

# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Coombeshead Road, Newton Abbot TQ12 1PT

Tel: 01626 352559

e-mail: [admin@sjna.uk](mailto:admin@sjna.uk)



Newsletter  
November 2024

# MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL



**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

**November has been jam packed with opportunities for us to practise and demonstrate our Gospel and British Values to the full.**

**The month began with anti-bullying week, giving us an opportunity to revisit exactly what is meant by bullying and how we can all play a part in treating everyone with mutual respect. We marked Remembrance Day by joining a national live assembly to reflect and thank those who gave their lives for the sake of our nation. We were able to raise money as part of our charitable work for 'Children in Need' by going spotacular for the day.**

**During Road Safety week we focussed on how we can ensure we are safe when we are near or on roads.**

**Finally, during parliament week, we began to unpick how our democracy is run and exactly how parliament is organised. We explored with the children why it is important for them to know about this. It is so important to us as a school to ensure opportunities and experiences like these are at the forefront of our curriculum.**

**I expect that everyone is very busily preparing for Christmas I hope that this is a happy time for you all. Best Wishes and God Bless,**

**Sarah Pascoe**

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

Thank you to all of those of you who responded to our RE and Catholic Life questionnaire at parents evening this week.

The results were very heartening.

In most areas 100% of parents agreeing or strongly agreeing with our statements. So we know that children feel happy and safe at school. The school is a supportive and joyful community and a place where your children's spiritual and moral education is developed.

There were a few questions where some people ticked 'don't know.' Therefore I will endeavour to answer those questions on the next pages.

No other boxes were ticked for any of the questions.

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

7. CL3.4 I understand the school's mission and I am supportive of it. (5% 'don't know')

Our Mission Statement:

To Live, Love and Learn in God's Way.

Everything we do at school is done in God's way, trying to love one another, treat each other with respect and be the best people we can be.

Ask your child they will be able to talk about the school's mission.

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

## 9. RE1.2 My child is making progress in RE. (30% 'Don't Know')

This is reported formally in your child's annual report in detail. This is in parity with all the other core subjects. It will also be discussed at parent consultation meetings.

## 11. RE2.6 The school supports my child's spiritual and moral development. (10% 'Don't Know')

Our whole curriculum offer is designed around academic, spiritual and moral development. We are passionate to develop our children holistically to be great learners and the best people they can be.

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

## 14. CW2.9 The School works well with the Parish. (20% 'Don't Know')

Deacon Tim and his wife Deborah are our main links to the Parish. They come in weekly to work with our chaplains and are dedicated to St. Joseph's. Tim is also a school governor.

We have whole school Mass and Liturgies at least once every half term said by the Parish Priests. We also go to Mass at the Parish of St. Joseph several times a year.

Many of our charity raising events are linked to our local Parish and the children's work is displayed at St. Joseph's church.

# THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL

13.. CW2.9 I am invited to be involved in the prayer life of the school. (10% 'Don't Know')



Absolutely you are, you are always welcome to join our whole school Masses and Liturgies. These are published on the monthly newsletter in advance and we would be delighted for you to come.

We also hold a class act of worship each term for you to come and share with you own children. This is always well attended. We hold events that include inviting you to pray at home as a family. For example the lenten promises that go home during lent.

# STARS OF THE WEEK



# VALUE GUARDIANS


<p>Kaden Harris Ellie Rowe Alesha Reeve Maya Tippett</p>		<p>Isaac Cotes Caleb Dobson Leah-Marie Elijah Evans James McGlinchy</p>
<p><b>Year 1</b> Tobias Thea Thaaragan Jack</p> <p><b>Year 2</b> Oliver K Phoebe Jayda Violet</p>		<p>Willow Samanta Izzy Reggie</p>



# STARS OF THE WEEK



# VALUE GUARDIANS

<p><b>Year 3</b> Archie Gracie O Harry Amelia</p>	<p><b>Year 4</b> Elouise Bella Leo Jason</p>		<p>Leo Wilbur Daniel Corey</p>
<p><b>Year 5</b> India Amelia Michelle Logan</p>	<p><b>Year 6</b> Dheshawn Federico Junior Gracie</p>		<p>Dheshawn Milena Praise Frankie</p>

