

# SCHOOL MATTERS

THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FROM NEWTON POPPLEFORD SCHOOL

## Friday 17th September 2021

### From the Headteacher

It's has been another lovely week in school, and even the weather has decided to be kind for the Fete, which I am sure we can all enjoy.

Years 1 to 6 have started to use the new Marvellous Me app. Login details were sent home earlier this week with your child. If you need a new copy please let the office know. Every week the teachers

will be letting you know a snapshot of something your child has been learning about – the first ones have been sent today. We hope that this will give you something to talk about and to gain an even better understanding of what goes on in school. We will also be sending virtual stickers home, so you can celebrate with your child.

I hope to see you all at the Fete later and have a lovely weekend.

Stuart Vaughan

The logo for the Marvellous Me app, featuring the word 'MARVELLOUS' in a light blue, sans-serif font, followed by 'ME' in a larger, bold, dark blue font.

### #Hello Yellow Day



On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October it is #Hello Yellow Day – World Mental Health Day. This year, as a school, we have decided to do something different. We will be calling it #Sunshine Yellow Day in honour of the Finley who passed away during the summer break. If possible, we will all take part by wearing yellow. The donations made to us will be going to the charities 'Neuroblastoma' and the Children's Hospice South West where Finley spent his final days.

On this day we will aim to create something to remember Finley by. There will also be some activities in classes for the children on this day. We look forward to sharing some aspects of the day afterwards.

[www.newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk](http://www.newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk)

01395 568300

✉ [admin@newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk)

For any Twilight after school club matters please phone the main school number.

## School Office Reminders

- **Twilight** and **Breakfast** clubs are now both in the library (8am - start of the school day & 3.15pm - 5 pm)
- If your child walks home without an adult, please could you send a letter or email into the School Office giving your consent. This will help us in releasing children at the end of the school day.
- Could you make sure that your child has a pair of **wellington boots** in school so that they are able to make use of the school field during playtimes.

## Diary Dates

Friday, 17th September (until 15th October)	Year 5 Swimming
Monday, 20th September - Friday, 24th September	Year 6 Residential to Skern Lodge
Friday, 22nd October	Inset Day
Monday, 25th October - Friday, 29th October	Half Term

## From the PTFA

### UNIFORM SHOP!

Our first uniform shop will be at the Summer Fete on Friday 17th September! Please bring in any donations for this to the school office!

### CLOTHING BANK!

Have you seen our shiny new clothing bank by the bike shed? It is open for business! Please bring in your clothing any time. Every item raises money for the PTFA and diverts textiles from landfill!



## New Reading System for the Coloured Banded Books

We are going to begin trialling the new coloured book band system across the school. This will be for all children in KS1 and KS2, who are reading books in the coloured book band scheme. You and your child/ren will be able to choose their own reading books from a selection that are outside KS1. Here is a brief overview of how it will work.

- Books will be organised outside in colour boxes with a coloured card system clearly showing the correct order.
- Books are able to be changed either before or after school.
- You and your child/ren will select a new reading book from the appropriate colour band. The children really enjoy being able to choose a book, so give them a choice of three. However, it is still very important that they are roughly following the correct order and reading the majority of books in each colour band.
- We would encourage parents/carers to change the books three times a week. We still want the children to re-read their reading books on the second day, as it improves their confidence and gives more opportunities for discussion about the book.
- Children are also able to re-choose a book they have read before if they wish.
- Put the old book in their class box for the TAs to put away.
- Write the date next to the book on the colour band book list that will be stuck in the home school diary.
- Year One and Year Two will each have a box for home school diaries to be put in if they have a note for the teacher – TAs will no longer be checking all the home school diaries on a daily basis.
- A Teacher or TA will be available outside to support families and answer questions.
- Home school diaries will be checked at least once a week in school, when the children are reading with an adult, so we have a clear overview of what the children have read.

There are many reasons why we are trialling this new system. It was used very successfully in Reception last year, and the staff felt the children really enjoyed being able to select their own books. The parents/carers were supportive of the system and some were more engaged, and as a result, the children were reading more frequently at home. Within school, our TAs will save a lot of time, as they no longer have to change reading books. Instead, they will be using that extra time to hear readers in class, which will further benefit the children's reading development.

We completely understand that there will be occasions when parents/carers are unable to change the reading books for various reasons. If that is the case, just put your child's book bag in the class box and it will be changed in school.

# This week's National Online Safety guide to keeping safe online.– What parents and carers need to know about Rocket League.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one game of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



## What Parents and Carers Need to Know About...

# ROCKET LEAGUE

Age Restriction  
**PEGI 3**

Rocket League is a free-to-play multiplayer vehicle football game. It was developed by Psyonix, now part of the Epic Games family (which also includes Fortnite and Gears of War). Rocket League is essentially a football game where, instead of running, the players drive rocket-powered cars. The game was a surprise hit that took the world by storm when it first released in 2015. Rocket League is available for the Xbox One, Xbox Series X, PlayStation 4 & PlayStation 5, Nintendo Switch, Windows PC, MacOS and Linux.

