



St Augustine's Academy Newsletter

9th January 2026



Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,



Happy New Year to you all and welcome back to the start of the new term. We would like to give a special welcome to our new teacher Mrs Dryden who is teaching in our Year 2 class.

This week, we very unexpectedly had to close our school due to a burst water pipe. We hope that you were able to make use of the learning that our teachers provided for the children via the school website and we would like to thank you all for your support. We would also like to thank Mr Mead and Mr Smart for ensuring that our school was ready to open again on Thursday.

Across the country, the weather has been cold and icy. The children have been dressing in their winter coats and hats to keep themselves warm outside and have been learning to appreciate the changing seasons. In our Reception class the children have also been making nutritious bird feeders which they hung on the trees in our Forest school. It is so important to look after our wildlife in wintry conditions.

We hope that you all manage to stay safe and warm this weekend and look forward to seeing you again on Monday.

Best Wishes

**Amanda Howes –
Headteacher**



Lyfta



This week in Lyfta we met Eshmaeil who is a teacher in Iran. Eshmaeil journeys to a remote village, sometimes in snowy, treacherous conditions, to teach the children who live there.



We learnt how it takes courage and determination to reach the village but Eshmaeil never gives up because he knows that the children's education is so important. Our Reception children needed a little bit of courage to learn outside in the cold weather but they soon realised that they were kept warm by their winter clothes and enjoyed learning in the fresh air. Fresh air and exercise is so good for you.



'Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.' Matthew 5:16



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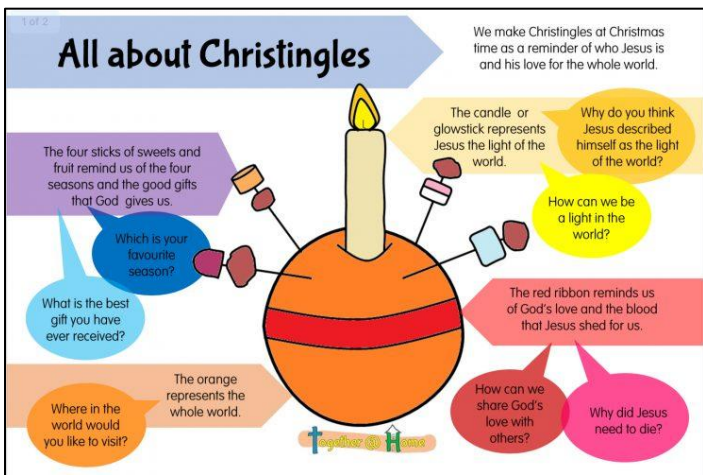


Christingle



Christingle is a joyful celebration which brings everyone together to remember Jesus as the light of the world. This week, each child in the school made a Christingle which they then carried to our fun-filled Christingle service in the hall, led by Revd. Ricky.

Each part of the Christingle has a specific meaning which can be seen in the image below.



Value of the Half Term - Courage



On 6th January, we celebrated Epiphany and remembered how the 3 Wise Men (or Magi) travelled to see the baby Jesus and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



Our value for the half term is 'courage' and we learnt how the wise men needed courage and perseverance on their long journey to find him. We will be learning a lot about courage over the next few weeks.

Vocabulary Velociraptors

1 sunny	2 cloudy	3 overcast	4 drizzle
5 rain	6 hail	7 frost	8 snow
9 fog	10 thunderstorm	11 hurricane	12 tornado

Quite aptly, this week was Weather Week in school and the children learnt to recognise 12 different types of weather. Can you learn them too?

Diary Dates

W.B. Mon. 12 th Jan.	Clothes Week – Vocabulary Velociraptors Lyfta – Heini in Finland – Costume Department
Tue. 13 th Jan.	Pantomime
W.B. Mon. 19 th Jan.	Occupations Week 1 – Vocabulary Velociraptors Lyfta – Melkiye in Awra Amba, Ethiopia – Decision Making

Sometimes we have to change diary dates due to circumstances beyond our control. Please keep checking the school diary regularly for updates.

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 ENCOURAGING HEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS

Navigating the complexities of childhood and adolescent friendships can be challenging – but with the right guidance, children and young people can cultivate meaningful, supportive relationships, some of which may last for many years. These top tips provide a comprehensive approach to fostering healthy friendships among children and young people. It's important to remember, however, that each child is different, and will require an individual approach to relationship support.

