

23rd February 2017

ISSUE 12

# LOWTHER SCHOOL FAMILY NEWSLETTER



## It's 2017 and a half!

We're now officially in to the second half of this school year. Amazing to think. The second half of the spring term is such a fantastic half term at school — one where we see so much fantastic learning and the children really flying. I know all the teachers are working really hard to ensure your child has the very best possible learning at Lowther. Here's to a truly awesome second half of the year and some really fantastic learning.

## Jury service absence

As you will be aware from my previous newsletter I'm out of school on jury service both this week (wc 20th February and next week, wc 27th February). I'll be in school as much as possible during this time and will most certainly be liaising with Mr. Bracken and the rest of the school team with ensuring all the children are doing brilliantly.



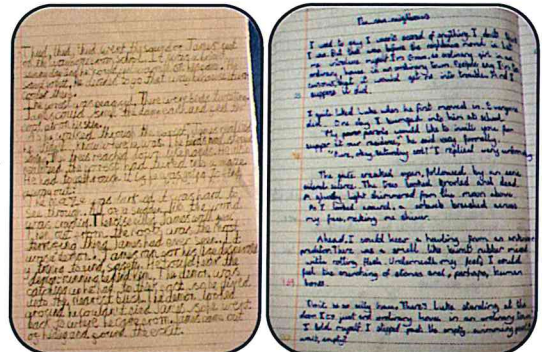
## Stag Brewery Development

As you may already know, Reselton Properties, who bought the Stag Brewery in November 2015, will, between 8th and 18th March, be holding their first pre-planning consultation drop-in sessions with residents on its proposed redevelopment: <http://stag-brewery.co.uk/news-events/>. Reselton's initial designs include a six-form entry 11-18 secondary school.

In order for the voices to be heard of those residents who would like to see a new secondary school in the east of the borough, I would encourage you to attend one of the drop-in sessions. The sessions start only a week after this year's secondary transfer outcomes become known, so I'm sure the provision of secondary places will be prominent in your minds.

## Screen your story

We were delighted with the finished entries the children produced for this annual competition. It was impressive to see the quantity and quality of writing, not to mention the enjoyment of the children in producing their stories. I'm feeling optimistic that we'll have some more finalists again this year. We'll keep you posted!



## Time to boost the Key Stage 1 area

At the end of last term we did some work with a landscape architect to look at how we can remodel and re-invigorate the Key Stage 1 outside area. We're still working through the plans for this but we've made a start to improving it by giving it a freshen up including power washing the roof! It already looks much better. Please help us to keep this vital learning area as it should be by not allowing children to play in there either before, or after school. Look out for more changes to this space in the future.

## Staffing news!

We have some more exciting staff news in that Mrs Blaxland, who teaches the Wil-lows on Wednesdays, is pregnant and is expecting her third child this summer. In addition, Mrs McNeaney is moving house and so will also be leaving Lowther after many years of great service. Sally will be leaving Lowther at the end of the Spring term. We wish her and her family every happiness with their move. Miss Heywood will also be heading off on maternity leave at the end of this half term to have her first baby.



## Parking and Road Safety

Every year in the UK there are over 16,000 road traffic accidents involving children. We want to ensure the streets around Lowther are the safest in the country. I'm sure you will have all noticed the new parking signs and the repainted yellow lines. Please park safely away from corners, zigzags and the school entrances. Don't forget as well that all the local roads now have a 20mph speed limit too. Thanks for your help with this.

## Playground changes and PTA funds

We have plans to make some more changes to the playground. At the moment this includes creating a new quiet play area at the front of the school and some more play zones near the climbing frame trail. We're going to be using hard-earned PTA funds to pay for this so we'll be sure to keep you fully in the loop with our plans. The next step is for our newly formed school council to get the views of the children as to how they'd like to see the playground developed. Exciting times!





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## Upcoming events

A few big dates for your diary this half term. Don't forget the school's online calendar gives you all the details and is updated regularly.

