

NEWSLETTER

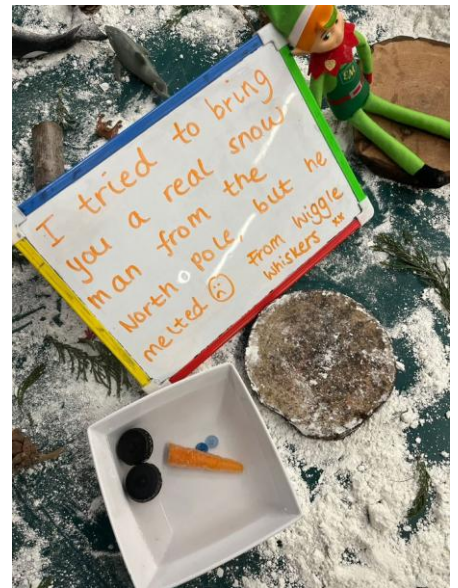
Dear Parents and Carers,

The festive period is in full swing here at Greet as we've unwrapped 'The 12 Days of GREETmas!'

The Elves of Greet have left daily surprises and activities for the children and staff under our Christmas tree. So far, the mysterious Elves have been very generous, spreading joy and cheer across the school! We unwrap a box each morning in a whole school assembly to see what surprises we have in store!

Our surprises so far:

Day 1 - A special delivery of Elf Mates, one for each building. Wiggle Whiskers, Twinkle and Jingle have been getting up to mischief overnight in classrooms. Take a look at some of the pictures below to see what they've been up to:



Day 2 - The children watched the pantomime today for a treat. Oh no they didn't! Oh yes they did!

Day 3 - We had a magical visit from Willow and Pepper the most beautiful reindeers! See below for photos on our reindeer fact sheet.

Day 4 - The Elves left us some Christmas themed story books. Every class had a story time by the Christmas tree with cookies and flavoured milk.

Day 5 - It was a treat for the staff today to show appreciation for their hard work; a special breakfast get together served by leaders!

Day 6 - The children were 'walking in the air' as the Elves let them watch the classic Christmas film of 'The Snowman' by Raymond Briggs.

Day 7 - On day 7 the children were tasked with creating a kindness wreath to display on their doors. We've discussed that Christmas is a time for giving as well as receiving gifts. The Elves have asked each class to think of ways they will demonstrate our school value of Social Intelligence and being kind to others. Their individual ideas will contribute to a class wreath to display on their classroom door.

Here are some pictures of our surprises so far. Keep an eye on our X page for daily updates.



We would like to give thanks to you all for your generous donations, both for the school and to charity over the last few weeks. Our Go Fund Me page, which raises money for our Creating Futures Fund, £971.00. This money will be spent directly on the children to help provide enriching experiences for them in school. These most recent donations are contributing directly to our '12 Days of GREETmas' events.

We know that this time of year can be challenging for many families, and we endeavour to support charities that work both nationally and locally for vulnerable children and families. Thanks to your generosity we raised over £200.00 for Save the Children yesterday by participating in Christmas Jumper Day on Thursday.

Hope you had an enjoyable weekend and we will see you back in school this week.

Ms Yasmin & Miss Williams



Ms T Yasmin
Headteacher



Miss C Williams
Deputy Headteacher

Exhibition Afternoon for Y2 - Y6

We will be opening our doors on Thursday 19th December at 2:30pm for our end of term art and DT exhibition afternoon. The Middle and Upper Phase gates will be opened at 2:30 to allow you to come into classrooms and see your child's beautiful work.

We will ask parents and carers to leave classrooms at 3:00pm so the children can get ready to go home. Parents and carers will be asked to wait in the playground to allow children to be collected safely. The Middle and Upper Phase gates will be locked at 3:00pm and will reopen at 3:15pm as per our normal end of day collection routine. Parents and carers that have attended the exhibition will be asked to remain on site at this time to help safeguard the children.

There will be no exhibition afternoon this half term for Year 1 and Reception - this is because the children have a school trip on this day and the majority of the children will be offsite.

