



St Augustine's Academy Newsletter

12th December 2025



Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,



It has been a very Christmassy week in school with nativity plays taking place, RE Active Church and Year 3 taking part in Caddington Grove Care Home's Christmas service.

The pictures above show the Christmas service at Caddington Grove where, as well as singing, the children met Father Christmas who gave them delicious drinks and cookies.

We are all very excited for next week where we have our spectacular Winter Wonderland, delicious Christmas dinner, our joyful Christmas Service and our fantastic Christmas parties to look forward to.

Best Wishes,

Amanda Howes – Headteacher

Lyfta



This week in Lyfta, we continued to learn about Lukas from Denmark who is a Christian. As we learnt last week, Lukas attends a church where people often pray for those who are sick.

We have been learning about the value of compassion during this half term. In our Collective Worship, we often pray for others. Below you can see a photograph of Early Years enjoying Collective Worship together in their classroom. In the centre of their circle they have a candle, 'compassion' poster, a Bible, a cross and a holding cross.

Children are invited to take the holding cross and pray for something or someone, if they choose to do so.



'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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Reception Christmas Performance



The youngest children in our school wowed us with a heartwarming performance that was an absolute treat to watch. The children spoke beautifully, looked wonderful and sang their hearts out to the delight of their audience. We would like to thank the children, staff, parents and carers, who worked so hard to put on such a special nativity play.

Year 1 Christmas Performance



Year 1's nativity play was truly spectacular! The children's performance was slick and polished and the children were a delight to watch. We would like to thank the children, staff, parents and carers who helped the children to learn their words. The play definitely started off our week in a wonderful Christmassy way. Thank you Year 1!

Year 2 Christmas Performance



Year 2 put on a rousing Christmas performance to the delight of their audience. Being Year 2's, they had a lot of words to learn and they did so well at learning their lines. The children sang their hearts out and their humorous rendition of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' was definitely a stand out moment in the play. We would like to thank the children, staff, parents and carers for all their hard work in helping to put on such a superb performance.

PTFA Christmas Fayre



Thank you PTFA



We are pleased to announce that the PTFA Christmas Fayre raised a whopping £500.00 for our school. The hall was a hive of activity as people queued to purchase raffle tickets, play fun Christmas games and take part in a range of crafts. We are excited to draw the raffle prizes next week and will let you know when we have the lucky winners' names. Thank you PTFA for all you hard work in organising this wonderful annual event and to parents and carers for your continued support.

Celebration

CONGRATULATIONS to the following children.

Our Stars of the Week are...

Year 1 – Frank
Year 2 – Kyren
Year 3 – Natalie
Year 4 – Trinity
Year 5 – Filip
Year 6 – Year 6

Our 'Lyfta' Pupils of the Week are...

Year 1 – Yemaryam
Year 2 – Eleora
Year 3 – Sara
Year 4 – Taliyah
Year 5 – Jhanea
Year 6 – NA



Our Vocabulary Velociraptors are...

Year 1 – Chimamanda
Year 2 – Alesha
Year 3 – Alfie
Year 4 – Harriet
Year 5 – Eliezer
Year 6 – NA



Our Attendance Bear Winner is...



The House Point totals this week are...



307

277

268





290

Hot Chocolate Award



"Congratulations" to the above children who shone this term by consistently following our Golden Rules and school values. We hope you enjoyed your 'Hot Chocolate Award'.

Vocabulary Velociraptors

1  Advent	2  Christmas tree	3  Christmas cracker	4  Christmas pudding
5  Carol singing	6  wreath	7  holly	8  mistletoe
9  Nativity	10  gold	11  frankincense	12  myrrh

This week in Vocabulary Velociraptors, the children learnt about 12 Christmas objects. They recapped on them every day to try to learn them well. Can you learn them too?

Diary Dates

Mon. 15 th Dec.	CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND BBC in School (Children to wear normal school uniform – No PE clothes today)
Wed. 17 th Dec.	Christmas Service
Thu. 18 th Dec.	Christmas Dinner
Fri. 19 th Dec.	Christmas Parties and Christmas Jumper Day Last Day of Term
Tue. 6 th Jan	Children Return To School Vocabulary Velociraptors – Weather Week Lyfta – Eshmaeil in Iran – Yearly Incredible Journey
Wed. 7 th Jan	Christingle Service with Revd. Ricky

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

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

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



#WakeUpWednesday



1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.



6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... Is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.



3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.



8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.



4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss; 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.



9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.



5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.



10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.



Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Sources of Information and Support

- Your GP
 Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>
<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>

Online Scams Awareness: Send Home to Parents

Internet Matters have worked with Roblox and Ambitious about Autism to create new resources to support neurodivergent children who like playing games online, to help recognise and deal with scams. **Please feel free to pass this information onto your pupil's parents and carers, or share within your own newsletters.**

Online safety support for neurodivergent children



Online scams like trust trades and fake giveaways can cause harm and upset to all children, but neurodivergent children are at greater risk of falling victim to scams.

Internet Matters have worked with Ambitious about Autism and Roblox to create new resources to help families with neurodivergent children learn and stay safe from scams within games.

There's a guide for parents, a video for children and young people, plus stories for families to read and discuss together to explore the risks, with practical actions for children to take to help stay protected.

Find all the resources [here](#).



Bedfordshire
Fire & Rescue Service

 bedsfire.gov.uk
 Southfields Road
Kempston, Bedford
MK42 7NR
 bedsfirealert.co.uk
 @bedsfire

For the attention of Parents and Guardians

Children/Young People's safety around lakes, rivers and bodies of open water

Dear Parents,

We want to alert parents and young people of the potential dangers and risk to life of playing near and on frozen bodies of water in Bedfordshire.

We would ask all parents and carers to talk to their children and remind them of the dangers of ice and water and why they must keep away from it.

Frozen lakes, ponds, canals and reservoirs can look picturesque, but they can be lethal. There can be no greater warning of this than last year's awful event.

The cold weather can lead to bodies of water freezing over and creating hazardous conditions. We understand the temptation to walk across or play on the frozen water, but we would like to urge everyone to see the dangers are associated with frozen water.

Our advice is to never go on to the ice under any circumstances. The ice may appear thicker than it is but please be aware that ice can be weak, especially as you move further from the edge. If you were to fall in it can be extremely dangerous due to the cold temperatures of the water and the possibility of currents pushing you under unbroken ice.

RLSS UK offer safety advice for winter water safety, with simple steps to keep safe during the winter:

1. Never go onto the ice to play, to retrieve an object, or a pet.
2. Never enter the ice to rescue somebody, call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service

What to do if YOU accidentally fall through ice:

- Stay calm and shout for help
- Spread your arms out across the surface of the ice in front of you
- Lie flat and use your arms to pull yourself over the ice towards the shore
- If the ice on the water breaks, try to make your way to the bank or shore, breaking ice in front of you as you go
- If you find yourself stuck and unable to escape, wait for help. Stay as still as possible to conserve your energy. Bring your arms close to your sides and keep your legs together, while keeping your head out of the water
- When you're safely out of the water it's important to go to hospital for a check-up



Bedfordshire
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📱 @bedsfire

What to do if you see SOMEONE ELSE fall through the ice:

- Shout for help, call 999 and – if the incident involves inland water – ask for the fire service. At the coast, ask for the coastguard.
- Do not go on to ice to attempt a rescue.
- Call out to the casualty and encourage them to stay calm.
- To try to reach the person from the bank, use a rope, pole, tree branch, clothes tied together or anything else that can extend your reach.
- Lie down flat on the bank, to avoid slipping or being pulled in.
- If you can't reach them, try sliding something that floats – like a football or large plastic bottle – to them, to help them float.
- If the casualty is too far away, DO NOT try to rescue them yourself. Wait for the emergency services to arrive. Continue to remain calm and reassure the person.

Please also see the attached Factsheet [The Dangers of Frozen Water Factsheet | StayWise](#)

Visit WWW.Staywise.co.uk for more learning resources that you can use at home provided by the Emergency Services



We are encouraging everyone to download what3ords as this helps us to identify a location when it isn't addressable e.g. by a lake or a rural country road. The App can be downloaded for free onto a mobile phone. More information can be found at www.what3words.com

- If you are in a rural area and are unsure of the exact location, try using what3words.
- This will give you 3 keywords to give to the 999 call operator. This gives us an exact location, enabling emergency services to know your exact location and the best access point to send help.

Despite the obvious safety risks, Fire service have no authority to stop people being near open water, but if you have concerns of safety or anti-social behavior, we would ask you to report this through to the Police non-emergency number on 101

If someone is in trouble and needs help in an emergency, please call 999

Kind Regards

Stacey Moore
Community Safety Officer
Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service



WE DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE



FREE

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



Partnerships for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools



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



SAVE THE DATE

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

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT - £21.60/£80 - ENDS 14TH DEC

J&R CHRISTMAS CAMP

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