Claverdon News:
December 2025

Contents

Contents 2
Head Teacher's Message 3
Chair of Governors' Message 4
Reception: An Amazing Autumn Term 5
Year 1: A Term Full of Learning & Discovery 6
Year 2: Discovery & Growing Independence 7
Reception & Year 2 Shine with Generous Christmas Foodbank Collection! 8
Year 3: Stepping Confidently into KS2 9
Year 4: Exploring Civilisations & Creativity 10
The 12 Days of Christmas at Our School 11
Year 5: Resilience, Creativity & Challenge 12
Year 6: Reflection, Responsibility & Readiness 13
Meet our NEW teachers 14
Safety Over the Festive Period 15
Tech-free Christmas 16
Promoting Strong School Attendance 17
Spring Diary Dates: 18
Important dates for your diary 18

Head Teacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a busy and rewarding Autumn Term, it has been a pleasure to reflect on the many achievements and memorable moments across our school. This term has been full of enthusiasm, creativity and resilience and I am incredibly proud of our children, staff and families for the way they have embraced every opportunity.

Across the school, pupils have shown a genuine love of learning. From Reception settling confidently into school life and delighting us with their first performances, to Year 6 demonstrating maturity, responsibility and readiness for the challenges ahead, every year group has flourished. The richness of our curriculum has been evident in classrooms, outdoor learning and special events, bringing learning to life in meaningful and memorable ways.

A particularly important development this term has been the introduction of our new school values, created in collaboration with our school team, children, class representatives and shared with our Governors. Our values - Accountability, Unity, Kindness, Acceptance, Creativity and Courage - reflect the principles we want our pupils to live by and the culture we strive to build at Claverdon. I am excited to see these values embedded across the school throughout the year, shaping behaviour, learning and relationships.

We are already seeing wonderful examples of these values in action, from teamwork and kindness during performances and sporting activities, to creativity and courage demonstrated daily in classrooms. Acts of generosity, such as the impressive Christmas Foodbank collection led by Reception and Year 2, highlight the strong sense of community that defines our school.

A special note of thanks goes to **George Redwood**, who leaves us for *The King's School, Canterbury*, **Sara Sheridan**, moving to *Northleigh House School* and **Allison Carling**, who is retiring after many years as our Head of Kitchen. Throughout their time at Claverdon, they have given generously of their time, energy and expertise. Their commitment to our children's learning, wellbeing, happiness and daily school life has made a real difference and we are grateful for the lasting mark they leave on our community.

I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to the **entire school team** - teaching staff, support staff, office staff, caretakers and lunchtime supervisors - whose hard work, commitment and positivity make Claverdon such a wonderful place to learn. Thanks also to FOCPS (The Friends of Claverdon Primary School) and all our volunteers, whose contributions enrich our children's experiences every day.

Attendance remains a key focus and I thank families for their continued support in ensuring children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Good attendance underpins academic progress, wellbeing and confidence and we are always here to support if challenges arise.

As the festive season approaches, I hope you enjoy time together and reflect on the many highlights captured in this newsletter. On behalf of all the staff, thank you for your ongoing support. I wish you a peaceful and joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in January.

With warmest wishes,

Mr. Dan Powell
Head Teacher

Chair of Governors' Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of term and approach the Christmas season, I am writing on behalf of the Governors.

In September, I took on the role of Chair of Governors. This is both significant and humbling, following in the footsteps of many talented individuals. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to **Steven Timberlake**, whose leadership over the past three years as Chair oversaw the school's development into an *Outstanding* institution, as recognised by Ofsted. I would also like to thank **Stephen Greenway**, Deputy Chair and **Vicky Jenkins** for their valuable contributions and service, alongside **Jen Smith**, Deputy Chair and fellow Governors **Nikki Reed, Anna Jewell, Emma Basden-Smith, Sally Puar** and recently joined **Abbie Claire**, for their ongoing commitment and support.

We welcomed several new beginnings this year, including the appointments of **Elle Turner-Biggs** and **James Oakley** as Assistant Headteachers. They have embraced their roles with enthusiasm and are actively supporting **Dan Powell** in the school's leadership. In September, we also welcomed new children into Reception, as well as others who joined classes throughout the school.

