



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of another fantastic term, we want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your incredible support at our recent school events. The past two weeks have been truly special, and your participation has made them even more memorable.

Winter Wonderland Success

Our annual Winter Wonderland event was a magical experience for all involved. From the festive decorations to the joyful laughter filling the air, it was heartwarming to see so many families come together to celebrate the season. Your support has been instrumental in making this event such a success.



The Bethlehem Bakeoff - A Nativity Highlight

The EYFS and KS1 nativity production, The Bethlehem Bakeoff, was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the term. The children's performances were outstanding, and the effort they put into learning their lines, songs, and actions was evident in every moment. Thank you to all the parents and carers who came to watch and cheered them on—your encouragement means the world to our young stars.

KS2 Christmas Songs Performance

Yesterday, the playground was alive with the sound of Christmas as our KS2 students performed a beautiful selection of festive songs. The turnout was incredible, and it was wonderful to see so many of you there to support and join in the festive cheer. We hope it brought you all some Christmas spirit to carry into the holidays.



Celebrating Children's Writing

This week, the children have been busy publishing their writing outcomes for the term, and we are immensely proud of their hard work and creativity. These wonderful pieces are now displayed throughout the school, showcasing their progress and dedication. We encourage you to explore this week's issue to see what your child's class has been working so hard on—their efforts truly deserve to be celebrated!

Wishing You a Wonderful Break

After such a busy and productive term, we hope you all enjoy a well-deserved Christmas break filled with joy, relaxation, and quality time with loved ones. On behalf of all the staff at Willow Bank Primary School, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We look forward to welcoming you all back on **Monday 6th January** for another exciting term of learning and growth. With warm wishes,

Mrs Oldfield and the Willow Bank Team



Year R

Magnolia's Autumn 2 learning has been transformed into a display around Omu and her famous thick, red stew. The children spent the half term exploring characters from the book, different fruits and vegetables before preparing the ingredients and making the stew.



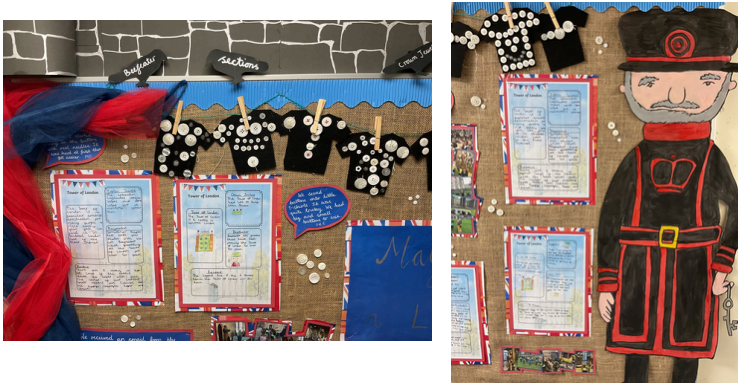
Year 1

In writing, Year 1 have created their own adventure story based on our model text – Molly McDrew – An Adventure Around the World. In Design Technology we have designed our own Artic scene including a slider to show how the character moves.



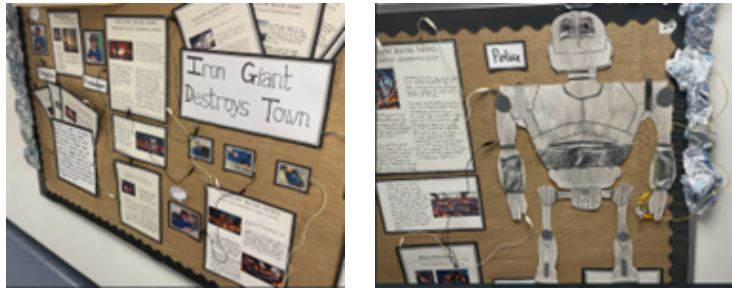
Year 2

Year 2 visited the Tower of London, exploring its history and creating fact files about key facts. In DT, they sewed Pearly King and Queen costumes, celebrating London's cultural heritage.



Year 3

This term in Year 3, we have been reading 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes. For our final outcome, we meticulously crafted our own newspaper articles based around the time when the people in the town first saw the Iron Man. The children thoroughly enjoyed being reporters and produced some fantastic newspaper articles!





Year 4

This term Year 4, proudly present their captivating 'Rags to Riches' tales alongside their stunning clay cartouche artwork on display showcasing their creativity, storytelling and ancient design skills!



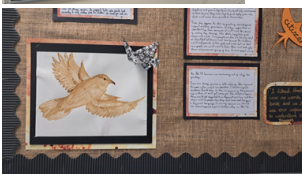
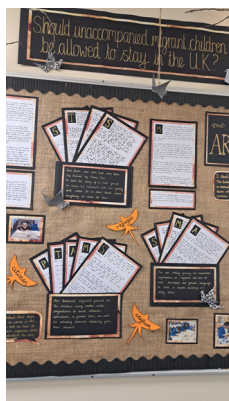
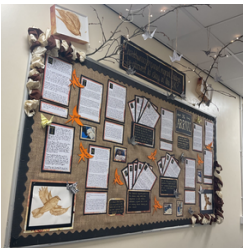
Year 5

This term, Year 5 explored the Polar Regions through Race to the Frozen North, linking to our humanities topic, Polar Regions. We wrote polar poems, debated eco-tourism, and created biographies of explorer Matthew Henson. In art, we designed striking digital collages inspired by icy landscapes.



Year 6

Year 6 have been studying *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan this term. The story follows a man who is forced to leave his home country and make a new life in another. We encounter the trials and challenges he faces as he adjusts to his new life. We used that as a starting point to consider immigration into the United Kingdom and the children wrote balanced arguments on whether the UK should house migrant children who enter the UK on their own. They wrote the pros and cons of the argument and then presented their own viewpoint. The writing is accompanied by artwork inspired by the coffee art of Alwy Fadhelp, who was an Indonesian man seeking asylum in Australia. The children painted birds in coffee to represent freedom.



OUR CORE VALUE FOR AUTUMN 2 IS INTEGRITY

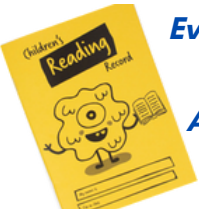




KS1 & EYFS Parent Reading Morning

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 - 91% | Yew - 90% |
| Hornbeam - 94% | ★ Redwood - 97% |
| | Almond - 91% |
| ★ Hazel - 100% | Walnut - 93% |
| Larch - 93% | Sycamore - 91% |
|  |  |

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>



SEND Coffee morning



Dear Parents,

We invite you to meet with our SEND Team on Tuesday the 14th January at 9 AM.

This is a great opportunity to share the SEN support across the school and the local authority that may be available for your child.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Willow Bank
Primary School

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

To take place on: **Tuesday 7th 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



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.

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 labelling 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, toppling 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>

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JOIN US FOR A
Christmas
MARKET

SATURDAY 21ST DECEMBER

12PM-5PM

**INDOOR: NEST COMMUNITY CENTRE
OUTDOOR: CYGNET SQUARE
SE2 9FA**

**INDOOR AND OUTDOOR SHOPPING AREA,
KIDS ARTS AND CRAFTS, FACEPAINTING,
FOOD COURT, SANTAS GROTTO, KIDS
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, CHRISTMAS
CONCERT, LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**

FREE ENTRY

**PRE-REGISTER
FOR FREE RAFFLE
DRAW AND FREE
ACCESS TO
SANTAS GROTTO
AND KIDS
ACTIVITIES**

