



**HAGLEY CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**
SEMPER FIDELIS

“Practice hospitality” (Romans 12:9-13)

Thursday, 05 October 2023

Dear Parent(s), carer(s) and students,

It is always slightly strange when we have a four day week, and it doesn't happen very often, but so it is this week with school closed tomorrow to students and then open again on Saturday for our annual Open Morning when we expect to welcome in excess of 300 families.

What has been overwhelming this week is the number of students who have volunteered to help out on Saturday, some 250+!! This is a wonderful show of commitment from our student body, but also from those of you who are no doubt dropping them off and picking them up again, so a huge thank for your support.

This very obvious show of school support and act of service is what makes Hagley the special place it is, reflects the importance that school has in our young people's lives and it is lovely to have so many helping to showcase what we offer.

Year 7

It was a great turn out to last night's Year 7 Meet the Tutor Evening, thank you to everyone that made it and I do hope that having the opportunity to meet your child's tutor and discover how they have settled in was worthwhile, as well as the chance to sample some of the food on service at lunchtimes in the canteen. In the coming days we will send a survey to you to get some specific feedback.

Transport

We have received reports of some isolated incidents of poor behaviour by students who catch the trains from Hagley and alight at Stourbridge. If your child is on this route please remind them of their responsibility to behave in a way that is always in keeping with the values and expectations that we set at school and at home.

Student Successes

It is wonderful to share with you this week the achievements of Mason in Year 7 who, the weekend before last, performed in the Inter-Regional Challenge Cup Tumbling Championships at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham winning the gold medal and being crowned national champion.

Here he is with his gold medal. What an amazing achievement and a credit to himself, his family and his school.

Please remember to keep us in touch with your child's achievements outside of school that we can celebrate.



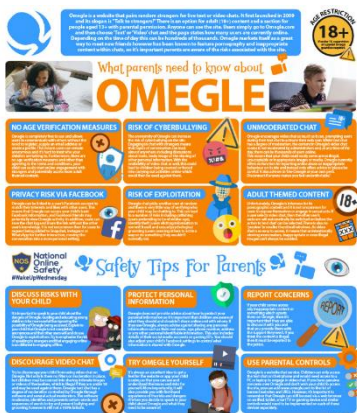
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Principal: Mr J Hodgson

School attendance

Student attendance will remain high on our agenda this year and rebuilding pre-pandemic resilience to always be in school can be achieved and we have already seen good signs this term. We are running competitions in school to recognise and reward good attendance. So far Year 7 are setting the standard with the highest attendance every week since the start of term, but other years are hot on their heels.

We will also be running a competition for individual student attendance and every student will get a raffle ticket for every week they have 100% attendance between now and Christmas. That's a maximum of 10 raffle tickets they could earn. All raffle tickets will go into a hat on the last day of the Christmas term and the winning ticket in each year group will take home a £50 Christmas shopping voucher.



Online Safety

The online safety world is reporting the increase in young people chatting to strangers on the site 'Omegle'. This site is blocked at school but might not be at home. Omegle is a website that pairs random strangers for live text or video chat. Omegle markets itself as a great way to meet new friends. However, it has been known to include pornography and inappropriate content with in its chats.

There is a full (readable) copy of the advice in this poster at the end of this letter.

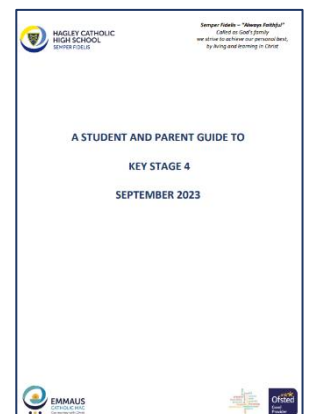
KS4 Curriculum Guide

Mr Trickett wrote to parents/carers of children in KS4 today and shared with them an updated copy of our curriculum booklet for GCSE and Level 2 studies.

