

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



## NEWSLETTER

## DECEMBER 2023

### Christmas Productions

Christmas is drawing very near (just over three weeks until the holidays!) and the children are busy finishing their school work for this term (including a number of Christmas activities).

There is a wonderful feeling of Christmas in the air as the school is full of Christmas excitement and mischief from the elves who have once again decided to visit St. Mary's this year. The children are really enjoying the fact that these elves seem to be extremely badly behaved again this year.



### Year 2 Performance

We are delighted this year that the Year 2 teachers and children have decided again to hold a Christmas Carol Service

in aid of the Nightingale Hospice.



Thank you parents for your support for the children always and a thank you in advance for your donations for the Hospice. The Year 2 Carol Service will be on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am in school.

### Year 1 and Reception Productions

The Year 1 performances will be on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am in the school hall (parents with babies and toddlers) and on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am in the school hall (adults).

The reception performances will be on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am in the school hall (parents with babies and toddlers) and on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am in the school hall (adults)



Many thanks to all of the children for filling the school with beautiful singing when they practise and to staff across the Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes for their hard work and dedicated effort in preparing the children.

Thank you too parents for your help in providing costumes where necessary and helping and encouraging your children to practise song words etc. at home.



### Junior Choir Carol Service

We are also looking forward to the Junior Carol Service on the 12<sup>th</sup>



December at 5pm in the church.

We would be very grateful if you would donate to the Nightingale Hospice as you always do so generously at this time of the year. You can make cash donations on the evening of the performance or to the school office or donate via parent pay.

### Nursery Christmas Performances

We are also greatly looking forward to the Nursery performance (AM) which is due to be held in the main hall on Friday 1st December.

Again please bring along any cash donations you have for the Hospice.

### Leading Parent Partnership

As part of our work towards continuing to develop our partnership with you to enhance our children's learning experience we had another 'Bring your Dad to School!' event earlier this term.

Again this event was very well supported and a very long queue of dads lined up outside the school ready for the 9.30am start.

Thank you dads for your excellent help and support throughout the morning and for your very positive and encouraging written and verbal comments.



### Illegal Parking

We had the zig-zag lines outside the school repainted a couple of years ago. Although we think they are very visible and we now have a School Street there are still a very small number of adults parking on the zig-zags generally in order to drop off or collect children from school.

**Parents or carers parking on the zig-zags are parking illegally and putting our children in danger.**

To avoid this please be prepared to park legally and walk a little bit with your child if necessary in order to keep the road in front of the school clear. This is also a healthier option as we focus on children having the option to walk / cycle/ scoot a little bit more each day.

Please try not to park across the driveways of our neighbours in neighbouring roads or in the car park which belongs to the Italian Centre and Mary Mother of God. I know the majority of our parents and others who bring children to school don't do this.

Thank you to all who respect the zig-zags and keep them clear.



If you are late for school please do not abandon your child on the road outside. You must come in to school with your child and sign your child into the building.

I hope that during the rest of this school term all parents and carers will act in a responsible manner both for the safety of our children and a positive association with our neighbours. Thankfully so many already do.



Parents a huge thank you to so many of you for your wonderful support for our School Street. More and more children are walking, cycling or scooting to school. Lots of parents too are parking away from the school and walking with their children.

<https://letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/SchoolStreets>.



### Sickness

We have been advised by the London Borough of Enfield medical people that any child who has been sick must not return to school for 48 hours. There are unfortunately a number of nasty bugs around at the moment.

Please continue to encourage your child to wash their hands with soap and water and /or use the sanitising liquid which is available in school.



### Uniform

Just to remind you that the office staff process

uniform orders on a Thursday only although they will always help you if you need something for your child. Winter hats are now available at £4.00 each. School coats are very good value at £21.00.

Please ensure that your child's clothing is labelled. Labelled clothing when found can be returned to its owner while unlabelled items generally remain in lost property.



Please encourage your child to wear the correct uniform (including hair colours and styles and tailored trousers for girls).

If your child wears boots or wellies to school he /she must bring school shoes to wear in the building.

