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Educating For 'Life In All Its Fullness'

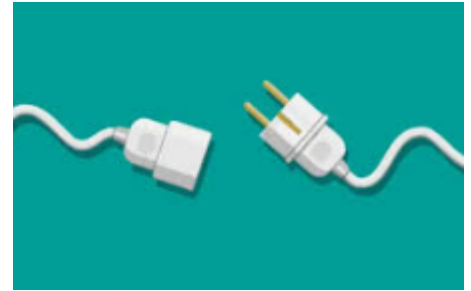
16th October 2025

Disconnect to Reconnect

Dear Families,

As part of our ongoing commitment to the wellbeing of our children, staff and families we will be taking part in a national initiative called 'Disconnect to Reconnect', over this academic year.

We will be taking opportunities throughout the year, including through three feature weeks, to educate the children about the impact of and the responsible use of smart technology. This is in addition to the usual coverage within our PSHE curriculum. Our aim is to help them develop some tools, techniques and, if necessary down the line, some alternatives to the growing dependency on smart technology, which is evident generally in young people today. The evidence of how harmful device use is to developing minds, as well as everyone's mental health is becoming more widely understood and I know from speaking to many of the children that lots of our families already share concerns about how they can support their children to develop good habits around device use.



The first of our feature weeks is next week, from Monday 20th October, and after discussion it was decided that the best use of this initial feature week would be to have the children (and families if they wish to join in) record their own device usage. This will give us a baseline for later comparison, as well as raising awareness of the extent to which we all use our devices. Our brilliant Year Six MindMate team have devised a method for the children to easily record their usage over next week and a separate form for W.C. 27th October, which is the half-term holiday. We would like them to include laptop and PC use as well as smart phones and tablets (it does not include watching TV). Next week the children will need their record forms in school each day, as well as using them at home.

The MindMates have been recording their own usage over this week in order to test the record sheet and provide some examples for the other children to see. They have also delivered their own PowerPoint presentations and shared their thoughts and insights with each class this afternoon. In addition to this we have promised treats and entry into a prize draw for all completed record sheets, which we would like returning to school after half-term please.

We have explained to the children that this is not a test and they will not be judged for the results of this survey. It is simply a tool to help them take responsibility for their own wellbeing as we learn more together over this year. We are not asking them to reduce their device usage at this point and would like them to be completely honest and as accurate as is reasonably possible in their records. I have also attached an electronic version of the record sheet if you need it.

I am aware that the younger children will need you to do most of the record keeping for them and I sincerely hope that all the children will have your full support. It is very much appreciated. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards

Mrs Dawn Watts

Reception Teacher

EYFS Leader

Science and PSHE Subject Leader (email: d.watts@harewood.leeds.sch.uk)