We bid farewell and offer our very best wishes to **George Redwood**, who is embarking on a new role at *The King's School, Canterbury* and to **Sara Sheridan**, the school's own "Mary Poppins," who will be greatly missed by the children.

The positive atmosphere at the school is evident daily, whether during drop-off and pick-up or at break times. The school provides a nurturing environment that equips children with lifelong skills beyond academic achievement. While curriculum and assessment remain important, it is equally vital that children are encouraged to have fun, build friendships, enjoy life and engage fully in all activities.

This year included many memorable events, such as the Summer Fayre, the school cross-country event, our whole-school Remembrance Day gathering on 11th November, the Nativity perromances and music presentations showcasing students' talents.

Becoming a School Governor
The Governing Body plays an important role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the best outcomes for our children. Governors bring a wide range of skills and experiences and no prior educational background is required - just enthusiasm, commitment and a desire to make a positive difference. If you are interested in joining the school as a Governor or would like to learn more, please contact the **school office**.

On behalf of the Governors, I would also like to thank the **entire school team** - teaching staff, support staff, office staff, caretaking and lunchtime teams - whose dedication and hard work ensure children are supported and inspired every day.

Finally, thank you to **Dan Powell** for his exceptional leadership. His guidance, accessibility and encouragement have a lasting impact on our children's experiences and future success.

In conclusion, we are privileged to be part of such a supportive, vibrant community. On behalf of the Governors, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a well-earned break.

Mr. Francis Hilton
Chair of Governors

Reception:
An Amazing Autumn Term

It has been an amazing Autumn term and the start of school life for Reception.
A huge thank you to all parents for supporting learning at home and on our visits to church and the pantomime.

Since September, the children have enjoyed a range of learning opportunities. We began with the topic Ourselves and more recently explored Transport - on land, sea and in the air, past and present and around the world. Their drawings of a 'Tuk Tuk' were impressive! Did you know the Bullet Train in Japan can travel over 200 mph?

Children have had many opportunities to develop their communication and language skills through our play-based learning approach. They have grown in confidence when speaking to peers and adults, retelling familiar stories in their own words and using new vocabulary.

In phonics, children have completed Phase 2 of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds and started their reading journey. They have been thrilled to receive their first word books and enjoy practicing their blending skills.

A firm favourite has been Forest School. The kits have never needed washing so much, reflecting the fun the children have had exploring nature - making crowns, creating potions and toasting marshmallows and fruit on the fire pit.

For Black History Month, the children celebrated Simone Biles, researching her achievements and creating colourful paintings inspired by her story.

We ended the term with our production of 'A Midwife in Crisis' alongside Years 1 and 2. The children worked hard on projecting their voices, singing clearly and performing confidently on stage as sheep on a hilltop.

It has been a joy to see the children grow in confidence, build friendships and develop relationships with their Year Six buddies. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and thank you for your ongoing support as we look forward to the Spring term with our themes of Space and Growing and Changing.

Mrs. Bevan & Mrs. Wade
(The Reception Team)

Year 1:
A Term Full of Learning & Discovery

What a fantastic start to the year it has been in Year 1. The children have settled wonderfully into their new routines and have shown curiosity, enthusiasm and a real love of learning across all areas of the curriculum.

This term, we enjoyed exploring the much-loved story ‘Lost and Found’ by Oliver Jeffers. The children created their own versions of the tale, imagining exciting new adventures for the boy and the penguin. We were so impressed by the imagination, care and effort they put into their writing. They also became enthusiastic researchers when writing fact files about blue whales, discovering many fascinating facts about these amazing creatures.

In English, we began exploring instructions through the story ‘Wombat Stew’. The children learned the importance of clear steps and bossy verbs when giving directions and had great fun acting out instructions and creating their own simple sets of steps.

In Maths, we have been securing our understanding of numbers to 10 and have started learning about addition and subtraction. The children have used practical resources and pictures to help explain their thinking and their confidence with numbers has grown significantly.

Our Science learning has taken us on a journey through the human body, identifying different parts and learning about their functions. We also explored animals and the places they live, comparing different habitats around the world.

In Geography, we explored maps and discussed what they show us. The children enjoyed creating simple maps and thinking about their own surroundings and how maps can help us.

