

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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Newsletter  
December 2024



# MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL



**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**December is such a lovely month in a primary school with the buzz and excitement of the lead up to Christmas. It is always so busy and full of special events that will hopefully make lovely and lasting memories for your children and also for you.**

**We have had visits from elves, advent services and calendars, lantern parades, Rudolph runs, Christmas fairs, Christmas jumpers, Nativities, Christmas dinners, parties and trips out! This is all in between working hard on the rest of the curriculum of course. I would like to thank the staff for making all of these events possible and for their continued hard work and dedication. They all deserve a restful and happy Christmas and the opportunity to recharge, ready and refreshed for a new year.**

**I would also like to thank you, the parents and carers for the continued support you show to us. It means a great deal to all of our staff to know we are working as a team. Many thanks also for the beautiful gifts and kind Christmas wishes from you all, it is so very much appreciated.**

**From all of us at St. Joe's a very Merry, Safe and Peaceful Christmas,**

**Best Wishes Sarah Pascoe**

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

Many thanks sent to Deacon Tim and Deborah for leading the school in a beautiful Advent service on the first day of Advent. Advent is a very special time in the church and marks the coming of the baby Jesus. We also ended our festive season at school with a whole school Christmas service. Led by Father Jude.

## Beautiful Advent Service



## Beautiful Christmas Service



# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

**Whole School Nativity**



# FAITH IN ACTION



We had some wonderful gifts donated to the Mission Christmas Campaign

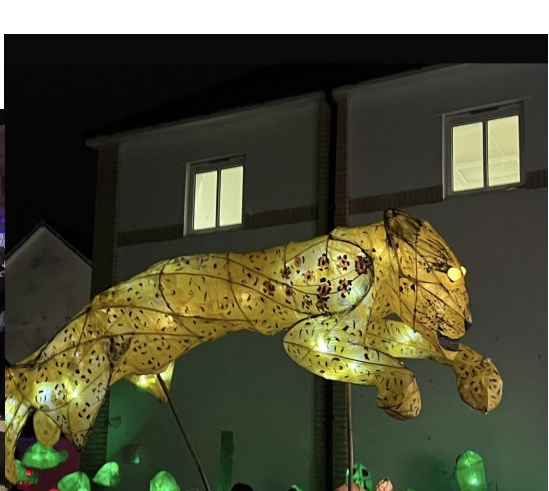


Rudolph Run - We raised over £800 for Rowcroft Hospice! Well Done St Joseph's





# LANTERN PARADE







# CHRISTMAS DINNER AND PARTIES



# STARS OF THE WEEK



# VALUE GUARDIANS

<p>Isaac Heyworth-Maclean Max Usher All of St. Francis</p>		<p>James McGlinchy Vianny Uhem Lily-Mai Martin</p>
<p><b>Year 1</b> Shariza Izzy</p> <p><b>Year 2</b> Samuel Laura</p>		<p>Lilia Violet</p>

# STARS OF THE WEEK



# VALUE GUARDIANS

<p><b>Year 3</b> Layla Daniel Noah</p>	<p><b>Year 4</b> Corey Andri Gracie E</p>		<p>Evan Whole class Elouise</p>
<p><b>Year 5</b> India Frankie Braxton</p>	<p><b>Year 6</b> Sam Emily Milena</p>		<p>James Frankie Gracie</p>





# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

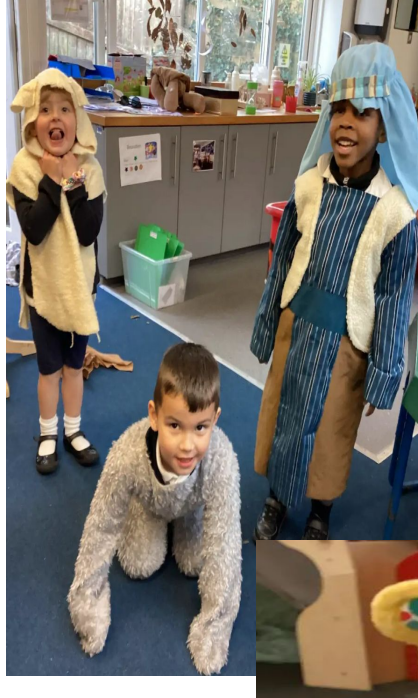
## Christmas in St. Francis Class







# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS







# ST. FRANCIS OUT AND ABOUT





# ST. FRANCIS OUT AND ABOUT







# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS



Such a festive month this month! We took part in the Rudolph run. Elfie came and decorated our classroom for us! We used our British Value of democracy and voted for some films. We had lots of party snacks for our class parties!

