



# Monksdown Mail

Where Children Come First

Friday 16th December



Our school's  
Designated  
Safeguarding  
Leads :

Mrs Price, Mrs Stewart



## Merry Christmas



Dear Families of Monksdown,

It has been such a pleasure welcoming you all into school during the past two weeks to watch and enjoy the Christmas performances. There has been such talent and confidence in every one and we are really proud of all of the children.



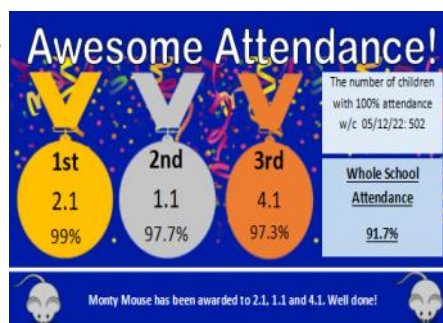
Today we had Early Years and Key Stage One Christmas Parties and the children even had a visit from the big man himself. On Tuesday 20th December Key Stage Two will be having their Christmas Party Day and may wear party clothes to school.

Wednesday 21st December is the last day of this term and school closes at 2pm for the Christmas holiday. The children do not have to wear school uniform on this day.

On behalf of the staff and Governors may I take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Warmest Regards

Mrs Price



## Our Stars!

- ★ NAM: All Nursery
- ★ NPM: All Nursery
- ★ R.1: Peggy Costain
- ★ R.2: All R2
- ★ R.3: Julia Hyusein
- ★ 1.1: Dareen Albukhari
- ★ 1.2: Ivo Wozniak
- ★ 1.3: Annie Reid
- ★ 2.1: Poppy Leigh
- ★ 2.2: Harrison Tudor
- ★ 2.3: Jack Irvine
- ★ 3.1: Katie Evans
- ★ 3.2: Regan O'Brien
- ★ 3.3: Arda Kahraman
- ★ 4.1: Tyler McKeown
- ★ 4.2: Yuelin Chen
- ★ 4.3: Millie Usher
- ★ 5.1: Nelly Wu
- ★ 5.2: James Daley
- ★ Thomas Tasker
- ★ 5.3: Lottie-Rose McLoughlin
- ★ 6.1: Megan Shearon
- ★ 6.2: Kerys Cooper
- ★ 6.3: Patrick Finn

## Dates to Remember

**Monday 19th December 2.00pm**  
Year 3 Carols around the Christmas Tree

(Parents and Carers invited)

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December**

**Christmas Party Day Years 3-6**  
Party Clothes / Non Uniform Day

**School Closes for Christmas**  
Holidays Wednesday 21st  
December 2pm

**Children Return to School**  
Wednesday 4th January 8.55 am



## Crafts, Carols and Cooking

Our Reception classes spread the Christmas cheer this week when they enjoyed some activities with their parents and carers.



## Martial Arts Champ

Huge congratulations to Theo who has been awarded his orange belt in mixed martial arts. Theo trains twice per week and is dedicated to his sport. We look forward to seeing him reach the standard for his next belt. Keep up the good work Theo!





## Attendance Matters

I am pleased to announce the worthy winners of our Ten Day Attendance Challenge. The first name out of the draw in each Key Stage won a family ticket to see Aladdin at the M and S Arena. Others won selection boxes and were awarded a certificate. You've got to be in it to win it.





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SETTING UP APPS, GAMES AND SOFTWARE

Millions of new phones, tablets, laptops and games consoles will be nestling under Christmas trees this year. However, even if parents and carers have gone to the trouble of setting up these new devices and enabling the safety features, there are still potential hazards in the apps, games and software that children will want to install and use. Knowing what to look for and discussing those risks with your child may help avoid any nasty surprises this Christmas. Here are our top tips for ensuring that unwrapping this year's presents doesn't unleash any unexpected dangers.

## TAKE NOTE OF AGE RATINGS

Back when most games were bought in shops, checking the age rating was easy: it was on the front of the box. Now that most games are downloaded, it's a tougher – but not impossible. All reputable download stores show a game's age rating at the point of purchase, and you can check the suitability of a specific title your child wants to play at [videostandards.org.uk/findingbeard/games](http://videostandards.org.uk/findingbeard/games).