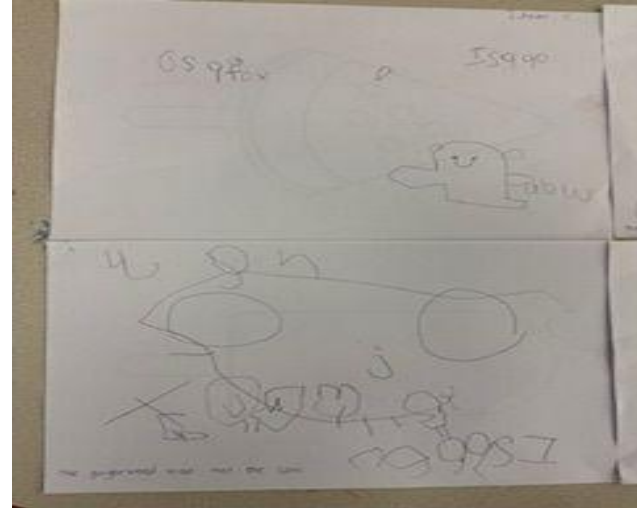


# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

In St. Francis class we found strange footprints that led us to ingredients.

We followed the instructions and made Gingerbread men.

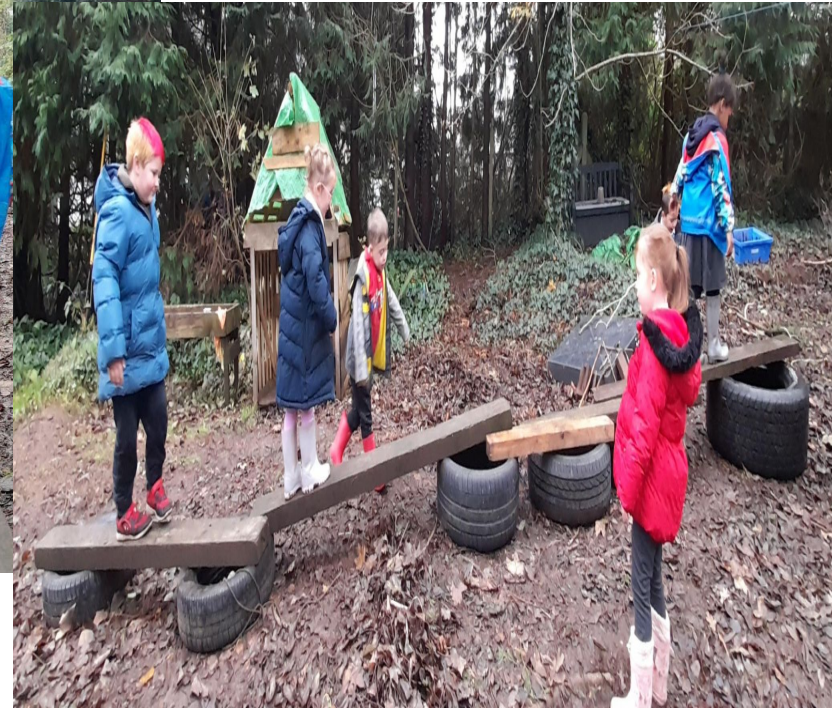
We soon discovered that the Gingerbread man had been running around the school. He also left us a book to read. This helped us to begin our journey as storytellers.





# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

Building Bridges to help save the Gingerbread man in the forest school.



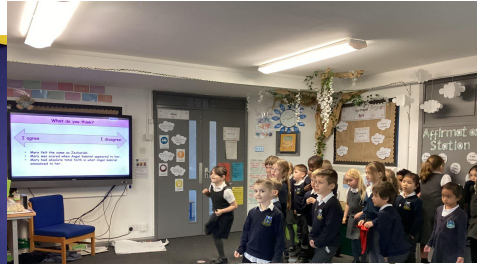


# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

How will St Vincent class help others and share the light of Jesus this advent? We will raise money for charity.

**Our pledges**

Help our grown ups  
Be kind  
Say kind things  
Help our class  
Spread the love of God  
Spread the love of God  
Spread the love of God



What an amazing month we have had that has been full of learning!  
In RE we have been looking at advent. Year 2s made pledges for themselves and Year 1s made a class pledge collaboratively.

We saw snow!!!!



In English our book this term is 'Nibbles the book monster'. We found clues that he was living at our school and have been making traps to find him. We caught Nasher his slightly 'less nibbly' cousin!



We visited NAC for a sports based afternoon. We had so much fun meeting children from other schools and having a go at all of the fun activities.



# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

As Historians, we enjoyed visiting Exeter Museum, where we saw many artefacts linked to our learning on Ancient Egyptians.