1 GRANT FRIENDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Encouraging children and young people to join extracurricular activities can foster healthy friendships by providing shared interests and common ground. Engaging in these pastimes offers a platform for interaction, sometimes alleviating the social pressure of knowing what to say, and helps children develop meaningful connections.

2 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

The children and young people in our lives see how we behave, the connections that we've made and the interactions between us and others. When we model healthy friendships, we set an example and help youngsters to understand what healthy friendships looks like and how to navigate them.

3 HELP THEM LOVE THEMSELVES

Healthy friendships aren't just about dynamics with other people. They're about our relationship with ourselves. For overall wellbeing, it's important for a child to have the space to build their self-esteem and a positive self-image, as these factors can have a notable influence on the friendships they form throughout life.

4 MONITOR SCREEN TIME

Too much screen time can affect some children's wellbeing in general, but it can specifically impact friendships if it results in fewer positive social interactions. In some cases, reducing screen time and encouraging children and young people to find ways to interact face-to-face can have positive results. It's also important to remember that young people can make positive friendships online, but they will require support to do this safely.

5 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING

Inevitably, friendships can run into problems. However, this is also an opportunity to support children and young people to work through any difficulties that may arise. It can be tempting to intervene and try to fix these issues for those involved, but helping them consider ways of resolving conflict or managing difficult situations for themselves can help them create stronger friendships.

6 EMPOWER THE CHILD

When we give children and young people the confidence to choose their friends, navigate interpersonal boundaries and consider how they want to interact with the different people around them, we empower them to take control of the friendships they have. When young people feel in control of these things, they're more likely to make positive choices and remain aware of the signs of a negative relationship.

7 TEACH EMPATHY

'Healthy friendships' doesn't always mean 'perfect'. Sometimes, disagreements can happen. When we teach children and young people to have empathy, we help them to see both sides of a relationship; to be mindful of the challenges a friend might be facing or whatever else might be going on. This can help children and young people to build stronger friendships.

8 BE OPEN TO QUESTIONS

Talking to young people about their friendships, who they spend time with and who they interact with can open the door to questions if they have concerns. Initially, these queries may be straightforward, but if we are receptive to discussion from the outset, young people are more likely to come to us for help when they are older as well.

9 UNDERSTAND BOUNDARIES

One of the keys to a healthy friendship is honouring boundaries. This can include anything from respecting personal space and belongings to acceptable language and behaviour. Understanding the importance of setting these limits and upholding those set by others can help children stay safe. If young people figure out their boundaries and feel comfortable enforcing them, they're more likely to call someone out if they go too far.

10 SPOT THE SIGNS

We can't always supervise young people: sometimes, we need to step back and give them some space. However, it's important to consider any indicators that they may be struggling in their friendships. Are they becoming increasingly irritable? Does their behaviour alter when they've been with their friends? Are they becoming withdrawn or reluctant to take part in certain activities? These could all be signs that they're finding things difficult, and we should remain alert to such changes.

Meet Our Expert

Becky Dawson is an experienced educator who has worked in primary and secondary schools for 20 years. She is a facilitator, consultant and coach working with young people and the adults who work with them, with a focus on developing understanding and skills around mental health, wellbeing and safeguarding.



The National College®



FREE

Don't miss out! Join us
at our coffee event
and pick up your free
hard copy of the booklet



Welcome from SNAP Parent Carer Forum!

We are inviting you to join our second PINS Coffee Event

Date: 19th January 2026

From: 9am To: 10.30am

Place: St Augustine's Academy

Come along to a coffee and a chat about our 'Supporting Your Neurodiverse Child/Young Person' Booklet



When you first realise that your child/young person experiences the world in a different way it can feel overwhelming. But once you begin to understand their way of thinking it can be rewarding and you can learn so much from them. This booklet is full of useful information and strategies to help support you on this journey.

The Goal

To help every child feel included, understood, and supported—especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

PINS is designed to:

- ✓ Help schools improve how they support children with SEND
- ✓ Offer early help to children who may be struggling - with or without a diagnosis
- ✓ Provide training for school staff to build skills and confidence
- ✓ Enhance communication and partnerships between schools and families

MORE INFORMATION



For more information please email
PINS@snappcf.org.uk and see our PINS webpage

POSITIVELY
INFLUENCING
CHANGE



SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM
CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE



PINS
Partnerships for Inclusion of
Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to
announce our...

**excellent selection
of online training:**



We are delighted to announce our new programme of supportive online training for PINS schools' parent carers. This exciting series of sessions has been designed to inform, inspire, and support you.

Further details, including session overviews and booking information, will be shared via email very soon.

