



**St Ives Primary School,**  
Sandy Lane,  
St Ives,  
Ringwood,  
Hants  
BH24 2LE

Tel: 01425 475478  
Email: [office@stivesprimary.com](mailto:office@stivesprimary.com)  
Web: [www.stivesprimary.com](http://www.stivesprimary.com)  
Company number 9809895  
Headteacher: Mrs L Crossley

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02<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

Dear Parent/s,

Congratulations to the new school councillors for the year-

Year 1 - Rory Butler and Flora Jackson  
Year 2 - Ethan Lomax and Mya Salomi  
Year 3 - Amelia McLaughlin and William Stanton  
Year 4 - Katie Moore and Samuel Clayton  
Year 5 - Roberta Taylor and Ethan Patrick  
Year 6 - Alfie Frampton and Tabby Kendrick

#### **New Seesaw Codes**

If your child is in Nursery or Years 1-6, they will be given a new Seesaw login code as the old ones have now expired. Please check your child's planner for their new code. Please also note the school uses this platform to access its assemblies and wake 'n' shake, which are completed in school. You are more than welcome to watch again, however it is not a requirement!

#### **Twitter Pages**

Class teachers will be using Twitter to keep you up to date with lessons and activities taking place throughout the week. Please find below the Twitter pages for each class:

Whole school: @stivesprimary  
Reception: @stivesprimaryyr  
Year 1: @stives\_year1  
Year 2: @stivesprimaryy2  
Year 3: @stivesprimary3  
Year 4: @Year4StIves  
Year 5: @stivesprimaryy5  
Year 6: @stivesprimary6

#### **Internet Safety**

Smart speakers have soared in popularity which means more and more children are interacting with Alexa enabled devices and accessing the online world much easier. Please find attached a useful guide which aims to help parents understand what they need to know about Amazon Alexa.

### **Class News**

- Nursery - have been learning the letter sound 'm' with Fred the Frog
- Reception - have been discussing what makes a good friend and making friendship cards
- Year 1 - have loved exploring materials in our science lessons
- Year 2 - have been doing drawings in the style of Monet
- Year 3 - have had great fun learning and developing new skills during their basketball WOW session
- Year 4 - have been working incredibly hard writing our own dilemma stories
- Year 5 - have been enjoying using Reading Plus and the challenge it offers
- Year 6 - have been using their leadership skills in PE this week to plan and lead their own sessions

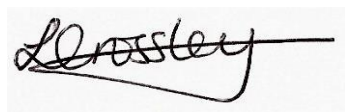
### **Breakfast Club/ Afterschool Club**

Breakfast Club is now available from 7.45am and After School Club is available until 6pm. Please ensure you book in for these on <https://bookwhen.com/stivesprimary>. There is currently a limit on spaces so book early to avoid disappointment.

A reminder to parents not to park in the car park when dropping off for breakfast club. There are two drop off times 7.45am and 8am and you need to wait at the pedestrian gate.

Have a lovely weekend!

Yours sincerely,



Mrs L Crossley  
Headteacher





What parents & carers need to know about...

# AMAZON ALEXA

Alexa is an artificial intelligence (AI) software assistant created by Amazon in 2014 through which smartphone, tablet and smart device users can issue voice commands and ask questions in a range of languages by issuing the 'wake' or activation word Alexa. It can be accessed in several ways and is integrated into a growing number of 'smart' products including speakers, phones and clocks. Once viewed as expensive gimmicks, Alexa is now one of the most used voice assistants in the world.

## Privacy concerns

By their nature, AI voice assistants involve the collection of large amounts data. How this is stored and the uses to which it is put has aroused growing concern. Experts also worry about who has access to voice recordings, which in 2019 the company admitted sometimes included employees of Amazon and its commercial partners. There is also the more general anxiety that internet voice assistants might record private conversations and not only commands or questions.

## Age-inappropriate content

Using Alexa as a speaker to play your favourite songs is one of the most popular uses for the device. However, without any parental controls in place, Alexa won't filter the lyrics so it's possible that children could hear something they shouldn't. Similarly, Alexa isn't always able to identify who or what age the person is who is issuing a voice command so if children ask a question which might not be age-appropriate, the chances are they're likely to get an age-inappropriate answer.

18+

## Insecure devices

The devices and their background services are another worry, which can have software vulnerabilities that make them insecure in complex ways. In 2020, for instance, researchers discovered that the services to which Echo products connect were insecure, potentially allowing hackers to access personal information such as voice conversations. In 2017, researchers were able to directly hack an Amazon Echo to send audio to attackers. Amazon has a good record of fixing security problems when they are discovered but it is never possible to find every problem.

## Changing Tech Relationships

In a 2019 report published by the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, concerns were raised on the disruptive effect that voice assistants and smart speakers, such as Alexa, were having on the way that children interact with technology. From building sentiment and forming relationships which could encourage them to overshare personal details, to a fear of consuming content driven by commercial algorithms and an inability to assess reliability, how Alexa operates could considerably change children's relationship with technology in both the short and long term.



#WakeUpWednesday

PRIVATE

## Safety Tips

### Check privacy settings

It's possible to delete Alexa's recordings either entirely, or for a given period, with the instruction "Alexa, delete everything I said." Alternatively, set up the Alexa account privacy settings for that account to delete recordings every three or 18 months. Existing recordings made using the Alexa app can be deleted via Settings > Alexa Privacy > Review Voice History. A final tweak is to turn off the setting that allows Amazon to 'use voice recordings to improve Amazon services.'

### Control voice input

If privacy is paramount, one idea is to locate Echo devices in only one room rather than having several throughout the home. In addition, Alexa can be activated only when it is needed by manually turning off the microphone on Echo devices between use. Users can tell when Alexa is in listening mode as an indicator light should appear or an audible tone should sound.

### Set pin code

Amazon account users can order items from the company using a voice command, for example "Alexa, buy some toilet paper." To counter accidental use or misuse and avoid racking up big bills, this can either be disabled or protected with a PIN code (it should be noted that this is an audible PIN however, so is not as secure as a typed code).

### Look out for 'Skills' apps

A big appeal of Alexa is that thousands of companies have created apps, which Amazon calls 'skills', that add useful capabilities, often integrations with other products or services. These are installed by asking Alexa to 'open/play/start' the skill. For example, a travel skill might be installed to check and automate checking train times and hotel bookings. However, it's important to remember that each of these might have a different privacy policy. A cautious approach is to install as few as possible, de-installing ones no longer in use.

### Talk about technology

As more and more homes install voice assistants and smart speakers such as Alexa, it's a good idea to talk to children about safe use of technology. Talk to them about what Alexa can be used for, how useful it can be and how to use it properly. Use it together to begin with and discuss any concerns they might have. Always make sure that children know to never share any personal or sensitive information and that if they need to talk about anything, they should always speak to a trusted adult.

## Meet our expert

John E. Dunn has edited and written for numerous computer and technology magazines since the early 1990s, most recently Which Computing, The Register, Forbes.com, Techworld, Computerworld and Naked Security. He is a specialist in online cybersecurity and cybercrime and their growing effect on education, young people and the public.

