



## Autumn Term Newsletter 2 – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025



Dear Parent/Carers,

Another fantastically action packed half term has literally flown past. The children have... been bursting with energy and a true enthusiasm for learning, experienced wonderful trips out and received special, magical visitors in. I hope you all have a peaceful Christmas packed with laughter, love and joy.

### Book Share

Thank you to everyone, who attended our book sharing afternoon, all the way back in October. The event once again highlighted how our children prove consistently enthusiastic to share their work, which accentuates their pride and sense of achievement in their learning.



### Wrap around provision

Every morning from 7.30am and every afternoon until 5.00pm, we have a superb team, who organise and lead activities for the children before and after school. Make sure you contact the school office for further information or to book a place for your child. Here you can see the children participating in a little gingerbread cooking and decorating; featuring as one of the many fantastic activities offered, across the course of this term.



## Display Boards

All display boards are riddled with colour and information, which provoke thought and curiosity towards our learning. Subsequently, it highlights the true pride that we all share for creating an enticing and dynamic school.



## Attendance

High attendance is imperative for every child's academic success and wellbeing at school. Each day of learning builds on the last, helping children to grow in knowledge, confidence, and friendship. When pupils attend school regularly, they are able to fully engage in lessons, develop strong relationships with their teachers and classmates, and take part in the rich opportunities we offer. Please ensure you support good attendance by enabling your child or children to arrive on time each day, ready to learn and flourish together. We monitor children's attendance and punctuality closely. When necessary, we report concerns to the Local Authority and take the appropriate action. Please also remember – **holidays during term time are not permitted and will from January incur a fine.**



## Nursery

All children within are provision are super inquisitive and curious learners, who love asking lots of questions and conversing freely with others. We are extremely fortunate to have a wonderfully green and beautifully scenic outdoor environment, where the children thoroughly relish walking, exploring and playing





### Remembrance Service

Remembrance Service is always a special and important occasion here at Ash, as many of our children have relatives who serve in the armed forces. This year, our year six children assumed the role of WW1 soldiers in the trenches, sharing their exceptionally emotive writing through the genre of diary entries. The year five read their creatively structured poppy fuelled poetry and the hall was adorned with colourful poppy themed artwork.





# READING

Make sure you read as much as possible over the holidays with your child or children because the benefits are boundless.



Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read.

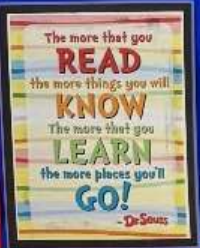



Theodor Seuss Geisel was born in 1904, Springfield, Massachusetts and lived for 87 years. He is better known as the world-famous author Dr Seuss!

Dr Seuss is also an illustrator and cartoonist. He has written and illustrated over 60 books! He is known for his nonsense words, playful rhymes, unusual creatures and worlds filled with imagination!

Find out more at [www.drseussenterprises.com](http://www.drseussenterprises.com)

Some of his books include...



**WHICH ONE IS YOUR FAVOURITE?**

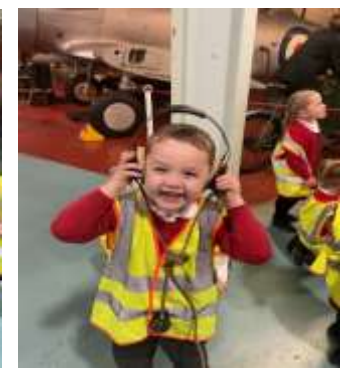
## Houses of Parliament

An absolutely brilliant day was experienced by our year six children, as they travelled to London and wandered the floors of the House of Lords. Rubbing shoulders with notable peers and Baronesses, desperately wanting to pass laws concerning free weekly sweet allowances and entitlements, for all children under the age of 11. Unfortunately, on this occasion, it proved an impossible task... however the political hook proved infectious and there are definitely future MPs in our midst. Huge thank you to Ilchester for organising and generously inviting us to share the experience with them.



## Yeovilton – Fleet Air Arm Museum

Our Reception, Yr1 and Yr2 children had a marvellous experience exploring our local Naval Air base; learning a little about the history of aviation, observing a variety of aircraft take off / land and thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to dress up. A wonderfully inspiring resource, literally on our doorstep.