End of Term Christmas Parties

The children can wear party clothes or festive jumpers on Friday 20th December. They will be having Christmas Parties in class.

End of Term Carol Concert

After the success of last year's Carol Concert in the playground we have decided to make it an annual festive tradition!

Join us in school on Friday 20th at 2:45pm for a good old Christmas sing song.

The children in Years 1 to 6 will be performing the songs they have been learning in weekly song practice. They will be on the main playground and would love for you to join us...and join in! There will be song sheets available.

The Upper and Middle Phase gates will open at 2:30pm, we look forward to seeing you there.

There will be no Millie's Bubble Takeover for certificate winners next week due to the Carol Concert taking place.

Afterschool Clubs

All clubs are going ahead this week, apart from Thursday. There are no clubs (cricket or football) at all on Thursday.

SEN Occupational Therapy Newsletter

Please see poster at end of the newsletter on services for parents with SEN children.

Food Donations

Please see poster at end of the newsletter on what to donate.

Safeguarding Updates

Toy Safety: The Child Accident Prevention Trust have produced a fact sheet to share with parents and to use for your own consideration about Toy Safety:

[Toy safety fact sheet | Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)

Christmas Safety: Christmas is a time when your home and setting is likely to be full of people, and it's in the excitement of the season that accidents can easily happen. Please find below useful hints and tips to use at this time of the year to keep children, and yourselves, safe:

[6 simple safety tips to keep children safe this Christmas](#)

Reindeer Visit!

On Monday we were visited by **Willow and Pepper**, two beautiful reindeer. Every child (and grown up!) at Greet had the opportunity to visit them in the lower phase playground. We learnt facts about reindeer and even had the opportunity to stroke them.

Willow and Pepper joined us from their home in Wales where they are currently resting whilst they wait to join Santa on Christmas Eve night!



Did you know...?

Reindeer can smell out food from beneath 60cm of snow!

Their favourite food is lichen.

Reindeer like to live in a group, called a herd. They get lonely and unhappy if they are on their own.

Reindeer communicate to each other by clicking their knees and ankles.

Reindeer can jump from a standing start to over 6ft in the air!

Reindeer can run up to 45mph at full speed, and they can swim.

Reindeer hold the record for the animal with the fastest growing bones in the animal kingdom. Their antlers grow at a rate of 2.5cm a day. They shed their antlers every year and then grow new ones.

At Christmas the reindeer you see with antlers are females. The males lose their antlers at the start of winter but the females keep theirs until late spring time. This is so they can use them to protect their babies.

Reindeer are covered in warm fur, they can survive in temperatures as cold as -50 degrees. Their fur keeps them warm by trapping air next to their skin.

WEEKLY SEND CLINIC Thursdays 9-11am

Mrs O'Donnell is happy to announce that she will be running a SEND clinic every Thursday. If you have a SEND related query regarding your child, feel free to call the school office on 0121 464 3360 to book one of the clinic appointments.

New Morning Gate Opening Time: The gates will open at 8:30 AM.

End of the Day Gate Opening Time: The gates will open at 3:15 PM.

Reception Children: picked up from their classroom door.

Nursery Arrangements: no changes.

The school day finishes at 3.15pm. Please ensure your child is collected at this time. Children will be taken to the late train at 3.25pm – please collect your child from late train if you arrive after this time (second door on the left side of the main office entrance).

