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Friday 20th December 2024

December 2024 Newsletter

Issue Number – 4

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for
their support at our Christmas Fayre!

An incredible £2629. 41 was raised!

We could have not done this without you! Thank you!

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

We look forward to seeing everyone
again on
Monday 6th January 2025!



After school clubs do not start until the week beginning Monday 13th January 2025.

KS2 Singing Club: Showtime! Will start on Thursday 9th January 2025.

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.



Year 2 were amazing during their performance of 'Florence Nightingale'. We were so proud of their fantastic singing and acting. We hope our performance helped to answer our enquiry question 'How much difference can one person make?' Thank you to parents and carers who supported us by providing such amazing costumes and also coming to watch us.



MUSIC:

I don't know where to begin in expressing my pride and joy in seeing all the fantastic musical performances there have been over the last month!

Our Y1 and Y2 children started off the festivities with a wonderful performance at the Hedge End Light Switch On. The children sang with joy, enthusiasm and enormous smiles. They represented our school beautifully – well done!

Year 2 have been extremely busy this month as they have worked hard to put together their Florence Nightingale performance. They gave two brilliant performances with clear loud speech, wonderful singing, lots of interesting historical information, super props and amazing costumes (thank you so much to our Y2 families for these!) Congratulations Year 2 on a fabulous show!

In year 3, we have spent this term's music lessons learning to play the ukulele. Last week, Hummingbird class and Flamingo class gave two separate performances – both excellent – demonstrating their super ukulele skills. They really showed the enormous progress they have made across the term and performed with great confidence. I look forward to progressing further with the ukulele when we return to it later in KS2 – what a wonderful foundation you have built on this new instrument. Super strumming Year 3!

This term, in year 5, we have trialled the exciting new Beyond the Beat initiative. This has been in collaboration with our lovely visiting brass teacher and all children have been given the opportunity to learn either a flute, cornet, trombone or baritone. Year 5 performed an incredible concert, with musicians from Hampshire music service and our neighbours at Wildern. They received some wonderful compliments from the head of Hampshire music for their fluent notation reading, beautiful tone production, expert ensemble playing, professional performance skills and outstanding singing. What a fantastic achievement! Lots of the children will be continuing with their instrumental tuition after Christmas and I'm already looking forward to their next performance! Well done year 5.

Singing club have been working extremely hard on their production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. Rehearsals are progressing well, but in the meantime, they were invited to sing at Berryfield Court Retirement Home. The children sang some lovely festive songs and even gave the residents a sneak preview of our 'Joseph' show! Again, our children represented the school beautifully in the wider community. Well done and thank you!

I hope to see many of you at our Carols on the Playground event (weather permitting!) and look forward to many more exciting musical opportunities in 2025!

Mrs Jackson

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.

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



POPPY APPEAL

Thank you very much for helping with our Appeal.

£ 133.04
was collected by you.

Without your help, we would be unable to continue our vital welfare and benevolent work.

Yours sincerely

Local Honorary Organiser

District Total (if available) £ 67,620.32

Registered Charity No. 219279

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!