Each session will be delivered by qualified experts who will help you support your child/young person.

Session	Date	Time	Venue
Understanding ADHD	27/01/2026	12:00 - 1:30pm	Online
Understanding Autism	10/02/2026	12:00 - 1:30pm	Online
Understanding and Supporting Sensory Difficulties at Home	25/02/2026	12:00 - 1:30pm	Online
Understanding Pathological Demand Avoidance	05/03/2026	12:00 - 1:30pm	Online
Understanding and Managing Challenging Behaviour	19/03/2026	12:00 - 1:30pm	Online

CLICK HERE

Please note...

Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

**BOOKING DETAILS ON FLYERS OR VIA
<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/pins-project-parentcarer-workshops-4801862>**

www.snapppcf.org.uk



SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM
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Partnerships for Inclusion of
Neurodiversity in Schools

**BOOK
NOW!**

FREE Online Workshops for Parent Carers as part of the PINS Project.

We are excited to announce they will be delivered by the
British Dyslexia Association.

Supporting Your Child with Dyslexia: A Practical Guide for Parents

Join us for an engaging 2-hour online session designed to help parents better understand and support children with dyslexia at home. This training will cover:

- **Understanding Dyslexia** – What it is and how it affects learning and daily life.
- **How Does It Feel?** – Gain insight into your child's lived experience.
- **Behaviours at Home** – Explore why challenges like homework avoidance and forgetfulness happen.
- **Practical Strategies** – Learn visual tools, technology tips, and ways to create a supportive home environment.
- **Whole Family Understanding** – Foster empathy and teamwork within your household.
- **Next Steps** – When and why to consider a diagnostic assessment.

This session is packed with actionable advice and real-world strategies to make a positive difference for your child and family.

Date: Friday 13th February
Time: 12:00 - 2:00pm



Please book your place by emailing '**BDA Training**', your name and your child's school to: PINS@snappcf.org.uk.

Limited spaces available, booking is essential!



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BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL



Partnerships for Inclusion of
Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to
announce our...

Online training:



Understanding ADHD
Friday
27/01/2026
12:00 pm - 1:30pm

This session is delivered by qualified experts who will help you support your child/young person.

Understanding aims:

- *To understand more about the strengths and challenges associated with ADHD*
- *To recognise the different ways that ADHD may 'present' in children/young people, including co-existing conditions*
- *To explore helpful support strategies*
- *To know where to get more help*



Book Now!

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL...



Please note...

Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

www.snappcf.org.uk

DATE: Friday 27th February
12:00pm - 1:30 pm

Please book your place by
clicking on the live link
[https://understanding-](https://understanding-adhd-270126.eventbrite.co.uk/)
[adhd-](https://understanding-adhd-270126.eventbrite.co.uk/)
[270126.eventbrite.co.uk/](https://understanding-adhd-270126.eventbrite.co.uk/)

CLICK HERE




SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM
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BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL



Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to announce our...

Online training:

Understanding Autism

Thursday 10/02/26
12:00 pm - 1:30pm



BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL...

DATE
Tuesday 10th February 2026,
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Please book your place by clicking on the live link:
<https://understanding-autism-100226.eventbrite.co.uk/>

CLICK HERE

Please note...

Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

www.snappcf.org.uk




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BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL



Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to announce our...

Online training:

Tips and Tools to Manage Sensory Differences

25/02/2026
12:00 pm - 1:30pm



BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL...

DATE: Thursday 25th February 2026,
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Please book your place directly (click on the live link) via
<https://understanding-sensory-differences-250226.eventbrite.co.uk/>

CLICK HERE

Please note...

Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

www.snappcf.org.uk




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BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL



Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to announce our...

Online training:

Understanding Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA)

Thursday 05/03/2026
12:00 pm - 1:30pm



BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL...

DATE
Thursday 5th March 2026,
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm



Please book your place by clicking on the live link:
<https://understanding-pda-050326.eventbrite.co.uk/>

CLICK HERE

Please note...


Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

www.snappcf.org.uk

SNAP PARENT CARER FORUM
CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL




Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools

We are excited to announce our...

Online training:

Understanding Challenging Behaviours

Thursday 19/03/26
12:00 pm - 1:30pm



BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL...

DATE
Thursday 19th of March 2026, 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Please book your place by clicking on the live link:
<https://understanding-challenging-behaviour-190326.eventbrite.co.uk/>

CLICK HERE

Please note...

Add -vance sessions are recorded and available to watch for 7 days after to those booked/attending the session.

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