

28<sup>th</sup> March 2024



# NORTH STAR 240°

Dear North Star Families,

It has been an extremely busy term and we are really pleased with the progress everyone is making. I hope you find this newsletter helpful. We look forward to seeing you next term for Parents' Evening and telling you more about the North Star Academy Trust vision. We wish you all a restful Easter break.

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## Vision and Values at North Star Academy Trust

Welcome to the **Vision and Values Relaunch** at North Star 240/82. As we set sail on this exciting voyage, we invite each member of our school community to be part of charting our course. Our core values—**Navigate, Success, Together with Ambition, and Relevance**—are not mere words; they are the guiding stars that illuminate our path.

### What's New?

**Student Videos:** We believe that our students are the true custodians of our values. Therefore, we're thrilled to announce the **Student Values Video Challenge!** Each team will create a short video explaining what these values mean to them. Whether it's a dramatic interpretation, a heartfelt interview, or an animated journey, we can't wait to see their creativity shine.

**Fun Day Out:** The winning team will embark on a memorable adventure with our senior staff during the summer term. Imagine laughter, camaraderie, and shared memories as we celebrate your commitment to our values.

**Website Showcase:** Some of the outstanding videos will be featured on our school website. Let's inspire others and showcase the essence of North Star through the lens.

**Parent Involvement:** Parents, you're an integral part of our community. Join us for a special event where we'll celebrate the relaunch of our values together. Details will follow soon!

### Why Values Matter

Our values are more than words. They shape our actions, define our character, unite us as a family. This helps us make a sense of belonging. Let's explore what each value means:

**Navigate** A wide range of pathways that inspire our students to achieve

**Success** We provide personalised teaching that accelerates our students' learning

**Together** Strong partnerships enable our students to be considerate community members

**Ambition** We have high expectations of everyone

**Relevance** We ensure everything we do is appropriate to individual's needs

## Parent's Evening Meetings

I wanted to remind you all that we will have a parent's evening for all students on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024** starting at 3.30pm You will be able to book your slot with your child's tutor via the Via Arbor parent app from Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March at 12pm. If you have yet to sign in to your app please contact your child's tutor who will be able to support.

## Red Nose Day

Before Red Nose Day at our student council meeting we planned everything. Last time we had a cake sale it went very well but the school decided to do something different. People wanted to go to Costco and get hotdogs and pizzas but the school council decided not to because they wanted to make it a fair price for students. Overall people had a lot of smart ideas but the best one was definitely the pizza and getting out of lessons. On Red Nose day we sold pizza and drinks for break, it was very yummy 😊. NorthStar 240° made over a whopping £47 from the sale.



Later on, Thursday afternoon we had a fun break from our lessons by getting 2 options of movies, one was Inside Out in Mrs Evans- Bentley's room and the other was Elemental Mr Marsh's class. The year 8s mostly went to Inside Out and the year 7s went to the other choice. It was a 50p donation or more if you would like, but it was very fun and we are hoping we could do this someday again. For the snacks we had sweet popcorn with pineapple squash and obviously everyone got more popcorn. On Friday we did a non-school uniform day, everyone wore their favourite outfits and everyone looked fabulous, again it was a 50p donation.

In total we raised a grand final £70.

Written by Amber and Rafal in year 7, part of the Student Council



Autism Independence supports people with a learning disability and autistic people and their families. They have a focus on ethnic minorities.

They have teamed up with local GP services across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire to help people with a learning disability, with and without autism, to attend annual health checks.

Research shows that people with a learning disability from ethnic minorities do not go to their annual health checks. Health outcomes and life expectancy for these groups of people are a lot worse.

The Race Equality Foundation published this review on the poorer care and lower life expectancy that people with a learning disability and who are from ethnic minority communities experience.

Autism Independence can help:

If the person has a learning disability and they are from an ethnic minority background.

With translating and explaining the annual health check if English is not their first language.

By getting the person on their GP's learning disability register.