We are incredibly proud of everything the children have achieved this term. They have shown resilience, kindness and enthusiasm and it has been wonderful to see their confidence grow. We are excited to continue this journey and look forward to the next term.

Mrs. Turner-Biggs, Mrs. Dainty & Mrs. Bryan (The Year One Team)

Year 2:
Discovery & Growing Independence

What an amazing term it has been for Year 2! Thank you for all the support at home and school. Since September, the children have embraced new learning opportunities with increasing independence, curiosity and enthusiasm, while coming together to live out our new school values.

In History, we explored the Romans in Britain. The children learned about the vast Roman Empire, the importance of a soldier's armour and the clever tactics used in battle, including the famous tortoise formation. They were fascinated to discover how Roman innovations still impact our lives today, from underfloor heating to modern plumbing. Our learning was brought to life with an exciting visit from Dan Tastic, which many children described as "the best day ever!"

Geography lessons focused on developing map skills. We learned how to use compass directions, map keys and symbols, before studying maps of our local area and creating detailed maps of our school site. We now have a class of confident cartographers.

In English, Oliver Jeffers' 'Stuck' inspired imaginative narratives about a kite trapped in a tree, with some wonderfully ambitious vocabulary choices. We then explored poetry through the work of Shirley Hughes. Performing poems aloud helped build confidence and prepare us for the Christmas production.

For Black History Month, we researched influential musicians, including Bob Marley and Nina Simone, enjoying listening to and singing their music. We also challenged ourselves further through the BBC 500 Words competition and the UK Bebras computational thinking challenge.

The term ended with our joint production of 'A Midwife in Crisis' alongside Reception and Year 1. The children shone with clear voices, confident singing and impressive stage presence.

We are incredibly proud of how the children have flourished and look forward to the Spring Term ahead.

Mrs. Salisbury, Miss Walters, Miss Clarke & Mrs. Matthews (The Year Two Team)

Reception & Year 2 Shine with Generous Christmas Foodbank Collection!

We are incredibly proud of our Reception and Year 2 classes for their outstanding effort supporting the **Warwick District Foodbank** this Christmas!

Thanks to the enthusiasm and teamwork of Oliver, Lucy and their classmates, the children completed a **12 Days of Christmas reverse advent calendar**. Every day, Oliver and Lucy placed a collection box at the bottom of their drive, welcoming donations from families on their way into school - what a fantastic idea!

After completing the final count, we are delighted to share the results:

Reception collected 118 items
Year 2 collected 119 items
Grand total: 237 items donated!

This is an impressive achievement and a wonderful example of our pupils coming together to make a difference in the local community.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed and well done to all the children involved for showing such kindness and festive spirit. You've made a real difference this Christmas!

If you'd like to find out more about the work of the foodbank, including how to donate or volunteer, please visit the **Warwick District Foodbank website**:
https://warwickdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/

Year 3:
Stepping Confidently into KS2

What an awesome Autumn Term it has been for Year 3 as they have embraced life in Key Stage 2 with confidence and enthusiasm. The children have immersed themselves fully in their learning, showing great commitment to home learning tasks and even completing optional activities that have brightened our classroom displays.

Our writing this term has been particularly impressive. Using 'Stone Age Boy', the children crafted gripping narratives, while 'The Egyptian Cinderella' inspired thoughtful and detailed character descriptions. We also explored poetry, writing a collection of beautiful haikus inspired by the seasons - even about one waiting for Santa!

In Maths, we focused on place value, addition and subtraction, building strong foundations and developing resilience. The children have worked hard to strengthen their core skills and are well prepared for the challenges ahead.

History has been a firm favourite. We travelled back to the Stone Age, learning how artefacts from sites like Skara Brae help historians understand the past, before moving on to explore the fascinating world of Ancient Egypt.

In Geography, we developed our understanding of the local area and settlements, linking closely with map skills learned previously.

Science lessons saw us learning about the human body and exploring life cycles. The children also completed a research project on migrating animals, producing thoughtful and well-presented work.

For Black History Month, the class researched significant figures in technology, presenting inspiring information with creativity and confidence.

In Art, they explored the concept of line by designing and creating printing blocks to produce repeated plant images.