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## 'FREE' ISN'T ALWAYS FREE

The games market has changed radically in recent years. Many titles are free to download, but then tempt players to pay for cosmetic items (as in Fortnite) or to unlock additional content. There can be huge peer pressure for children to pay for these items. Agree a budget for in-game purchases before the game is downloaded, and make sure children can't authorise in-game purchases by themselves.

## DISABLE IN-APP PURCHASING

It's not wise to leave children with devices that can make in-app purchases without your permission. Ideally, set up computers, consoles and phones so child accounts need an adult's authorisation to buy anything. On shared devices (like iPads, which don't allow user accounts), check the settings to ensure that in-app purchasing requires the account holder's password, fingerprint or face ID.

## APPS ARE AGE RATED, TOO

Like games, apps in the major stores have age ratings, too – so you can see in advance whether an app's appropriate for your child. Additionally, phones' parental control settings allow you to set age limits, preventing young ones from downloading unsuitable apps themselves. These ratings aren't infallible, however: we've seen TV apps featuring adult shows with an age rating of 3, for example.

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## CONSIDER STORAGE

Most apps and games will tell you in the online store how much space they need on a device. Check this carefully – especially with games, which can run into hundreds of megabytes and beyond. If you don't have enough free storage on a device to run the game or app, you won't get a refund from the store. You can normally check a device's available storage space through the settings menu.

## WATCH OUT FOR IMITATORS

Even in the official stores, untrustworthy rogue apps can slip through the net. Common tricks are apps or games that have a slightly different name to the genuine article (Fortnight rather than Fortnite, for instance) or use logos which deliberately look very similar to the official app. To avoid downloading these imitations, read the app's description and check who the publisher is listed as.

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## LEGAL APPS THAT BREAK THE LAW

There are many apps that are perfectly legal but enable illegal activity – streaming apps which let people watch football matches, say, without paying for Sky or BT Sport. Prosecution for using such apps is rare, but they can lead to risky behaviour like viewing rogue streams on sites teeming with malicious links. Watch for children installing unusual apps with 'TV', 'stream' or 'sport' in the name.

## IN-APP REGISTRATION

It's common for apps and games to ask users to register: entering personal details like email address, date of birth and other information you might not want your child to divulge. Ask them to get your permission before giving any personal info to an app – and consider using your details rather than the child's, so they're not targeted by marketing spam or put at risk of having their data stolen.

## STAY UPDATED

Most games and apps are subject to regular updates, which not only offer new content and features but also provide critical security improvements. Children tend to ignore such updates – usually because they don't understand why they're important, or they simply want to get straight on with gaming. Check your child's devices periodically to make sure these updates are being installed.

## Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the Sunday Times, Which?, PC Pro and Computeractive. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on Newsnight, Radio 5 Live and RTV News at Ten. He has two children and has written regularly about internet safety issues.



**National  
Online  
Safety**

#WakeUpWednesday



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# FIFA 23

FIFA 23, like its many predecessors, is a massively popular football simulator featuring lifelike recreations of thousands of real-world players, drawn from teams around the globe. While the gameplay is subtly improved year on year, the publisher EA Sports' tweaks tend to focus on FIFA Ultimate Team mode, which can tempt gamers of all ages to spend real money recruiting better players for their side. With each new release of FIFA comes a host of new players to unlock – meaning that youngsters can feel pressured to keep buying to compete with their friends.

AGE RATING  
**PEGI 3**

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### RELEASE RAZZAMATAZZ

FIFA 23 will be the last in the blockbuster series, before EA goes solo with its own football title next season. This 'end of an era' vibe – coupled with a huge advertising budget making the new release almost impossible to miss – will elevate FIFA 23 into even more of a 'must have' for football-mad young gamers, no matter how minor the updates are on last year's version.

### AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CHAT

Based on a popular sport which appeals to people of all ages, the FIFA franchise draws a huge audience of both children and adults. Communication is a key element, with many players enjoying in-game audio chat via headsets. With the mixed age range of players and a lack of regulation, however, chats can often turn offensive or toxic – especially in the heat of competitive matches.

### IN-GAME PROMOTIONS

Unless precautions are taken, dedicated FIFA fans can spend significant sums when attempting to improve their Ultimate Team. Most top-level players can be unlocked by simply participating in matches, but some sought-after stars can be obtained more quickly in limited-time promotions which cost a large amount of FIFA points (the in-game currency, often paid for with real money).

