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Friday 15th December 2023

# December 2023 Newsletter

Issue Number - 3

We would like to wish everyone a  
lovely and  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We look forward to seeing everyone  
again on  
Tuesday 2nd January 2024!



A Message  
From

Mrs Jones

We would like to thank everyone for their support and we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Very best wishes,

*Mrs Jones*





# Rewards



## Celebration Certificate - Friday 1st December 2023

Lemur Class - Lincoln  
Starfish Class - Sammy  
Lion Class - Ruby  
Giraffe Class - Evie  
Seahorse Class - Jack  
Dolphin Class - Kody  
Gecko Class - Evie  
Koala Class - Lexie  
Bushbaby Class - Xavier  
Meerkat Class - Riley  
Jaguar - Isla  
Snow Leopard Class - Tegan  
Tiger Class - Noah  
Cheetah Class - Jasmine

## Celebration Certificate - Friday 8th December 2023

Lemur Class - Oscar  
Lion Class - Nate  
Giraffe Class - Amelia  
Dolphin Class - Harrison  
Gecko Class - Hugo  
Koala Class - Fatima  
Bushbaby Class - Izzy  
Meerkat Class - Jaydn  
Jaguar - Joshua  
Snow Leopard Class - Bayer  
Tiger Class - Troy  
Cheetah Class - Maddison



Don't forget to follow and like our Shamblehurst Primary School Facebook Page for latest updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/shamblehurstprimary>

We also have a Shamblehurst Primary School Instagram Page – you can follow us here for the latest updates:

<https://instagram.com/shamblehurstprimary?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>



## Year 1 - Berry Theatre



On Wednesday 13th December, Year 1 went to the Berry Theatre to see the live performance of 'Father Christmas' by Raymond Briggs.

All the children were so excited to go in the lead up to the visit. They all represented our school out in the community so wonderfully. They sat and listened respectfully and their faces were an absolute picture throughout. Big beaming smiles and lots of laughter. What a lovely way to end a very busy term in school!

Mrs Hillman and Miss Jones

### Coats

Please remember to send children with coats as they go outside whenever possible. Don't forget to put their names inside so they do not get lost!



Due to several children having severe nut allergies, we have a 'no nuts' policy at Shamblehurst.

This includes Nutella in sandwiches!

If your child is going to be absent from school, please ensure you contact the office, either by phone, absence message or email, to provide us with a reason for absence. Please ensure you contact us each day of absence. Unfortunately, if we do not hear from you and Mrs Comper is unable to contact you, this will result in an unauthorised absence being marked.

If your child is going to be late to school, eg: medical appointment, please let the office know beforehand if your child needs to order a school dinner, otherwise, you will need to provide your child with a lunchbox.

We would like to remind you that school dinners for KS2 have increased to £3.00 per meal.

All dinner money is to be paid for in advance, or on the day of ordering.

There should be no outstanding debt, only in an emergency circumstance.

### Communication

The majority of our communication is via email and text so please keep us updated with your contact information.

*We strive to respond to emails within 5 working days.*

*Please bear this in mind if you are awaiting a response.*

All after school clubs do not start until the week beginning Monday 8th January 2024.

We can now accept card payments for Treat Friday. Minimum £1 spend.



# Christmas Top Tips!

For most families, Christmas is a joyful occasion, an opportunity to spend time together and enjoy a bit of overindulgence. But for families of children on the autistic spectrum, it can be a different story.

The festive season can be bewildering for many children with autism. The house is full of noise and people, the normal routines have been abandoned, and outings mean coping with crowds, lights, and unfamiliar sights and smells.

If your child has autism, the temptation may be to veto Christmas altogether, but when there are other children to think about, it's not always that simple. Many parents talk about the pressures of juggling everyone's needs, and trying to keep the whole family happy. Parents of children with special educational needs have been sharing their tips for surviving the festive season on [Scope's online community](#).

## Prepare ahead

*Prepare your child for the changes coming up. Start early, talking to them about what to expect.*

## Create a plan

*Print off a week-to-view calendar page and add a picture of your planned activities during the Christmas holidays (divide into morning, lunch, afternoon, etc.) to help put your child at ease about the plans for the week.*

## Make special time for your kids

*It's easy to get overloaded with Christmas preparations at this time of year, so make some special time for your kids, giving them 5 to 10 mins of undivided attention every day. Let your child take the lead, tune into their world and see it through their eyes.*

## Use the festive season as a teaching opportunity

*Help and encourage your child to give gifts. This provides an excellent opportunity to work on social skills, like thinking of other people's needs and interests, and being kind and helpful. I support my daughter to make gifts for her family and friends. She also looks forward to actually giving out the presents as well.*

## Decorate gradually

*Don't put up the decorations when your child is sleeping – if possible, get them involved. Try to introduce changes into their environment gradually, starting with the Christmas lights for (supervised) sensory play.*

## Create a Christmas-free zone

*Leave one room in the house, perhaps your child's room, free from anything to do with Christmas, so they can come back to the room as a 'safe place' when necessary.*



### **Spice up the playdough**

*Add cinnamon to your child's playdough to gradually introduce the new smells.*

### **Gift ideas**

*If family and friends are struggling for ideas for Christmas presents, email them a link to a website of sensory toys or ask for cash which you can put together to buy that (probably) expensive toy!*

