



## Dear Parents and Carers,

This week at Willow Bank Primary has been full of exciting activities and memorable moments. Here's a round-up of all the fantastic events and some important updates to look forward to:

### Rock Kidz Return!



We were thrilled to welcome Rock Kidz back to WBP this week! The children had an incredible day participating in inspirational activities and entertainment linked to our core values of resilience and aspiration. It was wonderful to see so many children and staff dressed up as their favourite rock and pop stars—thank you for embracing the spirit of the day!

### Parents' Evenings

Thank you to all the parents and carers who attended parents' evenings this week. We hope you enjoyed the opportunity to visit your child's classroom, look through their work from this half term, and discuss their progress with their class teacher. Your involvement plays a vital role in your child's learning journey, and a strong partnership between home and school significantly impacts their progress and attainment.

If you were unable to make your scheduled appointment, please contact the school office to arrange an alternative time to meet with your child's teacher.



### Almond Class Sharing Assembly

A huge well done to Almond Class for their informative and entertaining sharing assembly! The children impressed us all as they shared their learning around the history Big Question: How did the landscape of ancient Egypt influence their lifestyle and beliefs?

This week, Almond Class also had an unforgettable trip to The British Museum, where they explored the Egyptian exhibits and even encountered real mummies! Their enthusiasm for history is truly inspiring

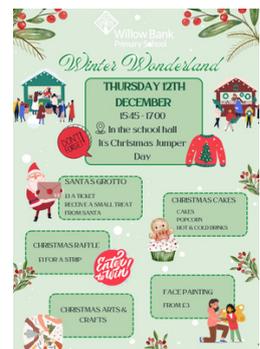
### Upcoming Christmas Celebrations

We are excited to kick off our festive celebrations next week! Here's what's coming up:

- **Christmas Dinner and Jumper Day:** On **Thursday, 12th December**, children are invited to wear their most festive jumpers and enjoy a special Christmas dinner at school.
- **WBP Winter Wonderland:** Also on **Thursday, 12th December**, join us in the school hall for an afternoon of festive fun! Enjoy delicious treats, meet Santa, and get your face painted. It promises to be a magical event for all.

We hope to see many of you there to celebrate the festive season together.

As always, thank you for your continued support and engagement in school life. We hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.



Best wishes,  
Mrs Oldfield and the WBP Team



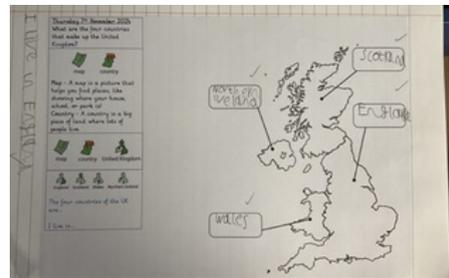
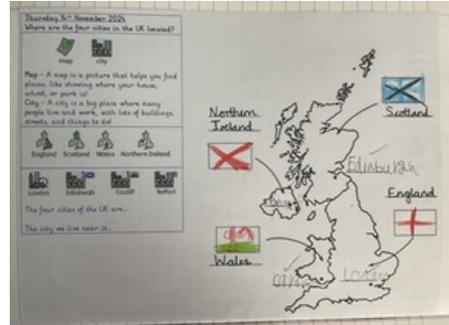
## Year R

As part of our Big Question ‘What happens in our community.’ We had a special visit from a local police officer! PC Roz came in to talk to us about how she helps the local community, what to do if we need to contact the police and she even let us try on her police hat!



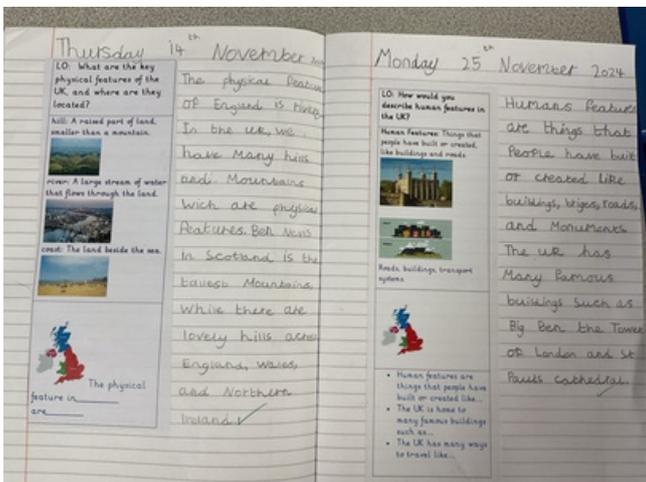
## Year 1

Year 1's Big Question is - What can we learn from maps? We have been learning about the four countries that make up the United Kingdom, including their flags and capital cities.



