



# St Luke's C E First School

10<sup>th</sup> January  
2025

## Dates for your Diary

### January

Week Beginning  
20<sup>th</sup> – All classes  
to complete  
NSPCC's Speak  
Out, Stay Safe  
activities

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> –  
Elephants Class  
Sporthall Athletics  
at Trinity High  
School

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> – SEN  
Sport Event at  
Arrow Vale

### February

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> –  
Lions Adopt a Chef  
2<sup>nd</sup> session

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> – Break  
up for Half Term

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> –  
School Re-opens  
for Spring 2



### **This week...**

Happy New Year and welcome back to Spring term 2025! I hope you all had a restful Christmas break and enjoyed spending time with your loved ones. The children have made a brilliant start to the new term and are already impressing their teachers and teaching assistants with their hard work and attitude to their learning!

We are looking forward to an exciting term ahead. As always, please keep your eye on Class Dojo and the weekly school newsletter for updates and information.

### **School Admissions**

A final reminder that if you are applying for a first or middle school place for September 2025, the deadline for applications is **15<sup>th</sup> January 2025**. You can apply here:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/schools-education-and-learning/apply-school-place>

### **Lions Class Swimming**

This week, our Lions have enjoyed their first swimming lesson! They were all amazing and tried so hard in this first lesson. Well done Lions!

### **Attendance:**

Our attendance to date is **94.97%**.

A great first week of attendance...let's hope we can keep this up!



Bears	Giraffes	Elephants	Tigers	Lions	Whole School
90.25%	98.75%	96.15%	97.32%	99.14%	96.32%

## PE Days

We still have children arriving to school in PE kit when it is not their PE day, or not wearing kit when it is their PE day. Class teachers have already communicated PE days with you via Class Dojo. Please ensure you know when your child's PE days are so that they come to school wearing the correct uniform. As a reminder, here are the PE days for each class:

Bears – Thursday & Friday

Giraffes – Monday & Thursday

Elephants – Tuesday & Thursday

Tigers – Tuesday & Friday

Lions – Monday & Thursday (swimming)

The majority of children are following our uniform expectations – thank you for your support with this. However, there are children still wearing trainers instead of school shoes and other items of clothing which do not follow our school uniform policy. We take great pride in our uniform and expect all children to be wearing the correct items. Your child's class teacher will speak to you and remind you of our expectations if we notice your child not wearing the correct uniform.

## Spring 1 Clubs

Our Spring 1 clubs have got off to a great start this week! The children have enjoyed lego, dodgeball, cooking, mindful colouring and football! A reminder of our uniform expectations relating to clubs:



Monday Running KS2 – children to come to school wearing PE kit.

Tuesday Disney Shooting Stars Football girls Years 1-4 – children to wear school uniform and bring trainers to change into.

Thursday Dodgeball Years 2-4 – children to wear school uniform and bring trainers to change into.

## Think of the Month

We have introduced a 'think of the month' in school. Thunks are simple looking questions about every day things that make you think! When answering the thunk, consider these questions...

\*What do you think?

\*Why do you think it?

\*Can you give an example?



This month's thunk:

*What colour in Monday? Why?*

Some of our responses so far:

*"Red, because it is the first colour and Monday is the first day of the week." Matilda Yr4*

*"I think Monday is the colour red for love," Grace EW Yr 3*

*"I think it is rainbow because some people like school and some people don't like Monday." Shannon Yr3*

*"Monday is green because you are happy to see your family and friends back at school." Anonymous*

*"Yellow because you come back to school." Oswin*

*"I think Mondays change colour each week. Depends on the season." Miss Grubb*

*"For me, Monday is grey because Mondays are gloomy." Shanaya Yr 4*

*"I think Monday is yellow because Monday is the start of a new week so you have a fresh start and yellow is a fresh colour." Esme Yr 4*

*"For me, Mondays are yellow and orange because Mondays are the best days as I can see all my friends." Savannah Yr4*

## Volunteers

Do you have any spare time and would be able to come into school to help our children with their reading or other activities? We would love to grow our group of volunteers and be able to share school life with some of our parents/carers or grandparents/wider family members. If this is of interest to you, please contact Mrs Baker who can share some more details and get the process started.



## Collective Worship

In collective worship this week, we have started our new theme 'GOSPEL'. We have talked about the Old Testament and New Testament within the Bible and the children have learnt that Gospel means 'Good News'. We have linked this to our Christian vision as we follow the Good News that God is sharing with us in the bible.

In our Celebration Worship we have said "congratulations" to children impressing their teachers by showing our school values. I was delighted to hand out values certificates to Yahya (Bears) Tilly (Giraffes), Luis (Elephants), Afiyah (Tigers) and Tilda (Lions).

Lunchtime award winners: Emily (Lions) and Zorain (Tigers)

OPAL Golden Welly Winner: Shannon (Tigers)

Giraffes, Elephants, Tigers and Lions class have received attendance certificate of the week for attendance over 95% - well done!