We went on a fantastic adventure to the city of Exeter on the train. For Geography we focused on what features we would see in a city, compared to a village and town.



As we approach Advent we visited the Cathedral and nativity and talked about the true meaning of Christmas.. It's the largest nativity we've ever seen!

We noticed how Exeter is helping everyone think about the environment - just like Pope Francis has done.





# CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

We have been working really hard in RE on Prophecy and Promise, making links to the scripture for Isaiah and Elijah

Our history has a focus on the Anglo-Saxons. We have become historians finding out why the Saxons invaded - what were the push and pull factors, together with the mystery of Sutton Hoo.

As mathematicians, we have worked very hard with multiplication, division and fractions - well done!



# SUMMER TERM CLUBS:

## Lunchtime Clubs:

Monday - Choir

Tuesday - Chess

Wednesday - Lego

Thursday - Sewing

-Prop club (Y6)

Friday - Art



## After School Clubs:

Wednesday - Drama

Thursday - 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.





Dear Parents / Carers

Thank you to all the families who continue to support Cookie Friday!

This term Asda have introduced a 'Cashpot for Schools' initiative which we have signed up to. So far you have raised £250.90 for our school. To support St Joseph's, all you have to do is opt in through the Asda Rewards app, shop and scan in store or shop online at Asda.com.

Our annual Christmas Fayre will be held on Friday 6th December. We will be having a non uniform day on Friday 29th November in return for bottles for the Tombola. Raffle prizes are still being sourced. If you are able to donate a prize to the raffle it would be greatly appreciated! Thank you to those parents who have offered to help and also to those who have agreed to run their own stall.

You should have all received your child's Christmas Card design from IQ Cards by now. The deadline for ordering is midnight on 27th November. Details of how to order are on your child's form. I can provide these details again if you need them.

Good news...! We have been offered a discount code from iBounce and iTown for 10% off birthday parties this year. If you would like to take advantage of this offer please use the code **StJosephs10** when booking.

Thank You  
Susi Mariadas



10% off birthday parties at iTown & iBounce using code:

**StJosephs10**







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

[iTOWN Newton Abbot](#)

**StJosephs10**

[iBounce Newton Abbot](#)







Attendance Matters!



