	Diced Potatoes	Wholegrain Rice	Golden Roast Potatoes	Penne Pasta	Oven Chips
Jacket Potatoes	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato
Dessert	Apple Crumble	Chocolate Sponge	Lemon & Orange Sponge	Chocolate Chip Sponge	Somerset Apple Cake




Summer Menu Week 2

30th March, 20th April, 11th May, 1st June, 22nd June, 13th July, 14th Sept, 5th Oct, 26th Oct 2026

WEEK TWO	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main - Option 1	Chicken & Pasta with Tomatoes and Herbs	Chicken Goujons	Roast Chicken in Gravy	Sweet & Sour Chicken	Tuna Pasta Bake
Vegetables	Sweetcorn	Baked Beans	Vegetable Medley	Cauliflower	Peas
Sides	Baked Potato Wedges	Diced Potatoes	Golden Roast Potatoes	White Rice	Oven Chips
Main - Option 2	Lentil & Vegetable Flaky Topped Pie	Vegetarian Tikka Masala	Penne Pasta in Tomato and Basil Sauce	Bean Chilli	Vegetarian Cottage Pie
Vegetables	Sweetcorn	Broccoli	Vegetable Medley	Green Beans	Peas
Sides	Baked Potato Wedges	Wholegrain Rice	Penne Pasta	White Rice	Oven Chips
Jacket Potatoes	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato
Dessert	Summer Fruit Sponge	Bakewell Tart	Pineapple Sponge	Apple Crumble	Hot Chocolate Brownie





Summer Menu Week 3

6th April, 27th April, 18th May, 8th June, 29th June, 20th July, 31st Aug, 21st Sept, 12th Oct 2026

WEEK THREE	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main - Option 1	Cheesy Garlic Chicken	Smoked Paprika & Tomato Chicken	Sliced Roast Chicken in Gravy	Beef Bolognaise	Breaded Cod
Vegetables	Carrots	Mixed Vegetables	Mixed Vegetables	Sweetcorn	Peas
Sides	Diced Potatoes	Baked Potato Wedges	Golden Roast Potatoes	Penne Pasta	Oven Chips
Main - Option 2	Cauliflower, Spinach & Lentil Curry	Tomato & Chickpea Gratin	Cauliflower & Broccoli Pasta	Vegetable Quiche	Potato, Cheese & Leek Bake
Sides	Green Beans	Cauliflower	Mixed Vegetables	Carrots	Baked Beans
Carbohydrate	Wholegrain Rice	Baked Potato Wedges	Penne Pasta	Baked Potato Wedges	Oven Chips
Jacket Potatoes	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato	Filled Jacket Potato
Dessert	Lemon Flavour Sponge	Apricot Crumble	Jam Sponge	Somerset Apple Cake	Chocolate Sponge



SPORTS CLUBS

This Half Term

MONDAY

KS2 Handball/
Dodgeball



TUESDAY

KS2 Football



THURSDAY

KS1/2 Streetdance



FRIDAY

KS1 Multiports



3:15pm – 4:15pm



£3.50
per session

★ ★ Get active • Make friends • Have fun! ★ ★



Join us for

The Daily Mile

A healthier, happier you!



Every
Monday &
Thursday



From
08:30



For ALL
year groups

Walk
Run
Be Active
Feel Great!



Get
active



Feel
good



Improve
your health



Boost
your mood



Together
we can!



Woodthorpe
Junior and Infant School

Wake Up Shake Up DANCE

Move Have Fun
Be You!

Every Wednesday

From 08:30

For ALL year groups



Get Active

Boost Your Mood

Make New Friends

Feel Great!

BIRMINGHAM MOSELEY
MINIS & JUNIORS

GIRLS.

YOUR TEAM IS WAITING.



SAME
GAME
MORE
GIRLS

BUILD
CONFIDENCE

MAKE
FRIENDS

LOVE
RUGBY

**4 FREE
TASTER SESSIONS**

Reception to Year 11
No experience needed



SCAN TO JOIN

ONE CLUB. ONE FAMILY. ONE COMMUNITY

BIRMINGHAM MOSELEY
MINIS & JUNIORS

JOIN THE RED & BLACK



BUILD
CONFIDENCE



MAKE
FRIENDS



PLAY
RUGBY

**4 FREE
TASTER SESSIONS**

Reception to Year 11



SCAN TO JOIN

ONE CLUB. ONE FAMILY. ONE COMMUNITY

Optimistic October 2026

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

5

Be a realistic optimist. See life as it is, but focus on what's good

6

Remind yourself that things can change for the better

7

Look for the good in people around you today

8

Make some progress on a project or task you have been avoiding

9

Share an important goal with someone you trust

10

Take time to reflect on what you have accomplished recently

11

Avoid blaming yourself or others. Find a helpful way forward

12

Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today

13

Ask for help to overcome an obstacle you are facing

14

Do something constructive to improve a difficult situation

15

Thank yourself for achieving the things you often take for granted

16

Put down your to-do list and do something fun or uplifting

17

Take a small step towards a positive change you want to see in society

18

Set hopeful but realistic goals for the days ahead

19

Identify one of your positive qualities that will be helpful in the future

20

Find joy in tackling a task you've put off for some time

21

Let go of the expectations of others and focus on what matters to you

22

Share a hopeful quote, picture or video with a friend or colleague

23

Recognise that you have a choice about what to prioritise

24

Write down three specific things that have gone well recently

25

You can't do everything! What are your three priorities right now?

26

Find a new perspective on a problem you face

27

Be kind to yourself today. Remember, progress takes time

28

Ask yourself, will this still matter a year from now?