We went on a trip to Newton Abbot Museum to learn all about Newton Abbot in the past and we had SO much fun!



# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

In RE we made our own Jesse Tree as a way of preparing for Advent. Each day we journeyed through the stories on Jesus's family tree, looking at important events and people that led up to Jesus's birth.



We have been considering how we can help others less fortunate than ourselves by giving to charity. This term we had fun running a Rudolf sponsored run for Rowcroft hospice.



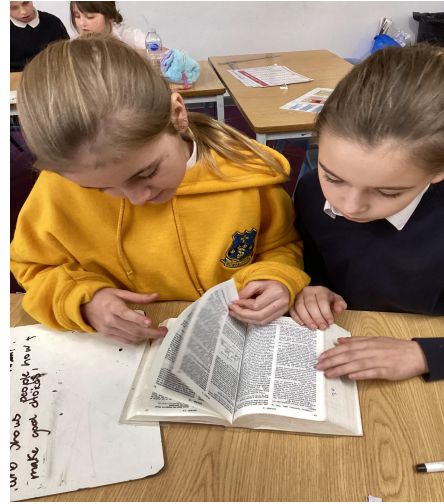
In History understanding chronology using timelines can be tricky. In our library with the large timeline we explored when all the different ages happened from Prehistoric to today.







# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS



We have had a super busy half term: as scientists we've begun looking at changes in materials and started by seeing which solutes would dissolve; RE has been a focal point and we have been studying prophecy and promise, learning how to find and interpret scripture from the Bible; and St Oscar have also had opportunity to take part in the lantern parade and Rudolf Run. Happy Christmas!



# After School Clubs:



Tuesday - Football

Monday - Friday - Breakfast Club from  
8:00 - £4 /session  
After School to 5pm £6.75 /  
to 5.30pm £10.00

Please note that any accounts that are  
£50 + in arrears you will not be able to  
use the breakfast and after school  
clubs.





# MERRY CHRISTMAS



Merry Christmas to you and your loved ones!  
May this festive season be filled with joy,  
warmth, laughter, and cherished moments  
that create lasting memories.  
Thank For for supporting St Joseph's this  
term.







**10% off birthday  
parties at  
iTOWN & iBounce  
using code:**

[iTOWN Newton Abbot](#)

**StJosephs10**

[iBounce Newton Abbot](#)







Attendance Matters!