### CIRCLING SCAMMERS

The popularity of FIFA Ultimate Team (FUT) mode has led to online scammers convincing many impressionable gamers to pay real money for non-existent FUT coins and player cards, or directing unwary FIFA fans to phishing sites. If your child gives these individuals their login details, the scammers can access not only their carefully built team but potentially your payment information.

### ADDICTIVE NATURE

One match on FIFA (usually around 15 minutes, but often lengthened by extra time and penalties) almost invariably leads to another. It can be a powerful temptation for young players, regardless of unfinished homework or an approaching bedtime. If the 'just one more game' mindset starts to impact a child's daily routine, it could be a sign of gaming disorder, a recognised mental health issue.

### GAMBLING-ADJACENT BEHAVIOUR

Ultimate Team has become a major feature in FIFA due to the revenues it generates. It can also be addictive, with children striving to earn coins and level up while swapping, selling and buying players. Spending FUT coins to open a player pack (which many experts have likened to gambling) is designed to be an exciting act – with bright lights, fanfare and attention-grabbing prizes.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### BE SELECTIVE WITH CHATS

It's enormous fun for FIFA players to chat online with friends, even as their teams do battle in the game. It's probably the safest idea, though, to restrict contact with strangers. By turning off voice chat in FIFA and allowing cross-party chat in their device's settings, your child can speak to people who are already on their friends list but won't be able to talk to (or hear) strangers online.

### CONTROL SPENDING

If your child plays Ultimate Team mode on FIFA, ensure their account isn't linked to your payment methods – so they'll need your permission to make in-game purchases. Alternatively, you could use parental controls to limit spending – or set up a pre-paid 'allowance'. When excitedly clicking options on screen, it's easy for a young person to forget the real-world repercussions of online purchases.

### STAY ALERT FOR SCAMS

There are some key things to remember about potential FIFA scams. Firstly, EA never contacts users via any method other than emails to the account holder (which may well be you). Neither will they ever ask for a player's username or password outside the game itself. EA's terms and conditions outlaw the buying of FUT coins, so anyone selling them should be treated as suspicious.

### AVOID 'EXTRA TIME'

If your child's spending a lot of time on FIFA 23 and seems less enthusiastic about other activities in their life, you could consider restricting how long they can play for each day with the parental controls in their device's settings. Even if they're not playing on their console or computer, there's a FIFA companion app for smartphones – but that can be limited through parental controls, too.

## Meet Our Expert

David Coombes is Games Editor of technology and entertainment website *Deserto* and has been working in the gaming media for three years. A long-time fan of the FIFA franchise, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have also been published on influential sites including *IGN* and *TechnoRadar*, among others.



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<https://www.nationalonlinesafety.com/parents-carers-need-know-about-fifa-23-the-top-selling-sports-game-but-not-just-for-football-fans>  
<https://www.expressonline.co.uk/news/technology/fifa-23-the-top-selling-sports-game-but-not-just-for-football-fans>



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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Date: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Dear Parent or Guardian

The Winter HAF programme starts on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December and there are lots of great activities happening over the school holidays.

Children and young people will be able to access hundreds of activities throughout the winter break including specific provision available for children with SEND. There's a great range of activities across the city including music tuition, puppet making, circus workshops, football, podcasting, dance, Christmas parties and grottos, cooking, climbing, films, bowling, arts and crafts, drama, trips out, mindfulness and much more! Every day there will be a meal available for every child that attends.

To find out where your nearest scheme is please click on this link - <https://merseyplay.com/haf-holiday-activities-and-food-fund/> or visit [www.Merseyplay.com](http://www.Merseyplay.com) and click on the HAF link.

When you have chosen an activity, you will need to contact that organisation to book a place. Each organisation will have either a telephone number, email address or online booking system. If your child has any additional needs or dietary requirements then please discuss this with the organisation when you book. There is no central booking system so please read the details of the programmes on the website and ring the providers directly.

Liverpool City Council is working with the local schools, voluntary and community organisations, and childcare providers to provide the HAF programme. The programme is funded by the Department for Education and is targeted at children and young people, aged from reception to 16 years old who are eligible for benefits related free school meals.

