



THOMAS WILLINGALE SCHOOL AND NURSERY

The Broadway, Loughton, Essex. IG10 3SR. Tel: 020 8508 7287 Fax: 020 8502 5364

Headteacher: Miss T. Phillips B.A. (Hons.), PGCE

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to invite you to an important and timely meeting led by Dr Benjamin Hibberd, focusing on children's digital usage and its impact on their wellbeing and development.

 **Date:** 7th July

 **Time:** 2:00pm

 **Location:** Main Hall

 **Duration:** 75 minutes, plus 15 minutes for Q&A

 **Adults only**

This session, **“Let’s Talk About Our Kids & Their Tech,”** offers parents and carers clear, research-backed insights and practical strategies for managing children’s mental health and technology use. It explores the impact of smartphones and social media, helping families to set healthy boundaries and make informed choices. The session is non-judgmental in tone and designed to create space for open and honest discussion.

This event links closely with our decision to support the **Smartphone Free Childhood** initiative. From September, children will no longer be permitted to bring smartphones to and from school. We believe this step supports our wider commitment to children’s wellbeing, focus, and healthy development.

You can find out more about the organisations behind this work here:

Papaya Talks - <https://www.papayatalks.co.uk>

Smartphone Free Childhood – <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>

Website: www.thomaswillingaleprimary.co.uk

Email address: admin@thomaswillingale.essex.sch.uk



Following the parent session, we will also be running workshops in school with our KS2 pupils. Our interactive **“Me and My Screen”** workshop will help children to critically evaluate their own technology use and consider its impact on themselves and society. These sessions are educational, reflective and empowering, ensuring that children understand both the benefits and risks of screen use.

About Dr Benjamin Hibberd

Dr Hibberd is an HCPC registered Educational Psychologist with over 15 years’ experience working with children, young people and adolescents in both clinical and educational settings. After initially working in IT marketing consultancy, he changed career direction and worked within the Child & Adolescent Unit at the Priory Hospital. He now works extensively in schools, supporting children, parents and staff with areas including autism, ADHD, learning difficulties and mental health.

Born in 1982, Ben could be considered part of the first generation to grow up alongside rapidly developing technology. As a father of three young boys, and having witnessed the rise of major tech companies, he is passionate about empowering children to enjoy their childhood fully. He supports young people to grow in a balanced way, helping them make thoughtful and informed choices about social media and online engagement.

We strongly encourage all parents and carers to attend this important session as we work together to support our children in navigating the digital world safely and confidently.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Warm regards,

Miss Phillips
Head Teacher

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