It has been a pleasure teaching this enthusiastic and hardworking class and we look forward to their continued success.

Mr. Redwood, Mrs. Sheridan & Miss Clarke (The Year Three Team)

Year 4:
Exploring Civilisations & Creativity

Year 4 have enjoyed an incredible Autumn Term, showing enthusiasm, curiosity and a growing sense of independence in all areas of learning. They have approached each challenge with a positive attitude and a willingness to try their best.

In English, we explored a range of engaging texts. 'The Lost Thing' by Shaun Tan inspired thoughtful alternative endings, while our history work on Ancient Greece led to imaginative poetry using rich figurative language. More recently, the children wrote suspense stories, developing atmosphere and tension with impressive results.

In History, we explored two fascinating ancient civilisations. The children were captivated by Ancient Greece, learning about myths, gods, democracy and daily life, before moving on to Ancient Rome and its lasting influence on the modern world. Geography lessons brought learning closer to home as we studied London and the South East, examining landmarks, physical features and reasons for London's growth.

Black History Month provided valuable opportunities for reflection and discussion. We read 'Hidden Figures' and 'Coming to England', learning about resilience, courage and belonging. The children also created vibrant posters celebrating famous Black actors and actresses.

In Science, we learned about the human body, focusing on organs and systems, alongside developing enquiry skills through classifying plants and animals. Careful observation and scientific reasoning were key skills throughout.

We are extremely proud of the children's achievements and the positive attitudes they bring each day. Thank you for your continued support - we look forward to another exciting term ahead.

Miss Robbins & Mrs. Grice

The 12 Days of Christmas at Our School

As we come to the end of a truly remarkable term, we reflect on just some of the highlights from across our school community this year…

On the first day of Christmas, we celebrated the *daily acts of teaching and learning* that happen in every classroom, every day.

On the second day of Christmas, we welcomed **2 new members of staff**, with more joining us in January.

On the third day of Christmas, we refreshed our **Vision, Mission and Values**, setting a clear direction for the future.

On the fourth day of Christmas, we proudly welcomed **30 new Reception children and their families**, alongside **6 new families** across other years.

On the fifth day of Christmas, we raised **record-breaking amounts of money for Mind and Children in Need**.

On the sixth day of Christmas, we strengthened our school environment with **new windows and blinds**, a **move to a virtual server** and **solar panels soon to be installed**.

On the seventh day of Christmas, staff development shone, with **additional First Aid, DSL and NPQ qualifications**, **Team Teach training** and whole-staff training in **safeguarding and restorative conversations**.

On the eighth day of Christmas, pupils enjoyed a wealth of **clubs, sporting fixtures** and achievements - including gaining the **Equal Access Award**.

On the ninth day of Christmas, we celebrated pupil leadership, electing **House Captains, School Councillors, Librarians and Rights Ambassadors**.

On the tenth day of Christmas, enrichment took centre stage with **school visits, workshops, competitions, Remembrance commemorations** and challenges such as the **UK Bebras and 500 Word competitions**.

On the eleventh day of Christmas, our community came together through **open days, parent workshops, church visits, discos, fun runs, wreath making, gift shops and festive events** - including the **Nativity, Panto trip and Christingle Service**.

On the twelfth day of Christmas, we looked ahead with confidence, introducing a **new leadership structure** and **transitioning to a new Chair of Governors and governing body structure**, aligned to our key priorities.

All this - and the countless moments of care, encouragement and learning that happen every single day.

Thank you to our pupils, staff, families and wider community for making this such a special year.

Year 5:
Resilience, Creativity & Challenge

Year 5 have had a fantastic Autumn Term, showing curiosity, creativity and a strong commitment to our school values. We would like to thank families for their continued support both at home and in school.

This term has highlighted the children's remarkable resilience. They adapted brilliantly to changes in staffing, demonstrating patience, positivity and maturity. They should feel incredibly proud of how well they handled these transitions.

In History, we explored the British Empire, culminating in live news reports on the Battle of Quebec. The children's teamwork and communication skills were outstanding. We also began learning about the Transatlantic Slave Trade, using maps and role play to understand the trade triangle and its impact.