29

Plan a fun or exciting activity to look forward to

30

Identify three things that give you hope for the future

31

Set a goal that brings a sense of purpose for the coming month



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together







OCTOBER HOLIDAY CLUBS

**ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,
KINGS HEATH, B14 5AL**

**OCTOBER HALF TERM
TUESDAY 27TH - THURSDAY 29TH OCTOBER**
£23.50 9AM-4PM (5-11 YEAR OLDS)
£14.00 9AM-1PM (4 YEAR OLDS IN RECEPTION)

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ACTIVITIES TO SUIT ALL AGES AND ABILITIES!**

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 ★★★★★
 ★ Trustpilot




THE COM

ANYONE CAN JOIN THE CHAT...

WHAT IT IS

Community 'Com' Networks are online groups involved in child sexual abuse, cybercrime and offline violence. However, not all cases involve all three.

The **majority of those involved are children** under the age of 18.

Perpetrators may target children who are discussing topics online such as mental health disorders, neurodiversity or self-harm but they are active on virtually all social media and online gaming platforms. Discord and Telegram are particularly popular.

The communities share extreme material which may include:

- Child sexual abuse
- Violence and gore
- Animal abuse or torture
- Misogynistic and 'incel' beliefs
- Extreme/violent pornography
- Racist and occultist materials
- Hacking tools and exploits

INDICATIONS OF CONCERN

The following behaviours are indicators that a young person **may be involved in** an abusive relationship with a Com group:

- Self-harm (cutting letters/symbols is of particular note)
- Numbers, letters, symbols written in blood on walls
- Interest in extreme themes
- Disengaging in education
- Obsession with new online friends
- Unexplained injuries to pets or siblings
- Unexplained money or gifts

HOW TO GET SUPPORT

Any concerns should be reported to one of the following for **safeguarding and diversion support**; reference "Operation Driftglen":

- Local police forces call '101' (non-emergency)
- School safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Local social services
- Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 (anonymous)
- **Cyber Prevent**/NCA/NCSC and or **CT Prevent**



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about LOOKSMAXXING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Looksmaxxing is an online trend focused on improving one's physical appearance, particularly among boys and young men. At the milder end, it can involve grooming, skincare, diet and exercise advice, sometimes called "softmaxxing". At its extremes, or "hardmaxxing", it can promote unproven or dangerous practices and contribute to body image concerns, low self-worth, and mental health difficulties.

TARGETING MALE INSECURITIES

Although usually aimed at men, looksmaxxing can also reach boys by promising to improve their appearance and dating success. Forums offer 'objective' and sometimes brutal views on attractiveness, while influencers may make appearance seem all-important. Advice ranges from useful tips on hygiene, skincare, and fashion to more concerning guidance.

DUBIOUS ADVICE

Some advice moves into dubious territory. One example is "mewing", a tongue exercise claimed to create a more masculine jawline. The American Association of Orthodontists says evidence for its effectiveness is limited and warns that following such guidance could contribute to tooth alignment problems, bite issues, and speech difficulties.

EXTREME REMEDIES

Some DIY remedies are even more extreme and potentially dangerous. While fears of "bonesmashing" – which involves trying to alter the cheekbones using blunt objects for a more 'masculine' appearance – may sometimes be overstated in the media, other guidance can also cause harm. Untrained use of microneedling and derma rollers, taking substances or medication without appropriate medical guidance, and overusing skincare products can all have potentially harmful consequences.

BODY IMAGE ISSUES

This pursuit of physical perfection can become obsessive and contribute to serious body image issues. Exposure to looksmaxxing content can encourage teenagers to tie their appearance to their value and self-worth, as well as making boys and young men feel they need to change perfectly normal aspects of their appearance. This can be associated with disordered eating, overexercising, or other obsessive behaviours that interfere with everyday life.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

As well as the physical consequences, body image concerns can be associated with mental health difficulties, such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, body dysmorphic disorder, and psychological distress. They can cause problems both at school and at home, with children and young people potentially avoiding social situations because they fear their appearance will be negatively judged by others.

A PATHWAY TO EXTREMES

Looksmaxxing has its roots in online 'incel' communities but has since become more mainstream on platforms such as TikTok. Algorithm-driven feeds may show users more extreme material as they interact with similar content. Some looksmaxxing spaces have also been linked with misogynistic, incel, and white supremacist ideologies.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WATCH FOR CHANGES

Keep an eye out for concerning behavioural changes in children and young people. This could include an obsession with diet and exercise, spending more time on social media apps, becoming secretive with their phone, or a shift in how they interact with friends and family. If a young person suddenly becomes distressed by their appearance or adopts rigid or extreme routines, try to understand what may be behind the change.

LISTEN FOR THE LINGO

Like many internet communities, looksmaxxing groups and influencers use distinctive language. As well as "mewing", mentioned above, you might hear terms such as "chad" (an attractive male), "foid" (a misogynistic term for a woman), and "mogging" (looking more attractive than someone else). Other examples involve adding "maxxing" to another word, such as "jestermaxxing" (using humour to attract women) and "starvemaxxing" (extreme dieting).

CHECK THE SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media algorithms are tailored to each user, meaning what appears on your feeds may be dramatically different from what children see on theirs. Try to get an idea of the content children and young people are consuming online, and use available parental controls where appropriate. TikTok, for example, provides tools that can help families manage or filter certain types of content.

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Open communication can help children and young people recognise misleading influencers and harmful online communities. Discuss unrealistic ideas about appearance and explain that some creators benefit from controversial or extreme content. Talk about the risks of unqualified health advice and how people's insecurities can be exploited online, while making it clear that it's okay to speak openly about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



The National College

See full reference list on our website

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