Every Student, Every School, Every Day

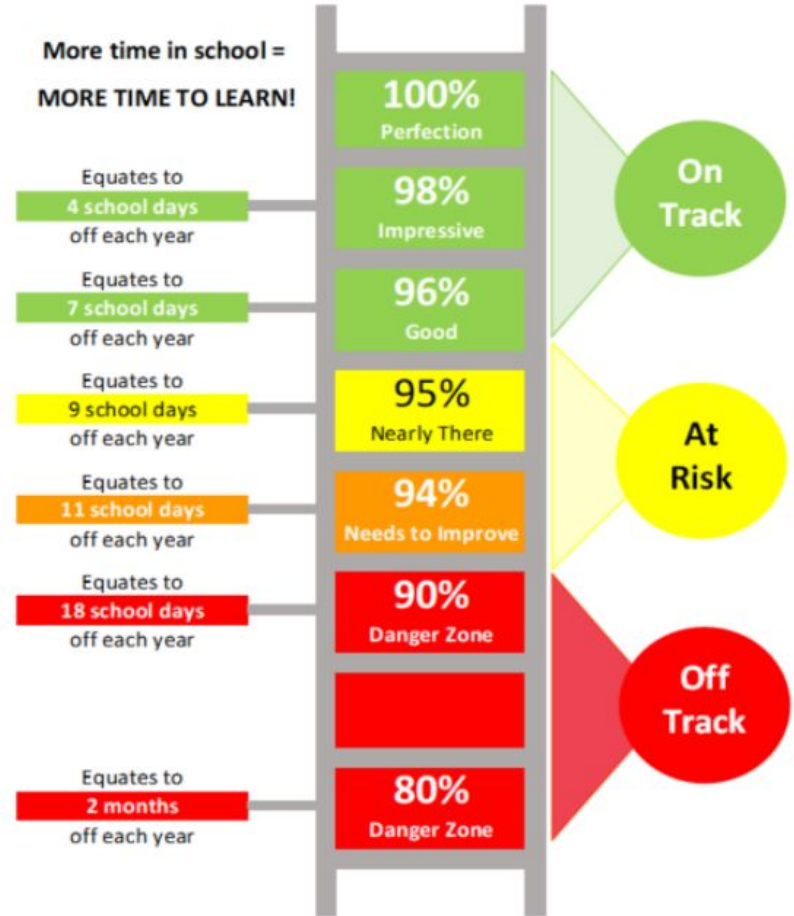
## Attendance Oct/Nov

	94.95%
	95.64%
	95.92%
	94.18%

## 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>.

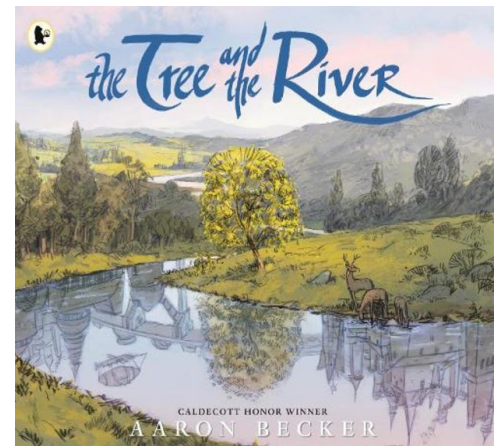
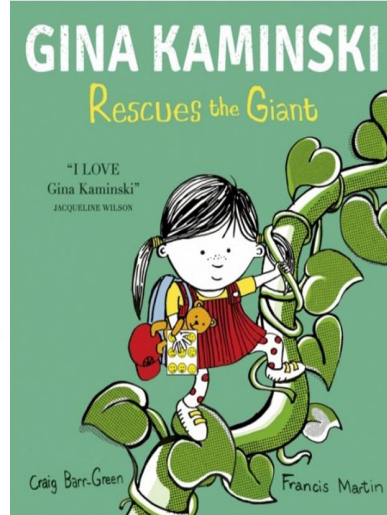
<b>03.12.24</b>	<b>Advent Service - School Hall 11:15</b>	<b>06.01.25</b>	<b>Spring Term 1 Begins</b>
<b>04.12.24</b>	<b>LANTERN PARADE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>10.01.25</b>	<b>Feast of the Epiphany - Whole School to go to Church - Parents and Carers welcome</b>
<b>05.12.24</b>	<b>RUDOLPH RUN</b>	<b>13.01.25</b>	<b>Bikeability Week - Yr5/6</b>
<b>11.12.24</b>	<b>LANTERN PARADE - NEWTON ABBOT - 6:00pm</b>	<b>14.01.25</b>	<b>Recycling workshops - whole school</b>
<b>17.12.24</b>	<b>Whole School Christmas Nativity 2:00pm and 6:00pm</b>	<b>21.01.25</b>	<b>St. Vincent/St. Oscar - Fire and Rescue Workshops</b>
<b>18.12.24</b>	<b>Christmas Dinner and Party</b>	<b>03.02.25</b>	<b>Children's Mental Health Week</b>
<b>20.12.24</b>	<b>Break Up for Christmas Holidays</b>	<b>11.02.25</b>	<b>Safer Internet Day</b>
		<b>14.02.25</b>	<b>Break up for half term</b>

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

***Margaret Fuller***

BOOK  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Confident, autistic protagonist, Gina Kaminski, comes up with a plan that involves no magic beans but plenty of cake, correcting the original plot in this distinctive modern version of the Jack and the Beanstalk story. This book will empower children to take control of their own narratives and appeal to fans of fractured fairy tales and character-driven stories. Highly recommended and great to read with children in Year 1. [Read our full review.](#)



**The Tree and the River by Aaron Becker**

In this wordless masterpiece, a majestic tree stands witness to the passage of time and the evolution of civilizations along a winding river. Through exquisite artwork, Becker portrays the ebb and flow of human existence, from humble beginnings to the rise and fall of civilizations. With its stunning visuals and thought-provoking themes, The Tree and the River is a timeless exploration of nature's resilience.



## **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.

# TRANSITION DATES



## Transition Dates - Summer 2025

### Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March

**Welcome Event at 6pm** - Introduction for all children and parents

### Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June

**Rising Stars Day** - A smaller induction day, targeted at children with SEND who are particularly anxious about the transition to secondary school.

### Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

**Parents Transition Meeting** - 6 - 7.00pm

### Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July

**Year 6 Step-up Day 1** - Induction for all children.

### Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July

**Year 6 Step-up Day 2** - Induction for all children.



Coombeshead Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1PT  
Tel: 01626 201800, Email: [welcome@coombesheadacademy.org.uk](mailto:welcome@coombesheadacademy.org.uk)  
Head of School: Helen Coulson

Education South West: Working together so children can lead great lives.



