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To all Parents/Carers,

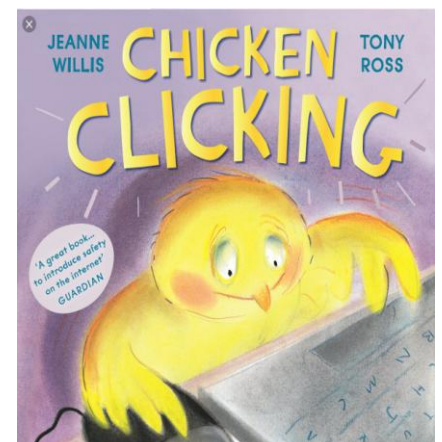
19/10/18

Following on from our work around Mental Health Day last week, I wanted to start by drawing your attention to the section in our Anti-Bullying Policy about Cyber-Bullying.

In a recent national survey, just over half of young people aged between 7 and 16 said that they had seen/heard someone being cyberbullied and around 40% had said that at some point they felt unsafe online. These are pretty high numbers and the likelihood is that a proportion of children at Markeaton will have experienced something similar. Via the curriculum we are trying to raise awareness of cyberbullying and how to be safe online as often as we can as we recognise that using phones, tablets and other online devices are part of everyday life.

With this in mind, one game in particular seems to be mentioned an awful lot in school and is causing some children a degree of anxiety and upset. Fortnite, a free downloadable game available on most consoles, involves children working as teams and communicating online in order to defeat other players; using guns and other methods of destruction. This type of game is nothing new but I'm not sure I have ever come across a game that has become so ingrained in how the children interact with one another and rapidly created such a 'trend' in the playground. Normally these things come and go but over the last six months the number of parents/carers speaking to me/other teachers about Fortnite has increased significantly. Issues include 'Fortnite Fallouts' from the previous night being continued at school and children becoming increasingly worried about being asked to leave the game or being alienated because of how good they are at it. Some children have also spoken to their teachers about these things and how upset it has made them. Likewise, some parents/carers have raised concerns about how addictive the game is and how it has affected their child's behaviour at home. If you share some of the concerns I have mentioned then please have a look at our E-Safety section on the website or feel free to contact us in school.

At this stage, we just thought it was worth highlighting the impact it was having in school. Of course, there are plenty of children who play it for fun or have never played it before! What we hope to do in the Spring Term is invite Traci Good back to school to deliver another E-Safety workshop, so keep an eye out in the new year. And whilst on the subject, Miss Hawley delivered the first of six E-Safety Assemblies on Monday and introduced the children to a book called Chicken Clicking – a great picture book about staying safe online. Well worth a read!



In other news, a big thank you to the PTFA for organising and running the Second Hand Uniform Sale last night. We appreciate how expensive uniform can be and how many items are lost over the course of a year so hopefully this helped. It'll be run again later in the term.

And finally, another thank you for supporting our Book Fair last week. We raised almost £850 and the commission we receive will help us to buy more books for the school libraries!

Have a great weekend,

Mr I. Johnson