### Fiercely Competitive Community

Competitive gaming isn't necessarily bad. However, playing purely to win (as opposed to simply having fun) can result in aggressive behaviour among some players if they're not successful in the game. Certain people can become hostile or "toxic" towards other players. Continually seeing this behaviour can cause children to think it is acceptable and lead to anger issues while playing.

### Unsuitable Online Interactions

A video game's age rating cannot take player-generated elements into account. Rocket League is rated PEGI 3, but its online features mean that appropriateness can't be guaranteed. Audio and text chat, player usernames, player-to-player trades and other user-created content may not be suitable for young players. The game is moderated, but catching everything can be difficult.

### Grinding and Increased Screen-time

Features like the Rocket Pass and the ranking system can make Rocket League a grinding-focused game. This means players need to spend a lot of time on the game to progress through levels and collect rewards. Grinding encourages regular long gaming sessions for players seeking to climb the rankings (meaning increased screen time) but it doesn't always result in making much headway.

### Scams and Bad Trades

Player-to-player trading is common in Rocket League. The game has lots of cosmetic items to collect, and some can be very valuable. Players can trade items among themselves, but younger gamers are not always the best judges of what constitutes a fair deal. This can lead to them being swindled in trades – or to children signing up to illegitimate trading websites, where they then get scammed.

### In-App Purchasing

Free-to-play games (so called because they don't cost anything to download) like this depend on players making in-game purchases to turn a profit. Rocket League's in-game currency, called credits, are used to buy items in the game. Credits can be earned by playing the game or can be bought with real money – which could prove expensive if a child lets their love of the game and desire to progress get the better of them.

## Advice For Parents & Carers

### Use Parental Controls

Psyonix has added some safety measures into the game. The text and voice chat can be disabled, for example, limiting contact from strangers. However, it's not currently possible to block contact from other players about trades. It's a good idea, then, to talk with your child about the possibility of scams and bad trades either before they download the game or early in their Rocket League 'career'.

### Stay Aware of Spending

Free-to-play games can become money sinks without children realising. For peace of mind, make sure you don't have any payment methods attached to your child's gaming account to avoid accidental purchases. Rocket League credits can be earned through gameplay or bought with real money: encourage your child to use their earned credits first before they ask you to top them up.

### Monitor Gaming Time

It's impractical to sit and watch your child every time they play Rocket League. Keeping an eye on their gaming hours is crucial, however; it's easy to lose track of time while playing (even for adults), so "one more game" can soon turn into ten more games. Helping your child to balance their gaming time with their homework, chores and other activities is a life lesson in time management.

### Encourage Regular Breaks

Sitting in the same position all day while gaming isn't healthy, but it is an easy habit to fall into. A short break every hour or half hour is important. It allows players to rest their eyes, brains, hands and arms. Learning the value of an occasional break from any activity is good practice for the future. Encouraging your child to rehydrate regularly can also help to lower any rising competitive tempers!

### Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books. With experience in esports and content creation, Clare has seen the benefits and drawbacks of all aspects of gaming.



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#WakeUpWednesday

SOURCES: <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360015613074>, <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360053542814-Parental-Controls>, <https://support.rocketleague.com/hc/en-us/articles/360039907693-How-can-i-protect-my-child-from-online-interactions->, <https://theglobalgaming.com/rocket-league/credit-system-free/>



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



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# **‘Behaviour Positive’**



## **A *free* interactive short course for parents of children with challenging behaviour**

*Addressing the concerns that you as a parent may have around your child’s behaviour which is causing difficulties in everyday life.*

*This could include **aggression, destructiveness, tantrums** and **‘meltdowns’, sleep problems, withdrawal** or **general oppositional behaviour***

*The course aims to inform and empower parents to take a new look at managing difficulties with their child and to offer practical and sustainable solutions*

*Informal and informative.*

*The course provides a safe, supportive and confidential place to share experiences and ideas within a small group.*

***Interested and want to know more?***

**Contact Kevin Hickson via email: [khickson17@yahoo.com](mailto:khickson17@yahoo.com)**

**Or text message: 07813 318357**



# Sidmouth College

*believe • inspire • succeed*



## Open Evening Wednesday 29th September

Due to a limited number of spaces, our Open Evening is for pupils in Year 6 only plus one parent. There will be opportunities for pupils in other years to come to one of our open mornings later in the year. Please keep an eye on our website for more information.

Tours will be available at either 5.00pm or 6.00pm and places must be booked in advance by calling the College on [01395 514823](tel:01395514823).

Please see the College website for more information and do look at the website before arriving on the evening for possible changes in arrangements.

[www.sidmouthcollege.devon.sch.uk](http://www.sidmouthcollege.devon.sch.uk)