

# NEWSLETTER

## 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019



### Key Dates for Term 4, Week 2

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Book Week

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Lowbrook Parent Consultations (3.30pm to 6.00pm)

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Lowbrook Parent Consultations (3.30pm to 7.00pm)

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019 – Book Week Non-Uniform Day

### Book Week Contributions

Thank you to all the parents who have already made their Book Week contributions.

We have currently received 90% of the amount required to run this Theme Week, which promises to provide the children with many fantastic opportunities for learning.

If you have not yet made your contribution please can you do so via the Scopay online system by Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

### Parent Consultations 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Parent Consultations will be held in the school hall on the Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March (from 3.30pm to 6.00pm) and on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 (from 3.30pm to 7.00pm).

Please note that there will be no Prep Club, Afterschool Club or Activity Clubs on either of these dates and that all children will need to be collected from their classrooms at 3.15pm.

The Lowbrook PTA will again be running a Book Fair during the Parent Consultations. Further information regarding this has been sent home today via pupil post.

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## 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019



Friday 1st March 2019

Dear Parents & Caregivers,

### Online Safety - MoMo

You may have heard on Social Media and in the news this week about the online "Momo Challenge" which is being spliced into YouTube videos and Fortnite. It has been reported that it is also targeting young children on social media, encouraging them to add a contact on messaging platform WhatsApp or online games, and then sends them graphic images and messages.

Although there are now questions surrounding whether this Momo Challenge is in fact a hoax, we would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to be extra vigilant when your child is using any device or watching any clips at home. We strongly recommend that you speak to your children about keeping themselves safe online and you may also want to check your parental controls and search histories.

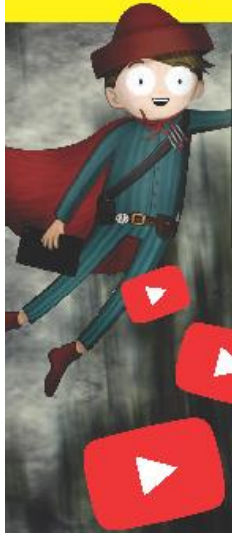
Many excellent tips can be found in the attached guide, which offers advice on how you can try and stop your children viewing content around the challenge and how to respond to them if they do.

Online safety continues to be taught regularly across the school and any search for the 'Momo Challenge' in school has been blocked as we continue to keep our children safe online here at Lowbrook Academy.

Yours faithfully,

*Bianca Iasi*  
Head of School

It's important to note that new challenges are arising on the internet all the time. We have created to this guide to raise awareness of the issue and offer advice on helping parents to talk to their children about making safer decisions online. See also our '7 conversation starters' guide for more tips on better communication with your child.



Momo is a sinister 'challenge' that has been around for some time. It has recently resurfaced and once again has come to the attention of schools and children across the country. Dubbed the 'suicide killer game,' Momo has been heavily linked with apps such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube, and most recently (and most worryingly)... YouTube Kids. The scary doll-like figure reportedly sends graphic violent images, and asks users to partake in dangerous challenges like waking up at random hours and has even been associated with self-harm. It has been reported that the 'Momo' figure was originally created as a sculpture and featured in an art gallery in Tokyo and unrelated to the 'Momo' challenge we are hearing about in the media.

What parents need to know about

# MOMO



## CHILDREN'S VIDEOS BEING 'HIJACKED'

There have been recent reports that some seemingly innocent videos on YouTube and YouTube Kids (such as 'surprise eggs', unboxing videos and Minecraft videos) have been edited by unknown sources to include violence provoking and/or other inappropriate content. Even though YouTube monitor and remove videos that include inappropriate content, clips can be uploaded and viewed thousands of times before they get reported and removed. As a parent, it's difficult to spot these videos as the harmful content doesn't appear until partway through the video.

## DISTRESSING FOR CHILDREN

Popular YouTubers and other accounts have been uploading reaction videos, showing their experience of the MOMO challenge. Some of the videos include a disclosure message warning that the content may be "inappropriate or offensive to some audiences" and that "viewer discretion is advised" but these videos are still easily accessed by clicking 'I understand and wish to proceed'. The image of the 'Momo' character can be deeply distressing to children and young people and it's important to note that it may slip through parental settings and filters.