### Hair

Please ensure long hair is tied back in school colours only (blue / black / white). No highlights, designs, lines or dyes to be put in hair please.

Remember nits love long free flowing hair too! Mohican hairstyles are not permitted.

### Nails

False nails or nail polish are not permitted in school.

*Please encourage your child to respect the uniform policy by leaving all jewellery at home. If earrings are worn please only allow your child to wear very small studs (no hoops please). These must be removed for PE.*

Many thanks to the vast majority of parents who support us by encouraging their children to wear the uniform. It's an important part of St. Mary's identity. The majority of children look really smart every day.

**Please encourage your child to leave all toys, football cards, jewellery, mobile phones etc. at home. Children become very upset if their personal belongings are lost or broken at school.**

### School Masses

Some of our children have led the readings, brought the gifts or Book of the Gospels forward or served at the various Masses and other services during the autumn term. Their excellent behaviour and



enthusiastic participation is to be commended.

All children have sung and responded well and behaved respectfully. Many members of the parish community have commented on the children's excellent behaviour. Parents thank you for your diligent support with this always.



Thank you children for being so willing to take part and to you parents for encouraging your children always.

### What is mental health?

We all have mental health. Mental health is about our feelings, our thinking, our emotions and our moods.

Looking after our mental health is important. We all have small feelings every day: These sometimes feel strong and overwhelming, whether happy or sad, but they go away before too long.

Sometimes we experience big feelings: These feel

strong and overwhelming for a long time. They stop us doing what we want to in our lives.

Young Minds also has a parent helpline:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>

### Christian Meditation

As you know the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) has worked to develop videos which provide short meditation sessions which children and young people can participate in, whether in school or at home. These sessions are inspired by meditation in the tradition of John Main OSB.

Full details are available here: <https://www.cathchilid.org.uk/meditation-with-children-young-people/>

### Play Safe, a national safeguarding campaign (Football Association)

The Football Association and the NSPCC launched 'Play Safe', a national campaign to focus attention on the vital importance of safeguarding in football. At the heart of the campaign are three short films to emphasise the importance of

safeguarding for key groups of people, crucially children themselves.

One aspect of the campaign is prompting parents to ask questions:

- Do you know your child's club Welfare Officer?
- If so, do you have their tel no. in your 'phone, as well as that of the NSPCC?
- Are you up to speed with your child's club's safeguarding policies and procedures?
- Do you regularly check-in with your child to see what they are enjoying/not enjoying and why?

More information can be found here: <https://www.thefacom/PlaySafe>

### Talk PANTS resources for parents

From the NSPCC: We want all parents to talk PANTS. That's why we've created guides and resources to help them find the right words to talk to their children about staying safe.



[> Find Talk PANTS resources for parents on the NSPCC website](#)

### Some Christmas Resources:

[The God Who Speaks](#) - The Christmas Donkey

[The God Who Speaks](#) - The Christmas Story in Plain English

[The God Who Speaks](#) - At the Manger, Family Celebrations for the Eight Days of Christmas

[The God Who Speaks](#) - Reflecting on Journeys in Luke's Infancy Narratives

[The God Who Speaks](#) - Christmas: The Lord Who Enters His Temple

[The God Who Speaks](#) - The Light Has Come: Christmas and Epiphany Through Art

### Holidays and Absences

I would urge you to try not to book holidays during term time as time away from school can unsettle children and affect their progress. Any requests for time off (for special circumstances only please) must be put in

writing to the Headteacher.

It is not school policy to provide homework for time off which is taken during term time.

We are required to ask for a written note to explain any absence from school and to report all absences.

Please remember that your child's absence from school affects our total absence figures. It was 5.9% at the end of the last school year (6% nationally) Our absence was 4.3% at the end of the first half of the autumn term (4.8% nationally).

Well done everyone for trying your best in these times which are still a bit more challenging for all families trying to cope with these coughs and colds which seem to be around at the moment.