# Victorian Evening

& late night shopping, 5pm - 8pm

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December



*A Victorian themed charity market event  
with free children's entertainment and a  
charity raffle in the Market Square*

**PLUS**

**Live Music**

Walkabout Acts

**Street food in Courtenay Street**

FREE visits to Father Christmas

**Fireside selfies in St Leonard's Clock Tower**



**Animals in Distress**

presents

## The Dog Friendly Christmas Carol Service



*Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December*

**Wolborough Street (near Carpetright)**



# LANTERN PARADE

& late night shopping, 5pm - 8pm

*Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December*

*Students from local primary schools parading  
from Bearnas Primary School at 6.30pm to  
St Leonard's Clock Tower.*

PLUS

Live music

FREE visits to Father Christmas

Fireside selfies in St Leonard's Clock Tower

Street food



Public lantern making workshop in December  
(check website for more details)

# Mayor's CAROL SERVICE

& late night shopping, 5pm - 8pm

*Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December*

*6.30pm at St Leonard's Clock Tower*

PLUS  
**Street food**  
FREE visits to Father Christmas  
**Fireside selfies in St Leonard's Clock Tower**  
Live music

**ROCK CHOIR**

# ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

At The National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** experts empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical advice to be able to inform 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).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WORRY AND ANXIETY

Worry and anxiety are common emotions experienced by children, often triggered by uncertainty or fear. While worry involves concern about future events, anxiety is a persistent feeling of dread or apprehension. Current statistics indicate a rising prevalence of anxiety disorders among children, and this guide has some expert advice on understanding and addressing these concerns.

### UNDERSTANDING WORRY AND ANXIETY

Worry and anxiety are emotional responses to stress or uncertainty. Worry is typically associated with potential misfortune, while anxiety is characterised by feelings of fear, apprehension or unease. Both can manifest themselves through symptoms such as restlessness, fatigue or muscle tension. Understanding the distinction between worry and anxiety is crucial for effectively addressing these concerns in children.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

Unresolved worry and anxiety in childhood can have potentially lifelong impacts on a person's mental health and wellbeing. Chronic anxiety may increase the risk of developing anxiety disorders, depression or other mental health conditions later in life. Additionally, unresolved worry and anxiety can negatively impact self-esteem, confidence and overall resilience, which is essential to address these concerns proactively and provide appropriate support and intervention.

### THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Excessive worry and anxiety can have profound effects on children's mental and emotional health. It may interfere with their ability to concentrate, sleep or participate in daily activities. Chronic worry and anxiety can also lead to physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach aches or difficulty breathing. Left unchecked, these concerns can escalate and potentially contribute to the development of anxiety disorders later in life.

### DIFFERENTIATING WORRY FROM ANXIETY

While worry and anxiety share similarities – in that they both involve concerns about possible trouble – anxiety tends to be more constant and overwhelming. Worry may come and go depending on circumstances, whereas anxiety tends to persist regardless of the situation. It's essential to recognise when the former crosses into the latter, as anxiety can significantly impact a child's daily functioning and wellbeing.

### THE EMOTIONAL TOLL

The emotional impact of worry and anxiety on children can be significant, affecting their overall quality of life and wellbeing. Children experiencing chronic worry or anxiety may feel overwhelmed, irritable or helpless. They may also withdraw from social activities or avoid situations that trigger their anxiety, leading to feelings of isolation or loneliness. Addressing these concerns early can help prevent long-term emotional distress and promote healthy coping strategies.

### ACADEMIC & SOCIAL IMPACTS

Impacts on the academic performance and social interactions of children and young people are very possible. Frequent worry or anxiety may impair concentration, memory and problem-solving skills, making it difficult for children to succeed at school. Anxiety can also hinder social development by causing children and young people to avoid social situations or to struggle with communication and interpersonal relationships, potentially leading to feelings of isolation or exclusion.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Parents and educators can foster a supportive environment by encouraging children to express their worries and anxieties openly. Actively listening and acknowledging young people's emotions can help them feel understood and supported, reducing the situation's intensity. Creating opportunities for regular check-ins and discussions about emotions can promote healthy coping strategies and strengthen communication bonds.

### CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Parents and educators play a crucial role in creating a supportive environment that promotes emotional wellbeing. Establishing routines, providing predictability and offering reassurance can help alleviate anxiety and create a sense of security for children. Fostering a culture of empathy and understanding, where children feel safe enough to express their emotions and seek support when needed.

### TEACH COPING STRATEGIES

Empowering children with effective coping strategies is essential for managing worry and anxiety. Encourage the use of relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness or progressive muscle relaxation to calm anxious thoughts and promote a sense of composure. Additionally, teaching positive self-talk and problem-solving skills can help children develop resilience and confidence in managing challenging situations.

### SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP

Recognising when to seek professional help is vital for addressing significant or persistent worry and anxiety in children. If worry or anxiety significantly impacts a child's daily functioning, interferes with their relationships or academic performance, or causes significant distress, it may be necessary to consult with a mental health practitioner. Early intervention can prevent long-term consequences and promote positive outcomes for children's psychological wellbeing.

### Meet Our Expert

Adam Gilllett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penitance Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which collaborates with schools on improving their mental health provisions.



At The National College, our **WakeUpWednesday** experts empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical advice to be able to inform 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).

## What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HOW TO COMBAT ONLINE BULLYING

Defined as "ongoing hurtful behaviour towards someone online", cyber-bullying makes its victims feel upset, uncomfortable and unsafe. In the digital world, it has numerous forms – such as hurtful comments on a person's posts or profile; deliberate leaving them out of group chats; sharing embarrassing images or videos of someone; or spreading gossip about them. Cyber-bullying can severely impact a young person's mental health – so, in support of Anti-Bullying Week, we've provided a list of tips to help trusted adults know what to look for and how to respond to it.

### 1. GET CONNECTED

Playing online games together with your child or connecting with their social networks (providing they're old enough) is not only fun but also an excellent way of establishing some common ground to discuss things you've both seen or done online – as well as talking to your child's friends or other children communicating with in the digital world.

### 2. KEEP TALKING

Regular chats with young people about their online lives are a good practice in general, but they can also help prevent cyber-bullying situations. Topics you might want to cover include why it's important to only connect online with people we know and trust, and why passwords should always remain secret (even from our best friends).

### 3. STAY VIGILANT

Observe your child while they're using technology and just out of sight they've used it. Are they acting normally, or out of character? Possible signs of a problem may include seeming quiet or withdrawn, lumpy or anxious, angry or repeatedly deleting their phone. When you feel it's the right time, report their parents to the app so they can see if everything is OK.

### 4. MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE

If an online bullying incident does occur, it may take a while before you could see any signs of what's happened. Just gently remind them that they can always come to you with any problems – and that you might also suggest a trusted family member whose ears could turn to, in case they feel too embarrassed to tell you directly.

### 5. BE PREPARED TO LISTEN

When conversations about online bullying do take place, they're likely to be critical, emotional and upsetting for both you and your child while they're bringing you up to speed, and try to show any judgement or criticism – even if you think you're exactly the only one who would have hoped.

### 6. EMPower YOUR CHILD

Depending on their age, your child might not want a parent taking the actions for them. In that case, talk through their options with them (including the perpetrator deleting the app and so on), or allowing your child to choose the path they take, you're putting them in control but are also demonstrating that you're there to support them along the way.

### 7. REPORT BULLIES ONLINE

Cyber-bullying often takes place through platforms and social media platforms so your child, if this is happening to your child, encourage them to report the offender to the app or game in question. Most apps and games have reporting tools specifically to stamp out abusive behaviour and protect users.

### 8. ENCOURAGE EMPATHY

Protecting themselves online isn't the priority of course, but young people who do feel empowered are likely to be more confident enough to call someone out on their abusive behaviour online, they can all confidentially report their parents to the app so they can see if everything is OK.

### 9. SEEK EXPERT ADVICE

Victims of online bullying frequently experience feelings of isolation and anxiety, a loss of self-esteem and potentially even thoughts of self-harm or suicide. If you or your child are experiencing cyber-bullying that has affected your child's mental health, seek psychological support for them. There are some useful contacts detailed in the central panel below.

### 10. INVOLVE THE AUTHORITIES

If the nature of any online bullying makes you suspect the child is in danger (or an imminent physical danger) – or if you've reported the perpetrator of explicit images or videos of someone being bullied – then you should gather evidence and report the incidents to your local police force.

### Meet Our Expert

Debrae Rutherford is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and online safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government concerning internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