This booklet is a great resource and guide to help children though KS4 and ensure parents/carers are clear on curriculum content, examinations boards and resources .

You can access the booklet by visiting our website at this link:

[Key Stage 4 Information Booklet 2023 2024.pdf \(hagleyrc.worcs.sch.uk\)](https://hagleyrc.worcs.sch.uk/Key%20Stage%204%20Information%20Booklet%202023%202024.pdf)



Homework/Assignments in Arbor

This year our updated homework policy means that all homework should be set for students in Arbor with the additional option for students to record it in their planners. This means parents/carers, as well as students, can see the homework set. I am aware that there is still work to be done to insure consistency with this policy change and we are working to resolve this.

Please note that we currently do not use the system in Arbor to record submission of homework/assignments but you can be confident your child has done their homework if they haven't been allocated a homework detention.

Family Mass

On Thursday 19th October we will be holding the first of our family masses at 6pm and Mr Miastowski (*Assistant Principal: Catholic Life*) has written to you all today to advertise this but a reminder that you can inform us of your attendance at Mass via this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/8MztYM7qiq>

The Mass will also be an opportunity to support our students who are planning to go on pilgrimage to Lourdes next May and refreshments will be available after Mass for a donation to their cause.

Mass at Our Lady and All Saints, Stourbridge

On Saturday 18th November the 5pm Mass at Our Lady and All Saints Stourbridge will be said for Hagley family past and present. It would be lovely if you could join us on this very poignant date.

Extra-curricular timetable in Performing Arts

This week we were delighted to welcome back to school Miss McKee from maternity leave and the Performing Arts extra-curricular timetable is already in full swing with "Matilda" auditions last night. The full extra-curricular timetable is below:

	Lunchtime	After School
Monday	KS4 and KS5 Dance	
Tuesday	Year 8 Dance	
Wednesday	Year 9 Dance	Production rehearsals
Thursday	BTEC Performing Arts	
Friday	Year 7 Dance	

Wear it Pink

On Friday 20th October we will be supporting the Breast Cancer Now awareness campaign "Wear it pink". All students and staff are encouraged to wear something pink on the day and bring in a cash donation to this important charity that I am confident has touched many of our lives. I know it has mine.



Students can choose to wear pink socks, a pink tie, pink hair band/bobbles or perhaps a pink ribbon pin. However, all other normal uniform items must be worn. I hope you and your children can support this worthy cause.

That just leaves me to wish you all every blessing and a wonderful weekend ahead.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Hodgson', written in a cursive style.

Mr J Hodgson
Principal

Forthcoming Events and Calendared items

Autumn 1:

- Teacher Training Day 06 October (School closed to all students)
- Open Morning 07 October
- Family Mass 19 October @ 6pm
- Sixth Form Open Evening 25 October @ 6pm
- Break up for half term 27 October



Omegle is a website that pairs random strangers for live text or video chats. It first launched in 2009 and its slogan is "Talk to strangers!" There is an option for adult (18+) content and a section for people aged 13+ with parental permission. Anyone can use the site. Users simply go to Omegle.com and then choose 'Text' or 'Video' chat and the page states how many users are currently online. Depending on the time of day this can be hundreds of thousands. Omegle markets itself as a great way to meet new friends however has been known to feature pornography and inappropriate content within chats, so it's important parents are aware of the risks associated with the site.



What parents need to know about

OMEGLE



NO AGE VERIFICATION MEASURES

Omegle is completely free to use and allows users to communicate with others without the need to register, supply an email address or create a profile. This means users can remain anonymous and it's hard to trust who your children are talking to. Furthermore, there are no age verification measures and other than agreeing to the terms and conditions, your child can easily start online engagement with strangers and potentially access more adult themed content.



RISK OF CYBERBULLYING

The anonymity of Omegle can increase the risk of cyberbullying on the site. Engaging in chat with strangers means that topics of conversation can lead almost anywhere including discussions about looks, body image or the sharing of other personal information. With the availability of video chat as well, this could lead to children being coerced or forced into carrying out activities online which could then be used against them.