### **Prep your extended family**

*Talk to family members ahead of time. Discuss your child's specific needs, and gently but firmly tell them what your plans are. Be sure to let them know that this will make the whole experience better for everyone. Ask for their support.*

### **Pack a comfort objects backpack**

*Fill a backpack with things your child finds comforting or enjoys playing with – toy cars, a stuffed animal, a CD and CD player, or a few books. If they get overstimulated, find a quiet corner or a back room and pull out the backpack.*

### **Don't hope for the best, make an action plan**

*I used to worry about my son's behaviour when spending time at family members' homes over the festive season. Basically, I'd take him and hope for the best! However, I've found that planning and preparation in advance hugely helps. I work with my family and we make sure we have a calm room or a space he can go to for when it all gets too much. I put his favourite blanket in there. Having some time alone, or just with me, keeps meltdowns to a minimum.*



### **Hold off on the perfume**

*One thing that people with autism often complain about during Christmas is the many different perfume smells coming from visiting adults – ask your family and friends not to shower themselves in scent!*

### **Wrap up something familiar**

*Luke can't really cope with opening presents, or will unwrap one or two then run away. So we wrap up his favourite big monkey which he always finds funny!*

### **Give your child a job**

*I always give my sons, who both have ASD, 'jobs' to do at Christmas – they take coats, offer nibbles round and so on. Giving them something to do reduces their stress about having lots of people in the house.*

### **Don't rise to criticism**

*Ignore well-meaning 'advice' from family members. Remember, it bothers you more than it does your child! You know best what your child needs, and providing it is your responsibility. Try to stay focused on your child's wellbeing and let everything else wash over you.*

### Create an itinerary

*I give my son a programme of events so he understands, for example, that people stand around and chat a lot when they meet up at Christmas, and that is part of the occasion.*

### Don't stand on ceremony

*Putting food onto large plates/ bowls and letting the family help themselves has saved my sanity during Christmas dinner. My adult son with ASD is very fussy about different foods being on the same plate. This way, he chooses what he wants to eat and will try one thing at a time.*

### Avoid marathon unwrapping sessions

*Don't feel all the presents have to be opened on Christmas morning in the traditional way. Our son would get so overwhelmed he couldn't cope, so we find it much easier to give him a few gifts at a time over Christmas and Boxing Day. He opens them all in the end without any tantrums and is much calmer and happier, meaning we all have a far more enjoyable time!*

### Get gifts ready to go

*When we give our daughter a gift, we make sure all packaging is removed, batteries are in, and it is set up ready to use as soon as she's unwrapped it. For someone with limited attention and suspicion of new things it can make the difference between acceptance and rejection.*

### And breathe...

*If your child reacts badly to stress, staying relaxed and low-key over the Christmas period is one of the best things you can do to keep your child's behavior in line. Save the tantrum (yours!) for when you get home.*

### Upcoming Trips

Our school calendar on our school website is regularly updated - please ensure this is checked if you are unsure.

Monday 8th January 2024 - Gecko Class, Sustainability Centre  
Tuesday 9th January 2024 - Koala Class, Sustainability Centre  
Tuesday 30th January 2024 - Year 1 - Beaulieu Motor Museum  
Wednesday 28th February 2024 - Year 2 - Living Museum  
Monday 4th - Friday 8th March 2024 - Year 5 - Stubbington Trip



# Christmas Puzzle Page

## Merry Christmas Word Search

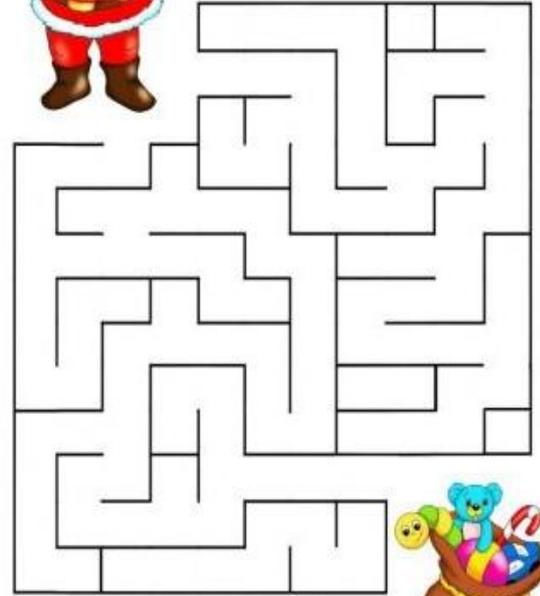
Search for the words going up, down, left and right.

c h r i s t m a s s  
 t o s d t r e e u t  
 w l a m a a s v l o  
 i e c a l t t h i c  
 n g k r e n n g g k  
 k n h a s a e i h i  
 l a i t n s s e t n  
 e g u s i o e l s g  
 g l i t t e r s z m  
 f r u d o l p h l l



tinsel  
 sack  
 lights  
 Rudolph  
 glitter  
 angel  
 stocking

presents  
 Santa  
 tree  
 sleigh  
 Christmas  
 twinkle  
 star



## Joke Corner

**Q:** Why are Christmas trees bad at sewing?

**A:** Because they always drop their needles!

**Q:** Where does a snowman keep his money?

In a snow bank!