**Parent's evening** from 315pm — 630pm  
Monday 27th February and Tuesday 28th February

**World Book Day** — all day on Wednesday 1st March

**Community Day** — all day on Friday 17th March

**Y4 Production** — Monday 27th March @ 5pm and Tuesday 28th March @ 630pm

**Spring Breakfast** — Friday 31st March @ 930am

**End of term** Friday 31st March @ 315pm  
We look forward to seeing you at these events.

It's going to be a marvellous half term at Lowther.

## Footie skills

Well done to the Yr 5 & 6 footballers who have played some super stuff in recent weeks in a range of games, the highlights being a 5-2 victory away at Sheen Mount and a staggering 14-0 win away at East Sheen!

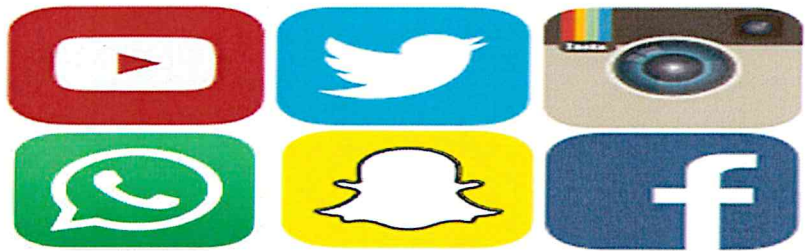
Don't forget any dads are welcome to join the dad's team—the next match is tonight (vs East Sheen, who no doubt will be looking for revenge!) Friday 24th February



## Internet Safety

We do lots of work with the children about staying safe online — but do you also do this at home? Do you have clear rules and monitoring of children's online usage? Please do talk to your children regularly and openly about the sites they're using and monitor their internet history and media use.

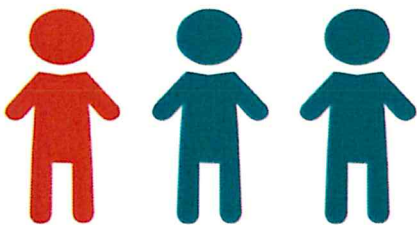
We often hear children talking about unsupervised internet use and being signed up to social media sites. Indeed, I'm sure you recognise the logos below, but do you know the legal age limits?



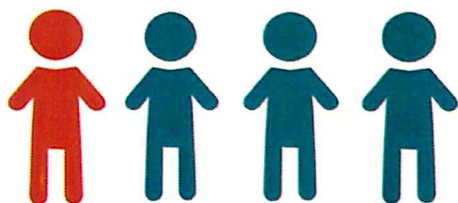
- To be a YouTube account holder you need to be 18 years old, or 13 with parent's permission.
- Twitter's minimum age is 13 years old
- WhatsApp's minimum age is 16 years old.
- Instagram's minimum age is 13 (this is the site we hear of children using most often)
- Facebook is 13 years old
- Musical.ly is 13 years old

Please ensure your primary age child is not accessing these sites without your knowledge. I know of different children at Lowther that are account holders for all these sites. We need to do more to support and protect children online. This is such an important part of growing up for children now and needs very close monitoring and supervision by teachers and parents.

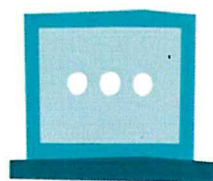
Please don't underestimate the size of this issue and how important it is that we are all proactive about protecting our children. Some stark statistics that you might not be aware of are included here.



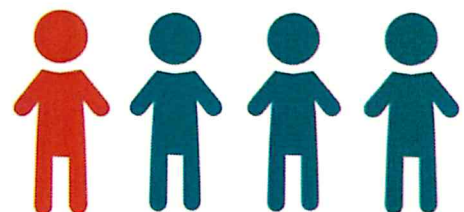
1 in 3 children have been a victim of cyberbullying.



Almost 1 in 4 young people have come across racist or hate messages online.



There were over 11,000 counselling sessions with young people who talked to Childline about online issues last year



1 in 4 children have experienced something upsetting on a social networking site.