## St Luke's Stars of the Week

**Each week in our celebration assembly, the teachers will be choosing a pupil to recognise for their excellent work and attitude to learning. Please see Class Dojo for pictures of our 'St Luke's Stars of the Week'. We are very proud of everyone for their hard work and achievements.**



**Bears:** Grayson for his positive attitude towards his Phonics learning. Miss Grubb has been blown away by his reading skills and the questions that he has asked during his learning!

**Giraffes:** Minsa for excellent maths work!

**Elephants:** Zayan for excellent effort and participation in PE lessons and making great choices!

**Tigers:** Ariaah for her great effort subtracting 3-digit numbers using the expanded column method. She is able to recognise when and where exchanges need to be made and can confidently explain why.

**Lions:** Maryam for her efforts in Maths, applying skills and methods she is using in interventions in her independent work.

Please continue to send in certificates and awards from outside of school achievements so we can share them with the whole school community during our celebration assembly



# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

JusTalk Kids is a child's version of the JusTalk app – a highly popular social networking platform – designed for users up to 13 years of age, allowing them to video call, message and participate in group chats. While adults can link their own JusTalk account to their child's and make use of parental controls, it's important to understand the risks associated with the app.

### SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they comply with others in a call, exclusive stickers, a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber, and exclusive ringtones and themes.

### RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to show children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or from their own adult JusTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

### KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact; this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username; in theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

### POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going as far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and its transparency of the development team.

### CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

### TOO MUCH SCREENTIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 29% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of linking their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

### DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what is and isn't safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

### 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.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/justalk-kids>



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO ROUTINE

Most of us look forward to the school holidays as an opportunity to slow down and relax, stay up later, sleep in and generally approach life in a more leisurely fashion. However, this does mean that returning to normal school-day routines can feel like an uphill battle. Here are some practical tips to ease that transition, reduce stress and set children up for success.

## 1 START SMALL AND EARLY

Begin reintroducing elements of the school routine a week before term starts. Gradually adjust bedtime, wake-up times and mealtimes to be more in line with school-day rhythms. Small changes can make a big difference in avoiding last-minute panic and helping children to readjust smoothly.

## 2 REVISIT THE SCHEDULE

Involve your child in mapping out their daily routine so they understand what's going to change. Visual tools like charts or calendars can help keeping to that schedule feel more engaging. When children understand and anticipate their personal timetable, they feel more secure and in control.

## 3 CREATE A SLEEP PLAN

Sleep can present one of the biggest challenges, as children can sometimes become night owls, prone to staying up late during the holidays. Limit screen time before bed and encourage winding-down activities like reading or listening to calming music. A restful night's sleep improves focus, mood and overall wellbeing, making mornings much smoother.

## 4 ENCOURAGE FRIENDSHIPS

Help your child to reconnect with school friends by organising playdates, catch-ups or arranging to go to after-school clubs. Re-establishing social bonds can make the return to school more exciting and less intimidating, allowing youngsters to focus on the positive aspects of the new term.

## 5 GRANT RESPONSIBILITY

Give children control over some aspects of the morning routine. Maybe they could be in charge of waking everyone up, serving breakfast or choosing the radio station that everyone listens to while getting ready. Something that gives them a sense of ownership over their morning schedule can help them view the task as one they've chosen to do, rather than being told to do it.

## 6 FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Make sure children are receiving balanced meals (with regular healthy snacks to boost energy and concentration), putting them in the best possible state to return to education. A nutritious breakfast is particularly crucial for a positive start to the day. Involve children in meal planning to make it enjoyable and collaborative.

## 7 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Talk with your child about how they're feeling about returning to school: whether they're excited, anxious or a mix of both. Validating their emotions helps them feel supported and understood. Try asking them about the things they're looking forward to at school, such as seeing their friends again. Focusing on the positives can be useful for children struggling with change.

## 8 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

Ease children back into a learning mindset by incorporating fun, educational activities into their home life. Reading a favourite book, playing games that involve maths or discussing an interesting topic can gently reawaken their focus and prime their minds to learn, which can have helpful impacts on their academic performance.

## 9 PREP TOGETHER

Turn preparation into a shared activity, to shoulder the responsibility together and provide support where needed. Pack school bags, lay out uniforms and plan lunch the night before. This not only reduces early morning stress but also gives children a sense of ownership over being ready for school.

## 10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

Transitions take time, and every child adjusts differently, so it's important to stay calm and supportive, especially if they're reacting adversely to the change in their daily life. Be ready to tweak routines as needed, and work with the child to make the return to education easier possible for them. Patience can go a long way to setting a positive tone for the new school year.

### Meet Our Expert

Becky Dawson is an education expert with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Passionate about empowering adults who spend time with and care for young people, Becky specialises in creating practical strategies that promote wellbeing and resilience in children during life's transitions.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at:

