



# Newsletter

1st November - 20th December 2024

## Upcoming Events

Tuesday 7th January  
School Starts 8:40am

Thursday 9th January  
PTA Meeting 3:15pm

3rd -7th February  
Children's Mental Health Week

Monday 10th February  
Class 1 Assembly 9:00am

Wednesday 12th February  
Spring Disco 4:30pm

Friday 14th February  
School finishes 3:15pm

## School Summary

It has been a fun filled half term and the children have enjoyed some fabulous experiences ...

Class 1 have been learning about school life in the olden days, how to regulate emotions in P.S.H.E. and investigating habitats in Science. They went to see an amazing theatre show with monsters, unicorns and dragons as well as visited the North Pole to see Santa! They topped it off with a wonderful performance of the Nativity in front of family, friends and members of the community.

Class 2 have been busy learning about life in the Stone Age and Iron Age and exploring the remains at Skara Brae as well as investigating scriptures from different religions in R.E. They also went to a Pantomime to watch the story of Aladdin. at the Carnegie Theatre and had lots of fun!

Class 3 have been investigating light and shadows in Science and designing and making Toys in their DT lessons. They also went to see the Pantomime and have been out playing various sports and representing the school in tournaments.

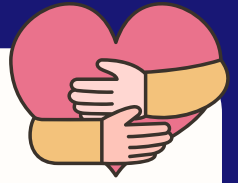
It has once again been lovely to welcome our families and friends into school for our many Christmas events. Thank you to everyone for your kindness and support in 2024 and we look forward to seeing you again in 2025! Wishing you all a wonderful holiday,

*Mrs Walker*

## Clubs

Our Clubs next half term have been changed based on Children's interests and feedback: Monday - Lego, Tuesday - Sports, Wednesday - Music & Dance, Thursday - Movie & Books and Friday - Games and Quizzes.

Please note prices will increase from 1st January 2025, including the offer for our Pupil Premium families. Please see Scholarpack emails for more details. Bookings can now be made in advance for the entire half term by visiting School Hub. Look out for emails from Class Teachers about our FREE Booster Clubs for Phonics, Times Tables Rock Stars and SAT Revisions coming soon!



# Safeguarding Update

Our attendance for the term so far has been 94% which is sadly below the 97% national target and our own school target of 98%. Whilst some of this is due to illness, a significant reduction in attendance continues to be from holidays taken in term time. Parents are reminded that new government rules are in place and fines will be issued to those missing more than 5 days unauthorised absence.

We have provided some useful tips for keeping children safe over the festive period but would also like to draw parents' attention to the recent Channel 4 documentary called Swiped. This introduces some of the current research around the use of smart phones by children under the age of 16, and highlights effects we are certainly seeing in our school from a younger and younger age. This specifically talks about the lack of verbal and communication skills in our early years pupils which has a knock on effect on reading, writing and being able to verbalise wants, need and emotions,

causing frustration and dysregulation. It also talked about the effects on self esteem, mental health and understanding social norms and healthy relationships of our older pupils.

There are lots of positive benefits to smart phones, but it is important to note the negatives too so we can protect our children and help them make healthy phone choices ... perhaps you could conduct your own family Swiped experiment in the New Year and let us know the results!



To watch the show visit [Channel4.com](http://Channel4.com) Swiped - The school that banned smartphones.

## 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.







# Christmas Update

Our Choir have been busy spreading Christmas Cheer by singing for the residents of local care homes and taking part in a special service at St Bees Priory. They were very lucky to have been taught by Margie Simper from the Whitehaven Adult Choir and look forward to working with her again next year!



The whole school got to share a Christmas Lunch which was home cooked by our wonderful kitchen leader, Janice. It was a fabulous feast and children enjoyed eating together in the hall, followed by Christmas Parties in class! We also welcomed some members of the Community to join our celebration too - thank you for coming!

Our Christmas Fayre was another huge hit, with craft stalls, cakes, children's creations, photography, tombolas and raffles ... and even the main man himself visiting from the North Pole! It was wonderful to see everyone enjoying the event and we were overwhelmed with the generosity of the prize donations. Thank you so much supporting this event, we raised £531 for our school PTA which will be used to fund experiences for the children.

Finally, we enjoyed sharing our musical and acting talents with the wider community at the Lowca Welfare Centre, where the audience was treated to a performance by the Choir and the Makaton Signing Club before watching our wonderful Class 1 children perform their Wriggly Nativity!

