



St Luke's C E First School

6th
December
2024

Dates for your Diary

December

Wednesday 11th –
Bears trip to the
theatre

Friday 13th – Santa
Breakfast &
Grotto/Christmas
Jumper Day/PTA
Christmas Fair

Monday 16th –
Christmas Lunch

Tuesday 17th-
Christmas
Experience at the
Bridge Church. All
classes to attend

Friday 20th – Last
Day of Term

January
Monday 6th – TED
school closed to
pupils

Tuesday 7th – First
day back for the
spring term!



This week...

Everyone is very busy with their Christmas rehearsals and at the same time continuing their learning in class. We've enjoyed Key Stage 2's dress rehearsal today, which was such a treat. The children can't wait to share their hard work with their audiences next week and we are looking forward to seeing lots of parents/carers and family members for each performance.

ECO Team

Thank you for all the donations we have had so far for our ECO team's recycling project!

Please remember, our collection is booked for **Monday 9th December 2024**. The more donations we get, the more money we can raise to support buying resources for school.



Attendance:

This week we have seen a decline in our attendance percentages and an increase in parents/carers not contacting the school to inform us of an absence. If your child is unwell or not attending school for any reason, **please ensure you telephone school** to inform us of this. We do not accept Class Dojo messages as a means of informing us of an absence as we cannot guarantee that these will be picked up early.



Our attendance to date is **95.34%**.

*Please **do not** send Dojo messages as these may not be picked up and we will still contact you by telephone.*

Bears	Giraffes	Elephants	Tigers	Lions	Whole School
84.45%	93.67%	92.69%	95.71%	90.71%	91.45%

Parental Questionnaire

This week we have published the results of the parental questionnaire on Class Dojo and on our school website (under news and events/other letters 2024-2025). Thank you for your very positive responses for our school. 100% of parents say their child is happy and safe and 100% would recommend us to other parents.

This week we have said an emotional 'goodbye' to Mrs Kelly as she has started her retirement after 25 years working at St Luke's! We wish Mrs Kelly all the happiness in the world for her future adventures and we look forward to seeing her back in school soon for the Christmas performances. We have also said a fond farewell to Mrs Barratt this week and we wish her all the best for her future.



ASDA Cashpot

Thank you to all our ASDA shoppers – you have helped us to raise £239.91! We will be spending the money on items we can use for developing our OPAL play even further.

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:

Are heroes ever scared?

We've already had some responses from the children:

Yes, but heroes face their fears. Anonymous

No, because they can be brave. Maisie Tigers

Yes – heroes can be scared but without showing it. Nancy Lions

Yes, because they might feel scared or worried about their people. Hannah Lions

Yes, but they are brave and face their fears. Zorain

Christmas Choir Visit to Plymouth Court

On Tuesday this week, our Christmas choir, led by Miss Grubb and Mrs Adams went to Plymouth Court to perform a range of Christmas songs for the residents. The group was also accompanied by Rich Bone and Rachel Payne and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience! Our children performed brilliantly to their audience and brought lots of smiles and joy to the residents and staff at Plymouth Court. Well done everyone!



Santa Dash

Today, each class has taken part in the Santa Dash in the hall. We enjoyed seeing everyone's Christmassy hats while they moved around the obstacle course singing and dancing to all the Christmas music!



Christmas is coming...important dates! Friday 13th December – Santa Breakfast. Our PTA will be holding our annual Santa breakfast and grotto. All children are welcome to wear their Christmas jumpers on this day. After school, the PTA will be holding their Christmas Fair. Please put aside some time to come and join us in the school hall to take part in this event and help raise some money for our school.

Monday 16th December – We are awaiting information from Cupcakes Catering about their Christmas lunch this year.

Tuesday 17th December – Christmas Experience at The Bridge Church. All classes will be walking to the church to take part in this year's Christmas Experience led by Reverend Ruth and her team. **Christmas Performances:**

Monday 9th December – KS2 Performances in school. Our Tigers and Lions will be performing to parents and at 9:15am and 2:30pm in the school hall.

Tuesday 10th December – Our Bears children will be performing to parents and carers at 9:15am and 2:30pm in the school hall.

Thursday 12th December – KS1 Performances in school. Our Giraffes and Elephants will be performing to parents and carers at 9:15am and 2:30pm in the school hall.

Book Fair

Thank you everyone who has purchased books from the recent Book Fair. Mrs Broughton now has a total of over £200 from 2 of these fairs to spend on new books for our school library!

Collective Worship

In collective worship this week, we have continued to focus on the theme of Advent and Christian values for this time in the Christian calendar. We have thought about Mary and her important role in the Christmas story. We have also had a visit from Paul from Southcrest Church.



St Luke's Stars of the Week

Due to our performance practices and dress rehearsals, we have not held our celebration worship this week. Our next celebration worship will be on Friday 20th December as next week the PTA will be preparing the hall for our Christmas Fair.

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.



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