## Year 2

Year 2 have been learning about the human and physical features of the UK. They've explored natural features like rivers and mountains, as well as human features such as towns and roads. This helps them understand how people live in and interact with different environments across the country.



## Year 3

In our humanities lessons in Year 3, we have been looking at our Big Question of ‘what makes someone a hero in our community?’ Whilst working towards our answer of this question, we have been looking at the history of our emergency services. We even had a police officer come in to visit us to inform us of all the amazing things the police do for us daily!



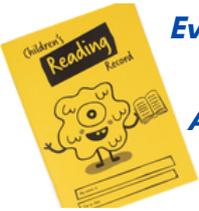




**KS1 & EYFS Parent Reading Morning**

**Every Thursday from 8:40-9:10am**

**All parents and carers welcome!**



We are looking for Read with Me volunteers at Willow Bank! These volunteers will visit our Yr 1 & 2 classrooms and listen to our children read.

If you are interested in volunteering with us for 30 minutes or an hour each week, then please pop into the office to express your interest and pick up our application pack.



Well done	Our target is over 96%
Magnolia - 89%	★ Yew - 97%
Hornbeam - 94%	Redwood - 93%
	★ Almond - 97%
★ Hazel - 99%	★ Walnut - 96%
Larch - 95%	★ Sycamore - 100%

**School Reminder**

Children should not arrive earlier than 8.20am, for Bagel Breakfast club from 8.25am - 8.35am  
 School gates close at precisely 8:50am. After this time, entrance is via the school office and parents will need to sign your child/children in using the screen.

**A reminder that we have our Chance To Chat.**

As a school we provide ongoing support for the children’s wellbeing and mental health to which one of the methods is they can fill out a form while in school to express their worries. The form then gets placed in the ‘Chance to chat’ box where it will be addressed by the wellbeing team.  
 We also have an online form which is located on the school website named ‘Chance to chat’.  
 The children can complete the form if they are worried about something or need some advice? A member of staff will get back to the child at school.

Please copy the link below and paste in the search bar and it will direct you straight to the form.  
<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=MvrWB2Z-r0qnuEuN-giOI1CAPQc0X4RFje43giTliLNUOE5BWUFISE40VjBXODZYRVFITLNXVzZYNCQLQCN0PWcu>



## Dates for Your Diaries!

Here is a quick reminder of the events happening in the coming weeks:

- **Year 6 Bikeability:** Monday 9th - Friday 13th December
- **Christmas Dinner and Festive Clothing Day:** Thursday 12th December
- **EYFS & KS1 Nativity Performance to Parents:** Wednesday 18th December at 2:30pm
- **KS2 Christmas Songs:** Thursday 19th December at 3:00pm
- **Class End-of-Term Parties:** Thursday 19th December from 1:30pm
- **Last Day of Autumn Term:** Friday 19th December 3:20pm

### EMOTIONAL BASED SCHOOL AVOIDANCE (EBSA) PARENT/CARER SUPPORT GROUP

To take place on: **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 10am – 11.30am**

Venue: **Bexleyheath Central Library in the Dickens Room.**



*Bexley Educational Psychologists are providing parent/carers the space to share their experiences, hear from others and gain support as part of a network for those supporting children and young people who are experiencing anxiety-related difficulties around attending school (including Emotional Based School Avoidance).*

If you are interested in joining this group, please email:

**[parentebsasupport@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:parentebsasupport@bexley.gov.uk)**



# WILLOW BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL

*Establishing Positive Behaviours  
and Routines*



## **Coffee Morning**

**Tuesday 10th  
December in hall  
9am-9:45am**

PRESENTED BY MISS WHITE





JOIN US FOR A

# Christmas MARKET

Saturday

7th December

FROM 12 PM TO 6 PM

Music, Food & Gifts

Indoor venue: Nest Community Centre  
Outdoor market: Cygnet Square  
SE2 9FA

**FREE ENTRY**

Cygnet Square indoor and outdoor Christmas Market:  
Unique gifts from independent business owners,  
live entertainment and food stands.

Free Santa's Grotto and children's gifts, Kids  
activities and face painting if you pre-register on  
[www.cygnetssquaremarket.com](http://www.cygnetssquaremarket.com) or scan QR code



Scan me!