By helping them to book and attend their annual health check.

By helping them follow up on their health action plan.

[autism-independence.org](http://autism-independence.org)

[hello@autism-independence.org](mailto:hello@autism-independence.org)

07354 486 322

We would like to thank our supply agencies

- Hanson Recruitment Ltd
- Five Education
- Teaching Personnel
- The Supply Room

For their kind donation of Easter eggs for every child across North Star Academy Trust .

They will be enjoyed !

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**



Snapchat is an instant messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to people in their friends list. One of Snapchat's unique features is that pictures and messages 'disappear' 24 hours after they've been viewed; however, this content isn't as temporary as many believe – with some users saving screenshots or using another device to take a photo of their screen. This year, Snapchat added 'My AI': a customisable chatbot with which people can chat and share secrets, as well as asking for advice and suggestions of places to visit.

## CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

Even if your child only connects with people they know, they may still get friend requests from strangers. The Quick Add option lets users befriend people the app recommends – but these 'friends' are merely a username, which could have anyone behind it. Accepting such requests reveals children's personal information through the Story, SnapMap and Spotlight features, potentially putting them at risk from predators.

## EXCESSIVE USE

Snapchat works hard on user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score), Spotlight Challenges tempt users into spending time producing content in search of cash prizes and online fame, while it's easy for children to pass hours watching Spotlight's endless scroll of videos.

## INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some videos and posts on Snapchat aren't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people (teens in particular) to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.



## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

## ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body-image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy if a young person compares themselves unfavourably with other users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

## VISIBLE LOCATION

Snap Map highlights a device's exact position on a virtual map which is visible to other users. There are options to restrict who can see this information: all friends, only you (Ghost Mode) or selected friends. Snapchat also has real-time location sharing, which is intended as a buddy system to ensure friends have reached home safely – but which could also be used to track a young person for more sinister reasons.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### TURN OFF QUICK ADD

The Quick Add feature helps people find each other on the app. This function works based on mutual friends or whether someone's number is in your child's contacts list. Explain to your child that this could potentially make their profile visible to strangers. We recommend that your child turns off Quick Add, which can be done in the settings (accessed via the cog icon).



### CHOOSE GOOD CONNECTIONS

In 2021, Snapchat rolled out a new safety feature: users can now receive notifications reminding them of the importance of maintaining connections with people they actually know well, as opposed to strangers. This 'Friend Check Up' encourages users to delete connections with users that they rarely communicate with, to maintain their online safety and privacy.



### DISCUSS AI

Although My AI's responses can often give the impression that it's a real person, it's essential that young people remember this certainly isn't the case. Encourage your child to think critically about My AI's replies to their questions: are they accurate and reliable? Remind them that My AI shouldn't replace chatting with their real friends, and that it's always better to talk to an actual person in relation to medical matters.



### CHAT ABOUT CONTENT

It may feel like an awkward conversation (and one that young people can be reluctant to have) but it's important to talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting. Remind your child that once something's online, the creator loses control over where it ends up – and who else sees it. Likewise, it's vital that children understand that some challenges which become popular on the platform may have potentially harmful consequences.



### KEEP ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Profiles are private by default, but children may make them public to gain more followers. Snap Stories are visible to everyone your child adds, unless they change the settings. On SnapMaps, their location is visible unless Ghost Mode is enabled (again via settings). It's safest not to add people your child doesn't know in real life – especially since the addition of My Places, which allows other Snapchat users to see where your child regularly visits and checks in.



### BE READY TO BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with your child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, your child can select the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user (annoying or malicious messages, spam, or masquerading as someone else, for example).



## Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/20263636602-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work> | <https://www.snap.com/en-gb/en/safety/keeping-your-profile-and-new-safety-enhancements> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/20263636602-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work> | <https://help.snapchat.com/hc/en-gb/articles/20263636602-What-is-My-AI-on-Snapchat-and-how-does-it-work>

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