Our absence level is higher than in past years but with time this should improve. Up to the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023, the class with the highest attendance over the term was Year 3, St. Bernadette (98.39%) closely followed by Year 5/6, St. Joseph (98%),

Year 5, St. Anthony (97.10%), Year 4, St. Paul (96.37%) and Reception, Hope (96.09%).

Please (unless of course your child is ill) ensure your child is in school each day.

The DfE's persistent absence threshold is 10% (from Autumn 2015)!

The DfE's guidance on the 2014/15 school census explains that from the 2015/2016 academic year onwards, a pupil will be considered to be persistently absent if he/she is away for over 10% of school sessions in an academic year.

Pages 72-73 of the DfE's guidance, linked to above, contains a table which sets out the estimated thresholds that will be used to define persistently absent pupils.

	15 per cent	10 per cent
Half-term 1	10 or more sessions	7 or more sessions
Half term 1-2 (autumn term)	22 or more sessions	14 or more sessions



Half term 1-3 30 or more sessions 20 or more sessions

INSET Day (no school for children) = 7th May 2024.

Half-term 1-4 (autumn term and spring term combined) 38 or more sessions 25 or more sessions

Last Day of the School Year = 19th July 2024.

### Handwashing Advice



Half term 1-5 46 or more sessions 31 or more sessions

We know that it is important that everyone continues to wash their hands more often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing with soap employs mechanical action that loosens bacteria and viruses from the skin, rinsing them into the drain. Drying hands afterwards makes the skin less hospitable to the virus. Hand sanitiser can be effective if soap is not available or the situation makes using soap less feasible (i.e. when outside) but using hand sanitiser provides none of the virus-destroying friction that rubbing your hands together and rinsing with water provides.

Half term 1-6 (full academic year) 56 or more sessions 38 or more sessions

Guidance and video on hand washing can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

### Spring Term Reminder!

Don't forget the pattern of the Easter holidays this year.

Half -term holiday = 12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024.  
INSET Day (no school for children) = 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

Easter Holiday = 29<sup>th</sup> March - 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

### Summer Term Reminder!

School opens for the summer term on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

Half -term holiday = 27<sup>th</sup> May - 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

May Bank Holiday = Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024.



### Children in Need

The spectacular day earned £418.67 for Children in Need.

The School Council organised a much enjoyed Cake Sale. Well done everyone!

### Home School Agreement

Thank you to the parents who have already returned their child's Home School Agreement. Remember if you haven't already done so to read, sign and return one of the copies as soon as possible (you should have received two copies - one is for you to keep at home).



### Play Equipment

Parents please support the school by not allowing your children (including toddlers) to play on the playground equipment at the end of the school day. This request is made purely for health and safety reasons.

Children are also asked not to cycle or use their



scooters / bicycles / tricycles while on the playground after school.

As the area is very crowded it is easier and safer for all if children walk with their bikes or scooters until they leave the school premises.

Parents / childminders please keep your children with you once you have collected them from the classroom / teacher.

Thank you as always to the great number of parents who are very supportive of all school requests. We have only noticed a minority of pupils doing the wrong thing. With the support of their parents or child minders this will easily be sorted out.

### Birthday Celebrations!



It is lovely that so many children now like to celebrate their birthdays by bringing in sweets for their classmates.

Please remember though parents that different parents have different rules about sweets and the kinds of sweets their

children are allowed to eat.

If it is your child's birthday, and you do want to mark the day, please just send in one very small bar for each child. It is probably better to send a known brand of chocolate with which all parents are familiar rather than lots of very sugary sweets or party bags. *Lollipops and hard sweets, or anything containing nuts are not permitted for health and safety reasons.*

*Also we are unable to cut up and distribute cakes or organise birthday parties during the school day. We are unable to take birthday photographs for you.*

Remember you are not obliged to send in sweets at all.



### Holidays

It's almost the end of term already! Time seems to have flown by this year. The last day of term is **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December**. The school will close at 12.45pm on that day for

the infants and at 1pm for the juniors. Please try very hard to pick children up promptly.