## Charity and Community Generosity

Support for Children in Need, Save the Children and School in a Bag have been generously supported by our wonderful community and children this term. Surprised and elated, we were even visited by an exceptionally renown yellow bear.



## Musical Celebration

Quipped with mainly cellos and violins, voices, a piano and a couple of guitars thrown in for good measure, KS2 exemplified their musical prowess, yet again, in a wonderful afternoon performance. Confidence was flowing, in harmony with their rhythmical melodies as they highlighted their learning from across the term.

A special thank you goes to Sephi Williams from Somerset Music, who organised and orchestrated the whole occasion - obviously with a little help from school. It truly was captivating and magical. They are a wonderfully talented little bunch.



### **Another special visitor**

Arriving by helicopter, in howling winds and torrential rain, Santa and his little helpers remained undeterred, spreading a little sparkle of magic to a rather gloomy day. With a degree of anxiety, to say the least, Mrs Gibbons and all the staff held their breath, as the helicopter approached the school field. Certain the rotor blades were going to clip the tree branches; they were all amazed and overjoyed (relieved) when it landed perfectly.



## Christmas Lunch

Festive spirit was enjoyed by all, as we shared a wonderful Christmas hot dinner or Christmas packed lunch. Jokes were a plenty, hats were a slipping and stickers were a sticking. All children loved the crackers and the entertaining music that was played.



## Beauty and The Beast

A great experience for all our Reception and KS1 children, as they were fully immersed and absorbed in a pantomime for the afternoon.



## Christmas Nativities

Simply stunning and spectacularly memorable performances from all children within the nativity plays. Every single child's energy and enthusiasm throughout the rehearsals and their final performances was apparent. Clarity and harmony, resonated from each voice as they sang, alongside confidence and true stage presence, whilst delivering their lines. They were all truly memorable performances and an absolute joy to watch.





## Father Christmas visits again!

Thankyou once again to our wonderful PTA, who happen to know Father Christmas. Luckily, he was available on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December, taking sometime out of his exceptionally busy schedule to visit us, once again. Conversing with Santa, the children were in awe and wonder. Magical, special and what an absolute treat.



## Christmas Tree Decorated

Once again, we were exceptionally fortunate to be blessed with a fabulous tree, to adorn the school hall. This marvellously shaped fir was erected by the wondrous Mr Coombes and with only a minor degree of persuasion and persistent pestering, he adjusted its stance and angle so that we were all happy. Such a legend, he even ensured the decorations were all placed safely upon the tree.





### **Keep on running**

Hugo's passion for running all started at school with Miss Cockram's Cross Country running club. From here, he has been selected to run for Wells City Harriers in the under 11s Wessex Cross Country league. His enthusiasm for competition enabled Hugo to achieve 14<sup>th</sup> place overall, with his fastest time of the season being 6min and 40secs. We are all super proud of your sheer determination and effort Hugo.

Fantastic

### **Who could this be?**

Blessed with a genuine heart of gold, I would like to thank this wonderful man for everything he does for our school and community. Each morning, whatever the weather, he welcomes every one of us with a warm, welcoming smile and heartfelt quip.

**I hope you all have a truly magnificent Christmas and a wonderful New Year.**



## School Prayer



## Dates to remember

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January – INSET DAY

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January – All children return to school

More dates to be sent out on our return to school, after the holidays. Dates can also be found on the school web site, under calendar.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SETTING UP NEW DEVICES FOR CHILDREN

At Christmas, millions of lucky children will be excitedly ripping the wrapping off new phones, tablets, computers or consoles. However, in the rush to let young ones enjoy their shiny gadgets, many parents neglect to set these devices up safely – increasing the chances of children going online and stumbling across adult content, making expensive downloads or installing unsuitable apps. A little time configuring the device properly can save a lot of anguish later. Here are our top tips to ensure that a dream gift on Christmas morning doesn't turn into a nightmare by New Year.