Asda Cashpot for Schools

Please support Greet when you shop. For more info please go to <https://www.asda.com/cashpotforschools>

School term dates

Autumn Term 2024

Term ends: **Friday 20th December**

Spring Term 2025 (06/01/25-11/04/25)

Term Starts: **Monday 6th January (school opens Tuesday 7th January)**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Monday 6th January**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 14th February**

Half-term: **Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Monday 31st March**

Term ends: **Friday 11th April**

Summer Term 2025 (28/04/25-21/07/25)

Term Starts: **Monday 28th April**

Half-term: **Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May**

BANK HOLIDAY (School closed for children): **Monday 5th May 2024**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 6th June**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Friday 4th July**

TRAINING (School closed for children): **Monday 21st July**

Term ends: **Monday 21st July**



Festive Calendar 2024

Thursday 28 th November	Christmas decorations go up!
Friday 29 th November	<p>Festive Friday!</p> <p>The children will finish off this week decorating their classrooms.</p>
Wednesday 4 th December	<p>Christmas Lunch</p> <p>Children will be served a festive meal in the dining hall complete with crackers & party hats!</p>
Friday 6 th December	<p>12 Days of GREETmas begins!</p> <p>Interactive advent calendar with gifts for children.</p>
	<p>Christmas Panto!</p> <p>The children will watch a screening of Panto Land By Panto Online.</p>
<p>Tuesday 10th</p> <p>Wednesday 11th</p> <p>Thursday 12th</p>	<p>Christmas Performances</p> <p>EYFS, Christmas Choir & Y5/6 Music Electives to perform their festive production to children and parents.</p>
Thursday 12 th December	<p>Christmas Jumper Day</p> <p>We will be raising money for Save the Children – all children to wear Christmas jumpers (own clothes are fine if you don't have festive jumpers) Donations of £1.00 for charity, or as much as you can.</p>
Monday 16 th December	<p>Christmas Singing Assemblies</p> <p>Children to sing their festive songs in their phase singing assemblies.</p>
Friday 20 th December	<p>Christmas party morning</p> <p>Christmas parties in classes.</p>
	<p>Festive Sing Song!</p> <p>Outdoor sing song in the main playground – all classes & parents @ 2:45pm</p>
	<p>School closes to pupils for the Christmas holidays @ 3.15pm</p>

Ho ho ho! Let the festive fun begin!



Narthex Centre and Narthex Sparkhill Foodbank support people in need or facing crisis including low income families, children, young people, single parents, refugees and asylum seekers of all faiths and ethnic origins, through the provision of food, clothing, resources and money advice.

Greets' Festive Appeal

To mark this festive period and offer our support to those who are most vulnerable in our local community, we are collecting items for Narthex food bank.

The food bank have an appeal running for the following items:

URGENTLY NEEDED FOOD ITEMS

UHT / POWDERED MILK

SQUASH/DILUTING JUICE

TINNED FRUIT

TINNED VEGETABLES (PEAS, CARROTS,
ETC.)

PULSES (KIDNEY BEANS, CHICK PEAS,
ETC.)

MEAT SOUP (CHICKEN, OXTAIL, ETC.)

TINNED FISH

COFFEE

TINNED TOMATOES/PASTA SAUCE

SPONGE PUDDINGS

INSTANT MASH

Please give generously if you can.

Donations are to be brought to the school office by **Monday 16th December**. Narthex will be collecting from us on Friday 20th December.

Many thanks in advance for your support and kind donations.

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.



The National College®

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

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING APPS

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.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

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.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/mental-health-apps>



SEND Occupational Therapy Newsletter

Spring Term 1

PARENT OFFER

Sensory Circuits at Home:

This online webinar explains the benefits of using a sensory circuit and how to implement at home to support with regulation.
Book via Eventbrite

Wednesday 29th January 13.00 – 14.00

Coming Soon: Face to Face Parent Sensory Circuits at Home



SEND Occupational Therapy Webpage:

We are developing our website on Birmingham's LOCAL OFFER, this will allow you access to our OT newsletter, FREE advice videos on different topics including dressing skills, sleep, P.E, sensory and many more!

Occupational Therapy Advice Line

Parents, professionals and educational staff can contact the OT advice line to gain advice and signposting on a child's need.

Monday- Friday, 09:00- 16:00.
0121 683 2325

Interpreting Advice Line information is found on our website via the QR code.



Community Paediatric Occupational Therapy Webpage:

A variety of advice packs (self-care, school skills, sensory) are available on the Occupational Therapy website.



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CARERS**



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