UNMODERATED CHAT

Omegle encourages video chat as much as it can, prompting users during their text chat to activate their web cam. Whilst text chat has a degree of moderation, the content in Omegle's video chat rooms is not moderated by administrators and, at any time of the day, there can be thousands of users online. This means that your child could easily come across illegal, unacceptable or inappropriate images or media. Omegle currently offers no function for reporting online abuse or inappropriate behaviour on its site and instead only offers advice to 'please be careful'. It also advises to 'Use Omegle at your own peril. Disconnect if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable.'



PRIVACY RISK VIA FACEBOOK

Omegle can be linked to a user's Facebook account to match their interests and likes with other users. This means that Omegle can access your child's basic Facebook information, and Facebook friends may potentially view Omegle activity. In addition, users can save the chat log and share the link without the other user's knowledge. It is not uncommon then for users to request being added to Snapchat, Instagram or WhatsApp for further interaction, moving the conversation into a more personal setting.



RISK OF EXPLOITATION

Omegle chat picks another user at random and there is very little way of verifying who your child may be chatting to. This can lead to a number of risks including catfishing (users pretending to be of similar age), identity theft (users eliciting information to commit fraud) and sexual/psychological grooming (users coercing others to act in a way or do something they wouldn't normally do).



ADULT THEMED CONTENT

Unfortunately, Omegle is infamous for its pornographic content and it is not uncommon for users to expose themselves or engage in sexual acts. If a user selects video chat, then the other user's webcam will automatically be switched on before the action to 'end chat' can be selected. There is also no preview in smaller thumbnail windows. As video chat is so easy to access, it means that unintentionally viewing more mature, inappropriate or even illegal images can't always be avoided.



Safety Tips For Parents



DISCUSS RISKS WITH YOUR CHILD

It is important to speak to your child about the dangers of Omegle. Guiding and educating young children is far more useful than ignoring the possibility of Omegle being accessed. Explain to your child that Omegle is not completely anonymous and that other users will and do use Omegle to exploit others. Try to emphasise the risk of speaking to strangers and that engaging online is no different to engaging offline.



PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

Omegle does not provide advice about how to protect your personal information so it's important that children are aware of what they should and shouldn't share online and with whom. If they use Omegle, always advise against sharing any personal information such as their real name, age, phone number, address or any other personal identifiable information. This also includes details of their social media accounts or gaming ID's. You should also adjust your child's Facebook settings to control what information is shared with Omegle.



REPORT CONCERNS

If your child comes across any inappropriate content or something which upsets them on Omegle then it's important that they are able to discuss it with you and that you provide them with the support they need. If you think the content is illegal, then it must be reported to the police.



DISCOURAGE VIDEO CHAT

Try to discourage your child from using video chat on Omegle. Not only is there no filters or moderation in place, but children may be coerced into sharing intimate images or videos of themselves, which is illegal if they are under 18 and may be used against them. Omegle text chat has a degree of moderation controlled by Omegle through software and several actual moderators. The software moderates, identifies and prevents certain words and sequences of words to try and prevent bullying and grooming however is still not a 100% failsafe.



TRY OMEGLE YOURSELF

It's always an excellent idea to get a feel for the website or app your child is using so that you can see and understand the issues and risks for yourself. More importantly, it will also provide you with first-hand experience of the risks and dangers if/when you decide to speak to your child about Omegle and what they need to be aware of.



USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Omegle is a website chat service. Children can only access the text chat on their phone and would need access to a PC or laptop to engage in video chat. If you have genuine concerns over Omegle and don't wish your child to access the site, you can add www.omegle.com to the list of banned websites and URLs. However, it's important to remember that Omegle can still be used via a web browser on an iPad, tablet, smart TV or gaming device and similar controls would need to be implemented on each of these devices separately.