The Early Help Directory also provides a wealth of useful information and support for families - [Early Help Directory - things to do](#)

Regards

*Sally Dobbing*

Sally Dobbing - HAF Project Manager

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# Monty the Mouse



## Incentives

Meet Monty— He is awarded to the highest attending three classes every week. attendance. Children with the highest attendance will look after Monty for a week. Monty will bring with him some chocolate friends.

Children with 97% attendance will receive a certificate each term.

Children with 100% attendance will have the chance of winning some family experience vouchers for the cinema, theatre or Chester Zoo.

Classes with 100% attendance for the whole week will be rewarded with golden time, fun and games with the mentor or a special breakfast.

Children with improved attendance will enjoy a special breakfast.  
**PLUS, LOTS OF OTHER AWARDS AND REWARDS.**

## Contact Details

We do understand and appreciate that children pick up illnesses and it is not always easy to decide whether to send them into school or not. If your child is too ill to attend school then please contact us before the start of the day by sending a message using Study Bugs App, sending an email or telephoning the school office on **0151 226 1606**.

## Attendance Team

**Our Attendance Team are here to help. We are a group of professionals who want to do our best to support you to get your child into school as often as possible. We are here to help and answer any attendance related queries that you may have. If you need help getting your child to school, please contact a member of the Team who will be more than happy to help.**



As you know, attendance at school is vital for all children.

There is a distinct link between those children who attend, and those who make the most progress.

## Attendance YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE

We want to work together to ensure your child is able to attend school as often as possible. We rely on you to get your child to school every day to enjoy learning and be with their friends. We want to work in partnership with you to make a difference.

## Did you know?

| 365 DAYS IN EACH YEAR | 175 NON SCHOOL DAYS  |   | 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments. |  |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
|                       | 10 days absence  | 19 days absence   | 29 days absence  | 38 days absence                            | 47 days absence       |                       |
|                       | 190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR   | 180 DAYS OF EDUCATION   | 170 DAYS OF EDUCATION  | 161 DAYS OF EDUCATION                      | 152 DAYS OF EDUCATION | 143 DAYS OF EDUCATION |
|                       | 190 days for your child's education                                    | 180 DAYS OF EDUCATION   | 170 DAYS OF EDUCATION  | 161 DAYS OF EDUCATION                      | 152 DAYS OF EDUCATION | 143 DAYS OF EDUCATION |
|                       | 100%   | 95%   | 90%  | 85%  | 80%                   | 75%                   |
|                       | GOOD<br>Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start. | WORRYING<br>Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress. |  | SERIOUS CONCERN<br>Not fair on your child. |                       |                       |

### Good Attendance

- 100% = 0 weeks learning missed
- 95% = 1 week 4 days learning missed

### Poor Attendance

- 90% = 3 weeks 4 days of learning missed  
At this level of absence your child will be classed as a persistent absentee.

At this level of absence the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) would be involved.

- 85% = 5 weeks 3 days of learning missed

If your child is absent from school for 1 week they would miss about 5 hours of Maths and 5 hours of English!

## What should I do if my child is absent?

By law, schools must record absences and the reason given. You must contact us as soon as possible, on the first day of absence, with a reason for absence. The easiest way to do this is via the Study Bugs App. If no reason is recorded your child will receive an unauthorised mark.

## Attendance Procedures

- We do not authorise absences without a good reason.
- If we have not heard from you then expect a telephone call or text message from us.
- We monitor attendance carefully and we will write to you if your child's attendance becomes a concern.
- If attendance problems continue we will ask you to meet with us to discuss the way forward and see how school can support you and your child.
- If all measures fail to lead to an improvement in attendance, we will refer your child to the EWO and this may ultimately lead to legal action being instigated.

## Punctuality

Please make sure your child arrives at school on time each day. Doors open at 8.50am ready for lessons to begin at 8.55 am.



## Do you know how much learning children miss out on?

| Minutes late per day | Equal days worth of |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 5 Minutes            | 3.4 Days            |
| 10 Minutes           | 6.9 Days            |
| 15 Minutes           | 10.3 Days           |
| 20 Minutes           | 13.8 Days           |
| 30 Minutes           | 20.7 Days           |

## How can you help?

- Ensure your child arrives on time.
- Prepare packed lunches, schools bag and breakfast items the night before.
- Make sure you set an alarm at a reasonable time to ensure you have enough time for getting everyone up and ready.