Every Student, Every School, Every Day

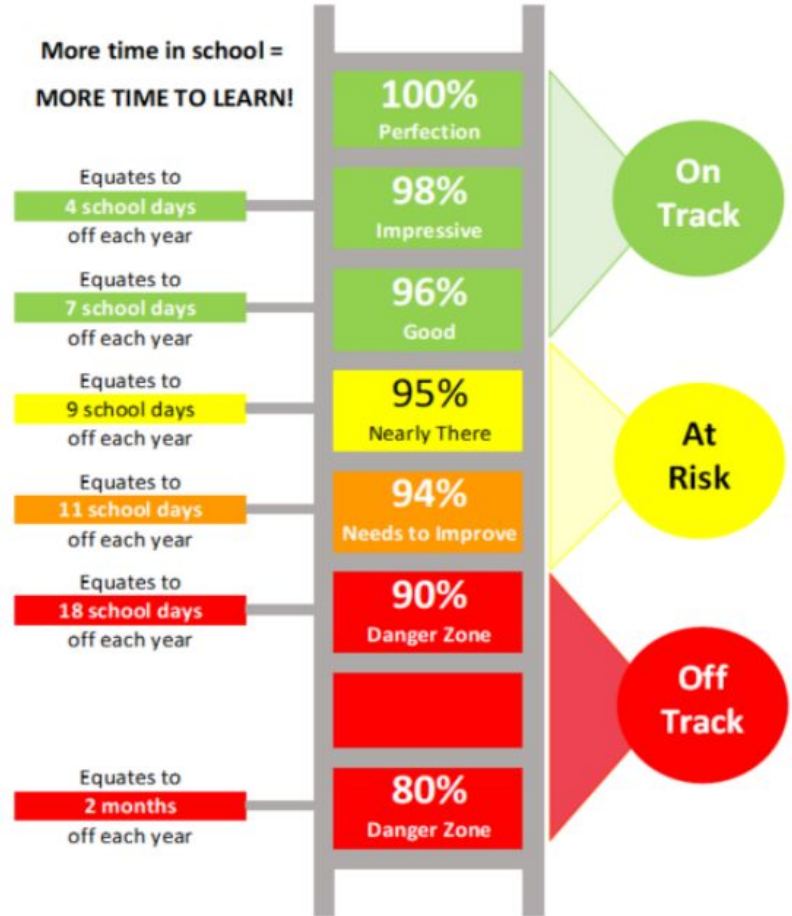
### Attendance Nov/Dec

	93.2%
	93.8%
	94.8%
	93.7%

### Important Notices & Reminders

If your child is late for morning registration, arriving late at school after 9am, please ensure you or their accompanying adult reports to the school office to ensure that they are registered.

How close are you to reaching the top?



# Attendance Roadmap

In line with the DfE Statutory Guidance (in force from 19th August 2024) we offer a supportive, stepped, attendance approach. We will offer a welcoming ethos with high expectations for all. We will assess data to identify absence trends & use preventative discussions/meetings with families to listen, understand & support to remove barriers. Where needed, we will formalise support to nurture improvement with Attendance Contracts & as a last resort we will consider intensifying support &/or enforce legal sanctions.



Did you know, arriving after the register has closed (30 mins from school starting) = an absence?



Did you know, 90% attendance = approx. 95 missed lessons/hours of learning?

## STEP 1 - Identify, Assess & Prevent

Our daily actions & processes aim to promote relationship building with children & families to prevent absence. This involves monitoring data trends & absence patterns to inform our conversations with you (& your child where age allows). The trigger for conversations is where absence is at risk of reaching the new National Threshold (**10 sessions (10 half days/5 days) within a 10 week rolling period**). Other daily actions involve promoting attendance positively, using praise & incentives, swift absence follow up, email &/or letter communication to raise your awareness of emerging concerns, processing requested or unrequested 'Term Time Exceptional Absence' & doing Home Visits to meet our safeguarding duties as required.

## STEP 2 - Early Absence Support

We move to this step if the National Threshold for absence is met (authorised or unauthorised) to prevent further absence occurring. Discussions & meetings will be offered to identify if early support or reasonable adjustments are needed. This will be done using discussions &/or meetings to create a supportive action plan. An Early Help Assessment (EHA) may be required for some support to be accessed along with a Team Around the Family (TAF) Meeting Process

Please talk to us about how we can support you &/or your child at any time.

## STEP 3 - Formalised Support

Where absence continues & initial support needs to be increased an Attendance Contract (AC) will be offered to formalise support. This is a 3-6 month nurturing plan of improvement to prevent further escalation. Achievable & individual targets will be set & reviewed regularly. Medical &/or other information will be actively sought at this point if required to work collaboratively with you & other agencies. An AC can run alongside other meetings e.g., TAF meeting.



Did you know, 90% attendance = 4 weeks of absence over a year?

## STEP 4 - Warnings - Concerns Remain

Where STEP 2 or STEP 3 support has been unsuccessful &/or declined, a 'Formal Warning' if AC has failed, or a 'Notice to Improve' Letter if no AC appropriate, will be issued to reinforce the need for immediate improvement. A Family Court Order such as an Education Supervision Order will also be considered as an alternative to prosecution.



Did you know, good attendance increases academic success?