## PASSCODES FOR IPHONE/IPAD

If your child's getting their own iPhone or iPad, you can set parental controls that make it difficult for them to access inappropriate content or download expensive apps. Once the device is set up, go to the Settings app and tap Screen Time, then select Use Screen Time Passcode and enter a passcode. Keep it to yourself so your child can't switch the protection off.

## SCREEN TIME SETTINGS ON IPHONE/IPAD

Once you've set a Screen Time Passcode, you can adjust various safety settings. You could, for example, only allow communication with people from the Contacts app, place restrictions on App Store purchases and apply age limits to movies, music and web content. There are many more protective options available within the Screen Time settings section.

## FAMILY LINK FOR ANDROID

Parents can manage Android phones and tablets, as well as Google Chromebooks, through Google's Family Link app. This gives your child some independence (and their own Google account) but lets parents monitor which apps are being used, set limits on content and ensure that parental permission is required to install apps. Look for Family Link in the Google Play Store.

## ADD A CHILD TO FAMILY LINK

The easiest way to add a child's device to Family Link is to set it up with its own Google account. It's a good idea to create this before they use their new phone, tablet or Chromebook. Once they're logged in, open the Family Link app on your phone, press '+' in the top right and add a new family member using their Google account details. Then follow the on-screen instructions.

## FAMILY SHARING ON A MAC

Families using a Mac get similar screen time options to iPhone and iPad users. Again, if you're setting up a Mac for a child, make yourself the main admin and add them as a user. This is handled through Apple's Family Sharing service, which not only allows you to put controls on child accounts but share apps and other purchases with them too. Search 'family sharing' at <https://support.apple.com>.

## PLAYSTATION PARENTAL CONTROLS

With parental controls for the PS5, you'll need a PlayStation Network account (as the 'family manager') and the child will need their own account, which they should sign in with on the console. This all needs to be set up in advance, so you might want to do it before the big day. Go to [PlayStation.com](http://PlayStation.com) and search 'family account' for instructions.

## DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR CHILD

If you're planning to implement any kind of restriction or protection settings on your child's new device, we'd recommend having a discussion with your young one first about what these controls do, and what they are for. If you try to impose parental controls surreptitiously or with no advance warning, don't be surprised if your child tries to find a way around them.

## SET AN ADMIN ON PCS

On Windows PCs and laptops, it's important not to let your child share a general user account or be the main admin on the device. If you're booting up a new family PC or a child's own device, set it up using your own account details and you'll become the admin by default. Then set up children with their own separate account: Settings > Accounts > Family & Other Users > Add Other User.

## SET WINDOWS LIMITS

Once your child's account has been created, a parent admin can go back into the Family & Other Users menu and apply limits to it. These include restricting screen time, the type of games and apps that can be installed, web filters and more. Microsoft also includes reporting tools which, for example, can email you with a weekly summary of your child's activity on the device.

## TREAT AN XBOX LIKE A PC

The same control settings you use for a PC can be used to apply parental controls on an Xbox. Again, once your child is signed into the Xbox with their own account, you can then monitor and regulate their activity from a PC or web browser. Microsoft's dashboard allows you to manage voice communication through the console, so you can limit who can contact your child, for example.

## INSTALL XBOX FAMILY SETTINGS

If you don't have a PC, but your child does have an Xbox, it might be easier to use the Xbox Family Settings app for iPhone or Android. Here, you can restrict console screen time (particularly handy if the console is in a bedroom), restrict communication and monitor the types of game being played. There's also a feature where you can allocate spending money for games or in-game purchases.

## STAY VIGILANT

It's important to remember that none of these methods is 100% foolproof. Nobody will ever invent flawless filters or parental controls – not least because what's unacceptable to some parents is perfectly acceptable to others. So although devices' parental controls will help to keep your child safe online, they work best side by side with good old-fashioned parental vigilance.

## Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *Newsnight*, *Radio 5 Live* and *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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# 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, traveling 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. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental 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, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. 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 mishaps.

### 3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time 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 labeling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate 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. Emphasise 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 both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, 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 choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, tapping Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in 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 that 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 parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding 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 to 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, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. 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 training.



The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>