JOIN US FOR A

# Christmas MARKET

Saturday 7th December

12pm-6pm indoor and outdoor shopping

12pm-6pm Kids Arts and Crafts

12pm-6pm Workshops

12pm-6pm Food Court

12.30-1pm Kid's outdoor activity

1pm-4pm Santas Grotto

2.30pm- 3pm Kids outdoor activity

3pm-3.30pm J Cocoa Christmas

Concert

**FREE ENTRY**



Scan me!



Willow Bank  
Primary School

# Winter Wonderland



THURSDAY 12TH  
DECEMBER  
15:45 - 17:00



In the school hall

It's Christmas Jumper  
Day



## SANTA'S GROTTTO

£1 A TICKET  
RECEIVE A SMALL TREAT  
FROM SANTA

## CHRISTMAS CAKES

CAKES  
POPCORN  
HOT & COLD DRINKS



## CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

£1 FOR A STRIP



## FACE PAINTING

FROM £3



CHRISTMAS ARTS &  
CRAFTS





At 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](https://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

When looking at options for supporting a child's mental health, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. There are many wellbeing apps available, but unfortunately not all are trustworthy. It's important to evaluate which resources are suitable, reliable and effective. This guide lets you know what to consider before installing such an app, to determine just how useful it's going to be.

### QUALITY & RELIABILITY

Mental health apps can be a useful starting point when looking for wellbeing advice and strategies and can be a useful extension to the in-person services available. However, they aren't a substitute. Information on the quality of some of these apps is scarce. They may look cute and child-friendly, but have they been designed by a mental health professional? Furthermore, do they have research to back up their content?

### PLACE RESPONSIBILITY ON CHILDREN

Some apps add the words 'kids' or 'children' to their title or use cartoon icons to make them more appealing to young people. When signing up for some of these apps, some will speak to the parent directly, saying something along the lines of "Your child is good to go. Let them take it from here". It's important to remain involved in the child's mental health journey, so regular check-ins are recommended.

### DISREGARDING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

Young people who feel anxious and have trouble sleeping may download a mindfulness app to help. While this is a good strategy initially, it's not addressing the root of the problem. A child could simply try managing these symptoms themselves (as opposed to speaking out and seeking professional help), which could potentially worsen their anxiety in the long run.

### LACK OF PERSONALISATION

Mental health or wellbeing apps are useful tools for the short term, teaching users several helpful habits to manage their condition – such as keeping an illness diary, improving nutrition and practising mindfulness exercises. As every person is unique – and children especially will grow and develop in different ways – these apps struggle to tailor themselves to users' individual needs. For example, many apps don't distinguish between the ages of users and can offer extremely generic advice.

### DATA SECURITY

As with any other app – not just those for mental health and wellbeing – it's wise to check out the privacy policy before downloading it. Some of these applications may share data with third parties for numerous reasons (such as targeted advertisements), and if a user is sharing personal and sensitive information within the app, they probably don't want it ending up elsewhere without their consent.

### IN-APP PURCHASES

Many apps will provide their most basic features for free but will require you to pay for other aspects – such as a more tailored experience or access to additional resources. This could be a one-off fee or a regular subscription. Consider whether this is actually required. Is it benefiting the child, or could they receive the same support from a medical professional?

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### CHECK THE CREDIBILITY OF THE APP

Before you download a mental health and wellbeing app, investigate the developers. Have they consulted with qualified mental health professionals to create their resource? Also check whether the app is affiliated with any government or mental health organisations, as these are solid indicators of legitimacy. Reviews can also be a useful signpost to the app's quality. There are many good apps out there, but there are just as many that miss the mark.

### SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Trusted mental health and wellbeing apps designed by qualified, reputable organisations can be used alongside the personalised advice and support of fully trained professionals. These apps should never be considered a substitute for counselling or other tailored medical help. If you have real concerns about a child's mental wellbeing, you should seek appropriate advice from a suitable source, such as their GP – or Childline, who can be contacted by calling 0800 1111.

### READ THE PRIVACY POLICY

Look into the app's terms of service – especially its privacy policy. Do so by yourself first, then go over it with the child who is considering using the app, to ensure they know what data will be collected and how exactly it will be used. Use all of this information to make an educated decision on whether or not to download that particular app.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Mental health and wellbeing apps can be useful for writing down feelings, tracking your own health and other such activities. These can help if the problem is short-term and temporary – such as a child getting stressed about approaching exams – or if you're currently waiting for professional support. Nonetheless, it is important that children aren't solely reliant on the app and have a safe space to talk about their feelings and experiences in the real world.

### Meet Our Expert

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



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>

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