## STEP 5 - Legal Action - No Improvement

Legal action (Penalty Notice or Prosecution) MAY be requested from the Local Authority (LA) if Unauthorised Term Time Absence is taken, or if overall absence continues to occur & reaches or exceeds the National Threshold for absence, despite STEPS 1-4 being attempted. Statutory Guidance States a Referral to Children's Social Care for children with 'Severe Absence' (less than 50%) should be considered to obtain 'Intense Support'.

### PENALTY NOTICES & LEGAL ACTION

**1st Offence** (after 19th August 2024) of **Term Time Leave** &/or **Irregular Attendance** (10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence or more) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. If paid within 21 days fine is reduced to £80 per parent, per child.  
**2nd Offence** within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) = Fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days, no reduction available.  
**3rd Offence** within 3 years (from 19th August 2024) NO PENALTY NOTICE considered. The case will be presented to **Magistrates' Court** under s444(1) or (1a) of the Education Act. If found guilty, a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child can be issued. Convictions for s444(1a) offences will show on DBS record.



# IS MY CHILD TOO ILL FOR SCHOOL?



**"THIS MORNING, HE HAD A STOMACH ACHE... BUT LOOK AT HIM NOW!"**

**MOMENTS MATTER, ATTENDANCE COUNTS.**

 **HM Government**

Head to the NHS website to find out more.



## Should I keep my **child off school?**

### Yes

#### Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

### No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



 SCAN ME

#### Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfex>.

<b>06.01.25</b>	<b>Spring Term 1 Begins Swimming for St. Teresa</b>	<b>14.02.25</b>	<b>Break up for half term</b>
<b>10.01.25</b>	<b>Feast of the Epiphany - Whole School to go to Church - Parents and Carers welcome</b>	<b>24.02.25</b>	<b>Non-Pupil Day</b>
<b>16.01.25</b>	St. Francis - Vision Screening	<b>25.02.25</b>	Spring Term 2 Begins
<b>13.01.25</b>	<b>Bikeability Week - Yr5/6</b>	<b>05.03.25</b>	1:30 Ash Wednesday Service
<b>14.01.25</b>	<b>Recycling workshops - whole school</b>	<b>06.03.25</b>	World Book Day
<b>21.01.25</b>	<b>St. Vincent/St. Oscar - Fire and Rescue Workshops</b>	<b>14.03.25</b>	Red Nose day
<b>23.01.25</b>	St Vincent - Kents Cavern	<b>19.03.25</b>	<b>Feast of St. Joseph - Whole School to go to Church - Parents and Carers welcome</b>
<b>03.02.25</b>	<b>Children's Mental Health Week</b>	<b>24.03.25</b>	St. Oscar Romero Day
<b>11.02.25</b>	<b>Safer Internet Day</b>	<b>04.04.25</b>	<b>Break up for Easter Holiday</b>

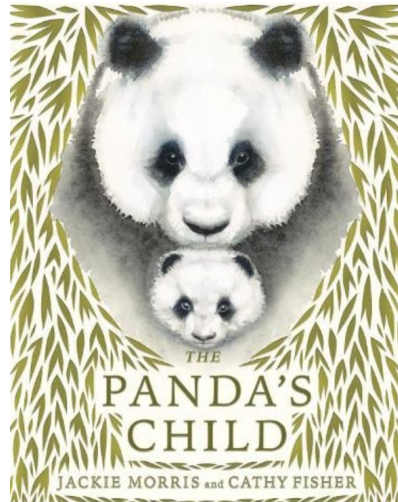
**‘ Today a  
reader,  
tomorrow  
a leader. ’**

***Margaret Fuller***

BOOK  
RECOMMENDATIONS

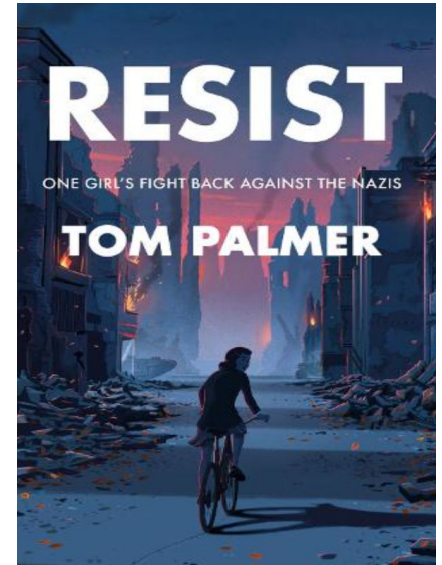
**The Panda’s Child by Jackie Morris and Cathy Fisher**