## SUGGESTED VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE

Video apps such as YouTube include an 'up next' feature which automatically starts playing another video based on the video just watched. Due to YouTube's algorithm, users are shown 'suggested videos' that they may be interested in. The thumbnails used on suggested videos are purposefully created in a way to encourage viewers to click them. During our research, we found that when watching one Momo related video, we were shown countless other Momo themed videos and other scary content which would be age-inappropriate for children under 18.



**National Online Safety**

## Top Tips for Parents

### TELL THEM IT'S NOT REAL

Just like any urban legend or horror story, the concept can be quite frightening and distressing for young people. Whilst this may seem obvious, it's important for you to reiterate to your child that Momo is not a real person and cannot directly harm them! Also, tell your child to not go openly searching for this content online as it may only cause more distress.

### BE PRESENT

It's important for you, as a parent or carer, to be present while your children are online. This will give you a greater understanding of what they are doing on their devices, as well as providing you with the opportunity to discuss, support and stop certain activities that your child may be involved in. As the nature of each task become progressively worse it's also important to recognise any changes in your child's behaviour.

### TALK REGULARLY WITH YOUR CHILD

As well as monitoring your child's activity, it's important for you to discuss it with them too. Not only will this give you an understanding of their online actions, but those honest and frequent conversations will encourage your child to feel confident to discuss issues and concerns they may have related to the online world.

### DEVICE SETTINGS & PARENTAL CONTROLS

Ensure that you set up parental controls for your devices at home. This will help to restrict the types of content that your child can view, as well as help you to monitor their activity. In addition to this, it's vital that you are aware of your device and account settings to ensure your child's utmost safety. For example, on YouTube you can turn off 'suggested auto-play' on videos to stop your child from viewing content that they have not directly selected.

### PEER PRESSURE

Trends and viral challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they seem. Make sure you talk to your child about how they shouldn't succumb to peer pressure and do anything they are not comfortable with, online or offline. If they are unsure, encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult.

### REAL OR HOAX?

As a parent it is natural to feel worried about certain things you see online that may be harmful to your child. However, not everything you see online is true. Check the validity of the source and be mindful of what you share as it may only cause more worry.

### REPORT & BLOCK

You can't always rely on parental controls to block distressing or harmful material. People find ways around a platform's algorithm in order to share and promote this type of material. Due to this, we advise that you flag and report any material you deem to be inappropriate or harmful as soon as you come across it. You should also block the account/content to prevent your child from viewing it. Also encourage your child to record/screenshot any content they feel could be malicious to provide evidence in order to escalate the issue to the appropriate channels.

### FURTHER SUPPORT

Speak to the safeguarding lead within your child's school should you have any concerns regarding your child's online activity or malicious content that could affect them.

If your child sees something distressing, it is important that they know where to go to seek help and who their trusted adults are. They could also contact Childline where a trained counsellor will listen to anything that's worrying them.

The Childline phone number is 0800 1111.



SOURCES:  
<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/sick-vids-youtube-kids-14052106>  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk>  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-47359623>



## Special Mentions

# NEWSLETTER

## 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019



### Special Mentions for the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019:

#### EY11

Munroop and Arjun – for thinking of great questions to write about dinosaurs.  
Olivia – for coming into class and getting ready to work more quickly each morning.

#### 1Q

Harry – for amazing effort and improvement in his handwriting and presentation.  
Nishta – for all round effort in all areas of the curriculum and for being a real role model.

#### 2C

George – for completing a task quickly and independently despite being absent due to illness earlier in the week.  
Lillyana – for learning her lines very quickly and delivering them with lots of expression.

#### 2W

Grace and Owen – for a brilliant start back after half term with excellent effort in reading and literacy.

#### 3G

Charlie and Jasmine - for working conscientiously and approaching all areas of the curriculum with enthusiasm.  
Henry – for always being kind and helpful to his friends in the classroom.

#### 3S

Ethan O and Ethan W - for being extra helpful and kind.

#### 4D

Sai – for being a really good friend to everyone in Year 4.  
Samuel – for his effort and enthusiasm in all subjects.

#### 4L

Olivia and Madeleine – for consistent effort in all areas and a great attitude to learning.

#### 5BH

Scott and Maisie – for improvement in their writing, adding detail and extending their vocabulary.

#### 5D

Gianpier for taking on feedback and writing an engaging recount on Maths Week.

#### 6G

Hugo – for being an excellent role model.  
Hanna, Luca and Sneha – for an excellent Big Write.

#### Kindness Cup

Oliver O – 2C – for being forever thoughtful and considerate.  
Cerys H – 6G – for always being kind and helpful and an excellent role model to others.



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