



The Henry Moore Primary School

Dear Parents/Carers,

19th December 2025

A huge well done to all the children for their fantastic Christmas performances – they were absolutely brilliant! A big thank you to our amazing staff for all their hard work in putting the shows together, and to parents and carers for helping the children learn their words and providing such wonderful costumes. Finally, thank you to everyone who came along to support the children – your presence made the performances even more special.

It's been a wonderfully busy week filled with parties, delicious Christmas dinners, and even a trip to the panto! After all that festive fun, we can all agree – we deserve a well-earned break!

Head Teacher Commendations

I am delighted to be presenting the first of the Head Teacher Commendations this year. Well done to these children who have earned 10 Merits.

Well done to:

Freddie C
Amy V



We'd love your support and donations!
Don't forget to save your boxes over Christmas!

DONATIONS NEEDED

We're collecting brushes, brooms, dustpans for lunchtime play.



Please send any unbroken donations into school
All items will be carefully checked for safety before use!

 **WANTED** 

Old pots, pans, utensils, microwaves, kettles, toasters, colanders

 Sandpit toys

 Wellies and waterproof trousers (all sizes for ages 4-11)

Having a clear out before/over Christmas?
The children would also love small world toys e.g:



Please send all donations into school



Cardboard boxes/tubes needed.
Please send them into school

Worried About Your Child's Learning or Development?



Scan the QR code to access our SEND Support Padlet – a helpful guide from our SEN Team with advice, available support, and who to speak to in school.



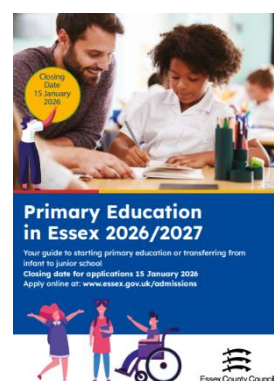
Primary School Applications

The primary school (Reception) admission round is now open for parents/carers of children to apply for a Reception school place for the academic year that starts in September 2026.

The statutory national closing date for applications is **15 January 2026**.

Even if you already have a sibling at the school, you need to apply if you have a child due to start Reception next September.

The website www.essex.gov.uk/admissions also has a copy of the Primary Education in Essex 2026-27 booklet and the Schools Admissions Policies Directories contain details of all admission policies.



End of Term - Early Close

A reminder to parents/carers that the school closes at the earlier time of **1.30pm** today. Please make sure that your child is collected at this earlier time. Thank you.

On behalf of the staff and myself, we wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year. We hope that you are able to enjoy time with your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you again when the new term starts on **Monday 5th January 2025**.

Season's Greetings

Sarah Cowley
Head Teacher



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are one of the most popular ways that children connect. Group chats allow messages, images and videos to be shared in one place and help friendships flourish; however, they also come with a number of risks.

TEASING AND BULLYING

Children of all ages are keen to fit in socially, and group chats can sometimes complicate that process. While group chats can foster connection, they can also give way to mean comments or jokes at someone's expense, especially when others join in for laughs. When bullying happens publicly, in front of friends and classmates, it can intensify the emotional impact – adding to embarrassment, anxiety and feelings of isolation for the child being targeted.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Children often can't control who is added to a group, which can lead to privacy concerns. Sharing personal details in group chats can be dangerous, and children have no control over what others do with the material they send. Some members of the chat might even decide to use such information maliciously.

PEER PRESSURE

Children may feel they have to constantly stay engaged just to be included and keep up with the conversation. In some cases, they might partake in inappropriate behaviours – like sharing explicit photos, jokes or teasing – just to fit in. Group settings can also encourage children to act in ways they normally wouldn't, or stay silent when they know something is wrong, out of fear of being excluded. Some children may find it difficult to leave toxic group chats.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some group chats may include inappropriate language or imagery. Even if a child isn't actively participating in the conversation, they may still be exposed to this content simply by being part of the group. Some apps have disappearing messaging features, where content is only available once or for a few seconds, which makes it harder for children to report something they've seen.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

Exclusion in group chats is common and can take several forms. Sometimes a new group is created specifically to leave one child out on purpose. In other cases, the chat may happen on an app that a child doesn't have access to, making it impossible for them to join in. This can cause feelings of being left out – even unintentionally.

VIDEO AND LIVE CHATS

Many popular apps allow children to engage in live streaming with interactive chats or have group video chats. Anyone can be added to these streams, and often children tag peers in the comments and have conversations which are unmoderated. There's a risk of being exposed to inappropriate or violent content and offensive language, either in the group videos or via the group chats.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for children to compete for social status. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave unkindly. If a child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

SET SOME GROUP CHAT RULES

Discuss safe group chat practices, such as asking a peer for consent before adding them to a group chat, or leaving a group chat if a stranger is added. Tell children that if they're added to a group they didn't agree to beforehand, it's OK for them to leave immediately.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child encounters inappropriate content or feels uncomfortable in a group chat, encourage them to block and report the sender and leave the group. Make sure children know it's OK to leave a group chat if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being bullied.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

It's vital for children to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure they understand the importance of not revealing personal details – like their address, their school, or photos they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up or how it might be used.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Being bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of a group chat while disabling notifications. In fact, it would be healthier for them to do so, helping them avoid the pressure to respond immediately.

Meet Our Expert

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



#WakeUpWednesday

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