Only a boy and the spirit of the forest can save a panda’s child in this generational tale of nature, empathy and conservation. This large-format hardback would make the ideal gift book for Christmas or a glittering gem to read to groups of children at the end of a long day at school. Inside the gold foil-adorned cover there’s sumptuous artwork with full-colour double-page spreads. With a lyrical verse story, The Panda’s Child is a joy to read to children in Year 2 and one that will inspire children to consider and discuss how people and animals can live together.



**Resist by Tom Palmer**

Set in the village of Velp the Netherlands during the WW2 Nazi occupation, ‘Resist’ follows teenage Edda as she feels compelled to help the resistance in the face of oppressive control, arrests and starvation. Based on the experiences of Audrey Hepburn, this is a thought-provoking read, and an ideal text to discuss with Year 6 classes studying WW2, the Holocaust and Anne Frank. Full of warmth, empathy, emotion and determination, Resist is a fast-moving and gripping page-turner that will inspire upper KS2 readers to read more historical fiction.





## **SAFEGUARDING**

Safeguarding at St. Joseph's is always a priority. Should you have any enquiries or concerns, please contact our Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection: Mrs Day or Mrs Pascoe on 01626 352559. Our governor for child protection is Tim van Kroonenburg.

### **WELFARE**

Our Family Support Worker is Rachel Ripley. Please let us know if you would like her to contact you for ANY support. Everyone needs a Rachel in their lives!



### **ATTENDANCE**

*Hi, my name is Steph, I'm the Attendance and Welfare Officer here at St Joseph's. I monitor attendance regularly to ensure that, where possible, every child is in school on time every day. If you have any concerns around your child's attendance, please leave a message with the office and I will contact you.*



### **CPOMS and Operation encompass**

At St. Joseph's we use CPOMs as our system for recording information that we consider to be safeguarding information. Further information about the programme can be found here -

**<https://www.cpoms.co.uk/privacy-statement/>**

Operation Encompass is the reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has exposed to, or involved in, any domestic incident.

Operation Encompass will ensure that a member of the school staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to liaise with the police and to use the information that has been shared, in confidence, while ensuring that the school is able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children, or their families, who have been involved in, or exposed to, a domestic abuse incident.






# Festive Fortnight

Daily from 10am-4pm  
Monday 9th to Sunday 22nd December

Unique and Handmade Christmas Gifts

**ULLACOMBEFARM**  
HAYTOR ROAD, BOVEY TRACEY  
NEWTON ABBOT, TQ13 9LL  
Telephone: 01364 661341  
www.ullacombefarm.co.uk

Ullacombe Farm  
Proper Moorish



Childrens Chocolate Lolly Making for Santa

Bring the Children to Newton Abbot Library to make Chocolate Lollies, one to keep, one to leave for Santa!

Saturday 21st December

Where? Newton Abbot Library



# ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

All The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, travelling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

- ### 1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Monitor screen time, reading harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Use clear boundaries, encourage self-regulation of online safety and use parent controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.
- ### 2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, heaters and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overload and the heat from lit decorations pose an elevated fire safety challenge. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent fires from spreading.
- ### 3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

Many families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to airport laws. Best practices to follow and other extra travel tips to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.
- ### 4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES

Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any dietary needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications for the consumption of others. Teaching children how to substitute for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.
- ### 5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Encourage hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.
- ### 6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD

Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for parents and passengers. Distractions, drowsy driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate driving. Encourage children to remain attentive, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.
- ### 7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS

Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical fire and tripping hazards if misused. Frayed wires, tangled Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially on busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.
- ### 8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS

Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have safety features or parental controls. Discourage children with and discouraging packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.
- ### 9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE

Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation, create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.
- ### 10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment, and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults for driving, supervision and provide alternative options for parents. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert  
 James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and foster safer environments.  
  