English lessons were full of imagination. 'The Tunnel' by Anthony Browne inspired suspense-filled narrative endings, while poetry based on 'Firework Night' by Enid Blyton helped develop imagery and perspective. 'The Nowhere Emporium' sparked creativity through newspaper articles and gripping suspense stories based on the mysterious 'Wonders'.

For Black History Month, the children researched influential Black scientists and created stunning folk-art inspired portraits. In DT, they designed and made cam toys for Year 2, thoughtfully interviewing their audience to inform their designs.

Art lessons explored Rococo patterns, modernist furniture and abstract painting, with confident and imaginative outcomes.

We have been consistently impressed by the class's enthusiasm and thoughtful discussions and look forward to more exceptional learning in the Spring Term.

Mrs. Davis & Mrs. Matthews

Year 6:
Reflection, Responsibility & Readiness

Year 6 have had an incredible Autumn Term, embracing every opportunity with enthusiasm, dedication and a strong commitment to our school values. Thank you for the support shown at home and in school.

In History, the children explored World War I, examining its causes, key events and resolution, alongside the inspiring suffragette movement. These topics prompted thoughtful discussions and showcased the children's growing historical understanding. Geography lessons focused on British issues, encouraging critical thinking about our environment and communities.

Our English work has been equally exciting. The class wrote suspense stories inspired by 'Into the Forest' by Anthony Browne, alongside persuasive leaflets promoting Alton Towers. The creativity and technical skill demonstrated were outstanding.

During Black History Month, the children researched prominent Black politicians and reflected on leadership and change. They also challenged themselves through the UK Bebras computational thinking challenge. In DT, the class designed and built water walls for their Reception buddies, showing teamwork, responsibility and care.

In Art, perspective drawings inspired by the Italian Renaissance were a highlight. Workshops with Stella the magistrate and Helen from Good News deepened understanding of justice and religious worldviews. Poetry readings at church for Harvest and Remembrance Day helped foster respect and reflection.

It has been a joy to see the children thrive and we are incredibly proud of their achievements as we look ahead to the Spring Term.

Mr. Oakley & Mrs. Smith (The Welsh Duo)

Meet our NEW teachers

Miss Burt

Hello everyone!

My name is Miss Burt and I am really excited to be joining the Claverdon Primary family. I'll be teaching across Year One and Year Five, which I'm absolutely thrilled about.

I've had the pleasure of teaching across both key stages for several years now and I love the variety and unique challenges that each age group brings.

I'm passionate about lots of subjects, but I have a real love for anything Performing Arts related. I'm also a huge advocate for boosting children's wellbeing, resilience and confidence, as I truly believe that when children feel happy and supported, they are able to achieve their very highest potential.

Outside of school, you'll usually find me enjoying the outdoors with my dog and horse, making the most of fresh air and nature. After that, there's nothing better than coming home to the warmth and settling down with a good book!

I'm very much looking forward to getting started and meeting you all. Please feel free to say hello or get in touch if you have any questions.

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and I can't wait to get started in the new year!

Miss Burt

Miss Bassi

Hello Year 3 families!

My name is Miss Bassi and I can't wait to join Claverdon Primary as your child's Year 3 teacher! I've been teaching for many years, with particular experience across Lower Key Stage 2. I have such a passion for teaching and my aim is to create a classroom environment where every child feels heard, supported and excited to learn.

I particularly love teaching Maths and helping children build their mastery of number. Outside of the classroom, I love going to watch the ice hockey (come on you Blaze!), reading mystery books, crocheting and painting. My newest favourite hobby is watercolour painting!

My goal is to make learning as engaging as possible whilst also being fun. I believe all children can achieve and thrive when we build a supportive environment together. I'm looking forward to working closely with you to get to know your children and to ensure they have a successful year.

Please feel free to say hello or get in touch if you have any questions - I can't wait to meet you all and start this exciting journey together!

Miss Bassi

Mrs. Starcevic

Hello Year 6 pupils and families!

My name is Mrs Starcevic and I'm thrilled to be joining the Claverdon team after the holidays. I have been teaching for many years with experience across the key stages but have spent 6 years alone in Year 6.

Outside of school, I love to exercise, read and spend time outdoors in the garden. I also love spending time with my family – my husband, our 5-year-old daughter Sofia and our 10-year-old house rabbit Fluff!

As an avid reader, I love teaching English and spreading my passion for books to my classes. I also love the creativity involved in writing and thinking of ways to bring the curriculum to life, whether that's using drama, props, music or video. Art is also a passion of mine and I look forward to producing lots of creative opportunities at school.

I'm dedicated to ensuring that your children have the best send off from Claverdon and that they leave us in the best possible way: proud of their achievements and with the skills and confidence to deal with all that secondary school (and beyond!) has to offer.

My door is always open so please feel free to pop in or drop me an email at any time if you have any questions.

Have a wonderful Christmas and I look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

Mrs. Starcevic

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.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 11.12.2024

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

Top Tips for a TECH-FREE CHRISTMAS

It can be difficult to stay away from technology and devices, and sometimes this means that people – of any age – can find it hard to be present in the moment. As a period when families are able to spend some quality time together and enjoy each other's company, Christmas is the perfect opportunity to step away from our phones, laptops and consoles and concentrate on the things that really matter. Follow our top ten tips for a tech-free festive period and make the most of this holiday season. Merry Christmas!

1. BOARD GAMES CAN BE FUN (HONEST)

OK, no one wants a repeat of that incident when your youngest had to pay triple rent on Mayfair, but going back to basics with a card or board game can be a fantastic bonding experience. Choose a game that even the youngest members of your family can enjoy and have a fun tech-free time.

2. MAKE YOUR OWN DECORATIONS

Spending time on arts and crafts is a brilliant way to relax and spend some productive time offline. Making your own Christmas decorations as a family can become a wholesome tradition and leave you with some treasured mementos, too.

3. GO FOR A WINTER WALK

Not much beats wrapping up warm on a crisp December day and taking a stroll. Whether alone or with the family, a walk is a fantastic way to clear your head and relish the break from hectic normal life. As an extra festive treat, why not make a flask of hot chocolate to take with you?

4. BAKE SOME FESTIVE TREATS

Not all Christmas cooking has to be a stressful chore that's timed with military precision. Baking some simple festive treats like cookies doesn't have to take hours – and will make sure you're stocked up on tasty things to offer any friends or family members who pop round.

5. READ A FAMILY STORY TOGETHER

Turn story time into an event. Make the living room or bedroom into a tech-free space, light some candles, make some hot drinks and reach for a classic Christmas tale. It's a fantastic way to relax before bed, and the right story will help to get the whole family into the festive spirit.

6. TURN OFF NOTIFICATIONS

It sounds obvious, but turning off email and app notifications can give you more control of your relationship with technology. Getting into the habit of checking your phone periodically – rather than reacting every time a notification arrives – helps you to stay present in the moment.

7. FEED THE BIRDS

Food's hard to come by for wildlife in winter, so helping our feathered friends is a very worthwhile reason to put down those devices and reconnect with nature. Fill a bird feeder in the garden or take a snack for the ducks in your local park (but ditch the bread in favour of oats, rice or birdseed).

8. SET DAILY LIMITS

Many apps and devices let you set reminders to let you know how long you've used them for that day. Setting daily limits puts you firmly in charge of your time and will help to ensure you don't miss out on any family Christmas memories because you're engrossed in your phone or laptop.

9. GET ON YOUR BIKE

Exercise, such as going for a run or a bike ride is an excellent way to burn off some of those Yuletide calories while giving your brain and eyes a break from screen-based activity. Physical exertion also helps reduce anxiety and releases endorphins which can improve your sense of wellbeing.

10. MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

There can be a lot of pressure to meet up with friends, make video calls and check in with people at Christmas – but remember that you need time to relax as well. Don't feel guilty about not replying to messages and emails immediately – the holiday is your chance to drop down a gear or two.

National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 21.12.2022

Promoting Strong School Attendance

At Claverdon Primary School, we are committed to providing the best education for every child and regular school attendance is key to their success.

While we understand occasional absences due to illness or exceptional reasons, strong attendance is essential for your child's academic achievement, personal development and future opportunities.

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance helps your child:

- **Achieve their best** academically, as learning builds day-by-day.
- **Develop friendships** and important social skills.
- **Build confidence** through a structured routine.
- **Prepare for future opportunities**, whether in secondary school, further education, or work.

Government guidance highlights that children with poor attendance are at a disadvantage, leading to **learning gaps**, **lower attainment** and **fewer opportunities** later in life.

The Impact of Poor Attendance

Missing school regularly can have a serious impact. For example:

- **90% attendance** = missing **1 half-day** every week = nearly **4 weeks lost per year**.
- **80% attendance** = missing **1 full day** every week = almost **8 weeks lost per year**.

Over multiple years, this adds up:

- **90% attendance over 5 years** = half a year of lost education.
- **80% attendance over 5 years** = a full year of lost education.

Missing even one day a week can lead to learning gaps that are difficult to overcome, affecting progress, confidence and future opportunities. Prioritising attendance helps develop positive habits that will benefit your child throughout life.

Supporting You and Your Child

We are here to support you and your child in maintaining good attendance. If you face challenges affecting attendance, such as health or family issues, please let us know. We can offer guidance and, where needed, connect with external services to help.

Attendance Expectations

- **Above 97%** attendance is considered excellent.
- **90-96%** attendance is concerning and we will discuss strategies to improve.
- **Below 90%** is classed as **persistent absenteeism**. In such cases, we will work closely with you to address the reasons and put supportive measures in place.

What We Expect from You

1. **Ensure your child attends school daily** and arrives on time (gates open at 8:40 am and close at 8.55am).
2. **Avoid absences during term time**, including holidays, which will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.
3. **Notify us by 8:45 am** if your child is unwell and unable to attend.
4. **Work with us** to resolve any attendance concerns.

The Process for Managing Attendance

Our approach follows the latest **Department for Education (DfE) guidance.**

1. **Regular Monitoring:** Attendance is reviewed daily and weekly. Children below 90% are flagged for early intervention.
2. **Initial Contact:** If attendance falls, we will contact you to discuss and offer support.
3. **Attendance Support Plan:** If concerns persist, we will create a plan, setting targets and providing access to resources or external services.
4. **Formal Measures:** If attendance does not improve, we may need to consider formal measures, which could include fines or legal proceedings.

Recognising Success

At **Claverdon Primary School**, we believe in celebrating **good attendance**. Each term, we plan to acknowledge and reward children who achieve 100% attendance. It's a great way to motivate pupils and highlight the importance of regular attendance.

Spring Diary Dates:
Important dates for your diary

Date:	Event description (get your diaries out!)
05/01/26	Spring Term starts!
13/01/26	Y4 Educational Visit to Roman Museum.
15/01/26	Young Voices Music Concert (school choir leaving school at lunch / concert starts at 7pm).
29/01/26	SATs Information Evening – Year 6 classroom (5:00 – 6:00pm). *Year 6 parents and carers welcome (adults only).*
04/02/26	Y6 Educational Visit to Bletchley Park.
10/02/26	Safer Internet Day.
13/02/26	Spring 1 Open Morning – visit classrooms to see children's books (8:30-9:15am).
16/02/26	**Half Term**
23/02/26	**Teacher Training Day**
05/03/26	World Book Day – *dress up as your favourite book character!*
05/03/26	PGL Information Evening Year 6 room (5.00 – 6.00pm). *Year 6 parents and carers welcome (adults only).*
11/03/26	Parents' Evening (3.40 – 6.20pm).
12/03/26	Parents' Evening (3.40 - 6.20pm).
20/03/26	Red Nose Day – *non-uniform day, a link will be provided for donations.*
23/03/26	Shakespeare Week!
24/03/26	Easter Church Service (9:30 – 10:30am). *All parents and carers welcome!*
24/03/26	Year 3 and 4 Easter Production – Show 1 (2.00 – 3.00pm).
25/03/26	Year 3 and 4 Easter Production – Show 2 (2.00 – 3.00pm).
27/03/26	Spring 2 Open Morning – visit classrooms to see children's books (8:30–9:15).
30/03/26	**Easter Holidays**

Claverdon Primary School
Breach Lane, Claverdon, Warwickshire CV35 8QA

Tel: 01926 842 403
Email: admin2017@welearn365.com
Twitter: @claverdonschool

www.claverdonschool.org.uk