

Dear Parents and Carers,

Christmas Events

Thank you to all the parents who were able to join us for our parent 'Stay and Read' sessions this week; we were overwhelmed with how many were able to take time out and spend time in our library to read with their children. Please keep an eye on Dojo and the newsletter for further reading events in the year.

As we come closer to Christmas, we have a number of events that the children are getting ready for in school. Year 1 and 2 have been practising their songs for the nativity, which we can't wait to see next week! If you would like to see your child, please come to the office just before 14.00 to make sure you see this magical event!

Next Wednesday is also our Christmas lunch in school; children have the option to wear a Christmas jumper/top with their school uniform for the event, however, we will not be asking for a donation as we recognise this can be a hard time for families.

On our final day (20th December), year 5 will be doing their assembly a little bit differently. To use what they have learnt in class, they will be performing a 'Winter Reflection' at 09.00. For any year 5 parents who would like to attend, please come to the office after drop off.

Year 5 and 6 Target Games Festival

Some of our year 5s and 6s went to Benham Sport Centre on Wednesday to take part in a Target Festival. The idea of the festival was that they had to be on target, therefore, every activity was a 'target' related activity. So they all had a chance to have a go at archery, boccia, new-age curling and more.

Miss Bick and Mrs Walker both reported on what a lovely event it was and how well the children did. They all had a go at everything and showed resilience and positivity and were great ambassadors for Rectory Farm. Jayden M was awarded 'Shining Star' for his teamwork and impeccable manners.



Curriculum

Year 1—Year 1 have loved the start of their Design and Technology unit this week. We made different shapes using modelling clay and tested their stability before completing an evaluation of the different chairs. They have made their very own chairs using cylinders and have evaluated how stable they are.

Year 6—Year 6 have started working towards a non-chronological report on their own mythical character. They have created their own characters and decided on their special powers. The illustrations and ideas that they came up with have been really creative and Miss Thompson and Miss Kingham are really looking forward to seeing the final reports at the end of next week!

Home Learning!

Spelling Shed 

1st: Rowan 


Megan – Year 2

Eva – Year 3

2nd: Sycamore 

Mukundi – Year 1

NUMBOTS 

1st: Sycamore 

Beatrice (6) – Super Star Collector

2nd: Maple 

Jeffrey (4) – Most coins

TIMES TABLES ROCK STARS 

1st: Sycamore 

Michal (6) – Most minutes

Charlie L (4) – Most coins

2nd: Maple 

Paula (5) – Most correct answers



Alexia in year 3 has made her own skeleton out of copper wire. She said it was hard to bend but she had some help from her grown ups. She named the skull and ribcage and we looked at some of the others too! Well done!

Here is Max in year 1 showing his home learning. He has made a replica of the Church in Northampton Town Centre. He was able to talk about how he did it, and the materials he used.



Dates for your Diary

Date	Year Group	Event
Tuesday 17th December	Years R-2	Nativity
Wednesday 18th December	All	Christmas lunch (with optional Christmas jumpers/tops)
Thursday 19th December	Years 4-6	Charity film night after school
Friday 20th December	Year 5	Winter Reflection

Messages from Mrs Llewelyn (our Family Support Worker and DSL)



Please see this month's newsletter from West Northamptonshire. It gives lots of information about events, clubs and groups that are available for our families and young people to access, to provide support in a number of areas:

[West Northamptonshire Stay Connected December 2024](#)

Many thanks

Sam L

Please make sure you pack warm PE clothes for your child as they may still have PE outside, depending on the sport. Trousers and hoodies are encouraged!



Miss Walker-Collins —Acting Deputy Headteacher

Mrs. Williams—Executive Headteacher

Friday 13th December 2024

School Contact details: Tel – 01604 4011820

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