 #WakeUpWednesday The National College

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## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO CHOOSE RESPECT

Sometimes, differences between children can escalate into bullying, potentially impacting their mental health in a way that can persist into adulthood. While it's natural to disagree sometimes, teaching children the importance of respect is essential – especially in difficult situations. This guide provides strategies for encouraging considerate behaviour, even during a dispute, to foster a kinder, more inclusive environment for everyone.

- ### 1 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

As adults, we play a crucial role in modelling respect. Observe and learn from our actions every day. The model of the way you interact with others in front of children. Keep in mind that you should always approach others with an attitude of mutual respect, even if you disagree with them. Demonstrating this behaviour can influence young people and help them to resolve their own conflicts in a healthy way.
- ### 2 AGREE TO DISAGREE

Make sure children know that it's fine to have differing opinions – and that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean you can't get along or respect each other's point of view. Help them understand that sometimes we can 'agree to disagree', using active listening skills when doing this can also help to build empathy and understanding of others.
- ### 3 PROMOTE ACTIVE LISTENING

Teach children about the importance of active listening. Invite, or gently offer to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting. Before responding in a way that shows you understand their viewpoint, even (or perhaps especially) if you disagree with it. This makes people feel respected and allows for a better comprehension of their point of view, which in turn can make it easier for you to communicate your own options to them.
- ### 4 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF "I" STATEMENTS

If a child finds themselves in disagreement with someone, it can be useful to encourage them to use "I" statements during the discussion. Framing their thoughts and feelings using "I" statements, such as "I feel..." or "I think..." can help them avoid an accusatory tone and encourages them to take responsibility for their own emotions.
- ### 5 FOCUS ON BEHAVIOUR, NOT CHARACTER

When disagreements happen, encourage children to focus on critiquing and addressing the specific actions or behaviours that caused the issue, rather than attacking the person's character. For example, "I didn't like how you interrupted me" is better than "You're rude". This can help children avoid hurting someone's feelings, which is likely to inflame the situation.
- ### 6 STAY CALM AND TAKE BREAKS

It's perfectly normal to feel upset during a disagreement – especially if it's getting heated. Remind children that if they feel overwhelmed, they should try to take deep breaths or even go for a short break to help them stay composed. If a conversation becomes too intense, remove them from it by suggesting continuing it later or in a different setting. This can prevent things getting out of hand, allowing cooler heads to prevail.
- ### 7 START CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RESPECT

Talk openly to children about what respect means to you and to them. Discuss how they might show respect to each other, to friends, to strangers and even to people we might disagree with. You could use examples of considerate or inconsiderate behaviour in books, films or TV to open discussions about the importance of giving others due regard.
- ### 8 SEEK COMMON GROUND

When a disagreement has occurred between children, they may find it hard to move past it. You can support them in finding a more positive way forward by helping identify areas of agreement or common ground with the other party. This can help to build bridges between differing opinions and foster a more cooperative atmosphere, as well as preventing those involved from denouncing each other.
- ### 9 AVOID MAKING THINGS PERSONAL

It's important that we make it clear to children they must avoid name-calling, insults or derogatory remarks in a disagreement with others. Respectful language sets a positive tone and helps to keep conversations productive. Reminding children to stay calm and take breaks – as mentioned previously – can help them avoid getting too emotionally involved, saying or doing something hurtful.
- ### 10 REFLECT AND LEARN

After a child has had a disagreement, encourage them to reflect on the experience and think about what they can learn from it. Encourage them to share how they improved their communication skills to handle conflicts more effectively in the future. You could use a role play, writing and drawing pictures, or hypothetical examples to further develop their skills in resolving conflict during a disagreement.

Meet Our Expert  
 The anti-bullying alliance (ABA) co-ordinates anti-bullying work each year. ABA is a coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to have their voice heard on bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow and learn. They welcome members from any organisation or individual that supports this vision and support a free network of thousands of schools and colleges.  
  
 #WakeUpWednesday The National College