Saint John Wall Catholic School
A Catholic School For All
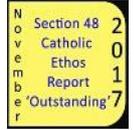
Weekly Information Bulletin

Mission Statement

'To educate each and every unique child in our care to hear and respond to what God calls them to be'

Prayer
TERMLY THEME: LIGHT

Dear Lord, we acknowledge you as Creator of all people of every race, language and way of life. Help us to see each other as you see us: your sons and daughters loved into being. Keep watch over our hearts so that the evil of racism will find no home with us. Direct our spirits to work for justice and peace.

Amen

Important Dates to Note

- **Year 11 Remote Parents' Evening using Teams**
  Thursday 22 October – 4pm to 6pm

- **INSET Day – School Closed to all Pupils**
  Friday 23 October 2020

- **Autumn Half Term**
  Monday 26 October 2020 to Friday 30 October 2020

Languages Classes

Dear Parents and Pupils,

We are now offering a number of language classes after school. During these lessons pupils are prepared to pass a GCSE exam in their home language. The lessons start after school and usually last for 1 hour.

Italian – with Dr Consonni on Thursdays in Room 32
Polish – with Mrs Kawecka, Wednesdays and Thursdays in EAL
Punjabi – with Mr Bhogal, Wednesdays-Fridays in Music Room
Spanish – with Mr Rosellon on Tuesdays in EAL

If a pupil is fluent in any of the other languages and would like to explore the options of taking GCSE in that language, please contact Mrs Kawecka: pkawecka@sjw.bham.sch.uk

By Mrs Kawecka - EAL & Community Languages Co-ordinator

SJW Values
Generous and Grateful

Uniform

Saint John Wall Catholic School is proud of how smart our pupils are presented, and the high standard of uniform displayed by the vast majority of the pupils is outstanding. A reminder that lines in hair and eyebrows are still not permitted, neither are artificial hair colours. One stud ear-ring in each earlobe - gold or silver, is allowed. Nail varnish and false nails are not allowed. Hoodies and caps are totally banned from school. Many thanks for your support. Please see our school uniform policy on:

http://www.sjw.bham.sch.uk/index.php/parents/policies

By Mrs Crooks - Assistant Principal - Personal Development, Safety, Behaviour & Attitudes - DSL & SPOC

After school Live Master class/Evening Teams Masterclass
Timings: After school Live Masterclass 3:00pm to 3:40pm
Evening Microsoft Teams Masterclass 5:00pm to 5:40pm
Saturday Masterclass 11:00am to 11:40am

Term 1 W/C	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Saturday Assessment Week Master Class Prep.
12	Year 10 Afterschool HISTORY Masterclass Mr John		Year 8 After school SPANISH Masterclass Mr Huggins		
			Year 10 Evening RE Masterclass Miss Fox-Roberts/ Mr Price	Year 9 Evening MATHS Masterclass Mr Simmons	
19	Year 10 After school Drama Masterclass Mrs Breslin	Year 9 After school HISTORY Masterclass Miss Lally/ Miss Guest			Year 10 Saturday ENGLISH Masterclass Mrs Hillier/Miss Lake
			Year 10 Evening Teams BTEC TRAVEL and TOURISM Mr Woodward		
26			Half Term		Year 10 Saturday SCIENCE Masterclass Mr Rahman

What parents & carers need to know about...

AMAZON ALEXA

Alexa is an artificial intelligence (AI) software assistant created by Amazon in 2014 through which smartphone, tablet and smart device users can issue voice commands and ask questions in a range of languages by issuing the 'wake' or activation word Alexa. It can be accessed in several ways and is integrated into a growing number of 'smart' products including speakers, phones and clocks. Once viewed as expensive gimmicks, Alexa is now one of the most used voice assistants in the world.

Privacy concerns

By their nature, AI voice assistants involve the collection of large amounts data. How this is stored and the uses to which it is put has aroused growing concern. Experts also worry about who has access to voice recordings, which in 2019 the company admitted sometimes included employees of Amazon and its commercial partners. There is also the more general anxiety that internet voice assistants might record private conversations and not only commands or questions.

Age-inappropriate content

Using Alexa as a speaker to play your favourite songs is one of the most popular uses for the device. However, without any parental controls in place, Alexa won't filter the lyrics so it's possible that children could hear something they shouldn't. Similarly, Alexa isn't always able to identify who or what age the person is who is issuing a voice command so if children ask a question which might not be age-appropriate, the chances are they're likely to get an age-inappropriate answer.

"Alexa...Switch on the lights please..."

..Sure...Switching on lights..

Insecure devices

The devices and their background services are another worry, which can have software vulnerabilities that make them insecure in complex ways. In 2020, for instance, researchers discovered that the services to which Echo products connect were insecure, potentially allowing hackers to access personal information such as voice conversations. In 2017, researchers were able to directly hack an Amazon Echo to send audio to attackers. Amazon has a good record of fixing security problems when they are discovered but it is never possible to find every problem.

Changing Tech Relationships

In a 2019 report published by the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, concerns were raised on the disruptive effect that voice assistants and smart speakers, such as Alexa, were having on the way that children interact with technology. From building sentiment and forming relationships which could encourage them to overshare personal details, to a fear of consuming content driven by commercial algorithms and an inability to assess reliability, how Alexa operates could considerably change children's relationship with technology in both the short and long term.

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Safety Tips

Check privacy settings

It's possible to delete Alexa's recordings either entirely, or for a given period, with the instruction "Alexa, delete everything I said." Alternatively, set up the Alexa account privacy settings for that account to delete recordings every three or 18 months. Existing recordings made using the Alexa app can be deleted via Settings > Alexa Privacy > Review Voice History. A final tweak is to turn off the setting that allows Amazon to 'use voice recordings to improve Amazon services.'

Control voice input

If privacy is paramount, one idea is to locate Echo devices in only one room rather than having several throughout the home. In addition, Alexa can be activated only when it is needed by manually turning off the microphone on Echo devices between use. Users can tell when Alexa is in listening mode as an indicator light should appear or an audible tone should sound.

Set pin code

Amazon account users can order items from the company using a voice command, for example "Alexa, buy some toilet paper." To counter accidental use or misuse and avoid racking up big bills, this can either be disabled or protected with a PIN code (it should be noted that this is an audible PIN however, so is not as secure as a typed code).

Look out for 'Skills' apps

A big appeal of Alexa is that thousands of companies have created apps, which Amazon calls 'skills', that add useful capabilities, often integrations with other products or services. These are installed by asking Alexa to 'open/play/start' the skill. For example, a travel skill might be installed to check and automate checking train times and hotel bookings. However, it's important to remember that each of these might have a different privacy policy. A cautious approach is to install as few as possible, de-installing ones no longer in use.

Talk about technology

As more and more homes install voice assistants and smart speakers such as Alexa, it's a good idea to talk to children about safe use of technology. Talk to them about what Alexa can be used for, how useful it can be and how to use it properly. Use it together to begin with and discuss any concerns they might have. Always make sure that children know to never share any personal or sensitive information and that if they need to talk about anything, they should always speak to a trusted adult.

10:00 AM 55°

Meet our expert

John E. Dunn has edited and written for numerous computer and technology magazines since the early 1990s, most recently Which Computing, The Register, Forbes.com, Techworld, Computerworld and Naked Security. He is a specialist in online cybersecurity and cybercrime and their growing effect on education, young people and the public.