

## School Newsletter | 29th September 2023

# Welcome

Welcome to our second newsletter of this term. All of the students have settled back into their school routines, and year 7 have taken the adjustment from primary to secondary all in their stride. The past few weeks have been filled with preparation for our open mornings and open evening, as well as continued hard work and support from all students, staff and parents/carers.

# Good News

This week, we had our open evening and open mornings to welcome prospective students to our school. The open mornings gave visitors the chance to see OSCA in it's natural environment, showing what a typical school day would look like. At our open evening, we had such a variety of things going on. From dance performances to science experiments, visitors were able to get involved as well as see the curriculum contents for each subject. Current students from year 7 to year 11 offered their time to help out in each department. It was great to see the students being proud of their school and offering visitors first hand knowledge on what it is like to attend OSCA. As always, we are so proud of the students and we would like to thank all of the staff who were in attendance too.



# Attendance

1st	Year 7
2nd	Year 10
3rd	Year 8

High attendance is vital to ensure that students reach their maximum potential while at school. Having a couple of days off here and there may not seem like it will have much of an impact, but by having just 6-10 days off a year, it can drop the chances of achieving those higher grades by 10%. This equates to over 50 hours of learning lost per year. Congratulations to Year 7 who achieved the highest attendance last week!

# Notices

## College Open Days

Over the next couple of months, colleges and sixth forms in Sandwell will be holding open days for school leavers. Open days are a chance to see what a college or sixth form offers for each student, and gives an opportunity for students to experience what post-16 life will look like. We will be posting all upcoming college and sixth form open days in Sandwell over on our social media channels.

## Uniform

At OSCA, we have high expectations of everyone at the academy, one of these expectations being uniform. As a reminder, we are asking that all parents/carers could ensure that their child is correctly dressed every day. For more information about uniform expectations, please see our website.

# Social Media

Don't forget to follow us on social media, where you can find any news on school activities as well as updates about recent events.



@OSCATweets



Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about LIVE STREAMING

Live streaming involves broadcasting and watching videos online in real time, often on social media or via platforms like YouTube and Twitch. Viewers can interact through comments, chats and reactions during the broadcast: such instant engagement makes this an exciting way to share experiences, learn from others and build digital communities. Despite the many positives, live streaming also creates a potential platform for unsuitable content and poses some risks to children: it's essential to keep privacy and safety in mind and comply with each site or app's age restrictions.

AGE RESTRICTION

13+  
16+ 18+

Age varies by platform

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### LACK OF AGE VERIFICATION

Despite their age restrictions, some platforms don't require proof of age at sign up – meaning that anyone can register for an account (and potentially pretend to be older or younger than they actually are). In many cases, this means that young live streamers can never be totally certain exactly who they are broadcasting to and who is engaging with their live stream.

### DISCLOSING PERSONAL INFO

A characteristic of live streaming is the ability for videos to be instantly shared worldwide. Without the correct privacy settings enabled, a child could inadvertently reveal personal information or their location, making them vulnerable to online predators or identity theft. It's wise to regularly check the privacy settings (and what data is being shared) on any apps your child has signed up for.

### ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN

As the video streams are live, children might encounter (or inadvertently share) inappropriate content. Most live-streaming apps have rules to prevent this and monitor their services, also providing report buttons where content can be flagged for review. It may not be dealt with instantly, however, meaning that your child could be further exposed to harmful content during a live stream.

### UNAUTHORISED RECORDINGS

Each live streaming platform stores completed videos for different periods (Twitch saves broadcasts for 60 days, for example, while Facebook and YouTube remove them only at the creator's request). Deleting a video, though, doesn't always stop it from being shared: in some cases, streams have been illegally recorded (or screenshots taken) by certain viewers and redistributed on other sites.

### ROGUE CONTENT CREATORS

Children can also watch other people's live streams, which could potentially contain anything at any time (such as nudity, drug use or profanity). Most apps claim to monitor live streams and will stop any that don't adhere to their guidelines – but with millions of streams per day, it's complicated to regulate them all, so children could be exposed to inappropriate content without parents knowing.

### DANGER OF GROOMING

There are increasing reports of children being coerced into performing "suggestive acts" by strangers on some live-streaming apps. Due to the lack of verification required for certain apps, almost anyone can sign up to these services (including anonymously or under a fake identity). It's vital, therefore, to ensure the correct safety measures are in place before your child begins live streaming.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### PUT PRIVACY FIRST

Through the streaming app's settings, switch your child's account to 'private', so only their friends and followers can see their broadcasts. You could also turn off the live chat, shielding your child from any upsetting comments – although viewers' feedback is often seen as an integral part of the fun. Identify any nearby items (such as school uniforms or visible landmarks) that could give away your child's location.

### MANAGE MULTISTREAMING

Some apps and sites let users stream their content through multiple social media platforms at once. A broadcast on SteamYard, for example, can be shared on YouTube, Twitch, X and Facebook if the accounts are linked. The privacy settings can differ on each of these, so we'd suggest only streaming via one platform at a time to maintain greater control over who's watching your child's videos.

### GET INVOLVED YOURSELF

Research suggests a significant number of streams show a child on their own, often in a supposed safe space like their bedroom. If your child wants to live stream, ask if you could be present because you're interested in how it works. You could even set up your own account to gain a more detailed knowledge of what your child talks about in their live streams – and who they're broadcasting to.

### TALK ABOUT LIVE STREAMING

Try to start with positives before discussing potential risks. You could ask which live streaming apps your child likes and how they use them. Do they just watch streams or create their own? Explain why it's unwise to reveal personal information while streaming (even to friends). If you feel your child's too young for live streams, explain your reasoning to them and perhaps agree to review this decision in the future.

### CONSIDER THEIR ONLINE REPUTATION

As the broadcasts are live, it often causes the misconception among young people that whatever happens in their video simply 'vanishes' once the stream ends. However, videos can stay online indefinitely or be recorded by other users. It's important that your child understands what they do and say in a live stream could potentially damage their online reputation and, quite possibly, be seen by prospective future employers, colleges or universities.

## Meet Our Expert

Rhodri Smith is Head of Digital Learning at Thomas's Kensington, London. Recognised in the EdTech 50 UK Awards Yearbook 2021/22 for his efforts in the digital transformation at Cubitt Town Primary School and Tower Hamlets, he is also a Google for Education Certified Trainer and guest lecturer at University College London on the integration of technology across the curriculum.



Source: <https://www.itw.org.uk/media/23j3nc2/distribution-of-captures-of-live-streamed-child-sexual-abuse-final.pdf>