The school will open again for the new spring term on **Monday 8th January 2024**

### Future Dates

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December: Nursery Christmas Performance AM.

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December: School Mass in church for Years 2-6 at 9.30am for Blessing of Advent Wreath.

Year 1 Christmas Performance AM (parents with babies and toddlers).

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December: Reception Christmas Performance AM (parents with babies and toddlers).

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December: Year 1 Christmas Performance AM (adults).

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December: Reception Christmas Performance AM (adults).

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December: The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - School Mass in church for Years 3-6.

Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December: Year 2 Carol Service for parents / relatives, 9.30am (for Nightingale Hospice).

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December: Junior Carol Service in church, 5pm (for the Nightingale Hospice)

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December: Year 4 to parish Mass at 9.30am.

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Lunch.

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Class Parties PM.



Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December: Last day of autumn term - School Mass (Mrs. Derwin's 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary Mass) in church for Years 2-6.

Early Closing (12.45 Infants and 1pm Juniors). Own Clothes' Day.

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024: Return to school for Spring Term.

*On occasions it is necessary to change dates. I apologise in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.*

### Volunteers

A sincere thank you to all parents who have volunteered to help in classes this term. We really value the time and support you give to children and staff.



### Tissues

We have very few tissues and hundreds of runny noses! We are no longer able to afford to provide tissues for classrooms. Donations of boxes of tissues would be so very gratefully received.

If your child has a cold please try to send some

tissues to school in his / her school bag.



### School Fund

Since the last newsletter, **£1868.00** has been donated to the School Fund. This is excellent! Thank you to all who have supported the school to date this year with voluntary donations.

### Phone calls

Your child is welcome to phone home (in emergency only). We would welcome a voluntary contribution towards the cost of any phone calls your child makes

### Parish Christmas Bazaar



Thank you parents and children for your **very generous** donations of bottles of wine, boxes of chocolates, biscuits and sweets, toys, books, tins, toiletries and a host of other items for the Parish Bazaar.

Your willingness to give and support our parish is wonderful. I know your donations made a difference to the success of this event and earned much needed funds for our church.

### Best Wishes

Many thanks for all of your support both for me personally and for the members of our school staff throughout the term and always.

It is really appreciated by all at St. Mary's and I know contributes greatly to the happy atmosphere we are so fortunate to have in our school.

I would like to wish you all a happy, holy and restful Christmas when the time comes. Enjoy this special family time together.

I hope to see you all in January well rested and ready for a new year.

Miss M. Creed  
Headteacher





### A Prayer for Christmas

What shall I bring Him,  
Poor as I am.  
If I were a shepherd I  
would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise man I  
would do my part.  
What can I give Him.  
Give Him my heart.



These are the prayers we say each day with the children. You might like to say these prayers with your child during the holidays. It's good practice to have a little quiet prayer time each day. I know many of you already encourage your child to pray at home.

### Morning Offering

O My God, you love me,  
You are with me night and day.  
I want to love you always  
in all I do and say.  
I'll try to please you  
Father.  
Bless me through the day.  
Amen



### Night Prayer

God our Father, I come to say,  
Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family,  
And all the things you give to me.  
Guard me in the dark of night.  
And in the morning send your light. Amen.

### Grace Before Meals

Bless us O Lord as we sit together,  
Bless the food we eat today.  
Bless the hands that make the food.  
Bless us O Lord. Amen.



### Grace After Meals

Thank you God, for the food we have eaten,  
Thank you God for all our friends.  
Thank you God for everything,  
Thank you God. Amen.



### The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.



### The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee;  
blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.





**Glory be to the Father**

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Spirit. As it was in  
the beginning, is now, and  
ever shall be, world  
without end. Amen.



**ADMISSIONS FOR  
ACADEMIC YEAR  
2023/2024**

*Due to the fact that  
there are now fewer  
pupils in London (there is  
a continued decrease in  
the population of  
children) and the issues  
with finding affordable  
housing we currently  
have places in our  
Nursery, Reception,  
Years 1, 2 and 4 2023-  
2024 year groups.*

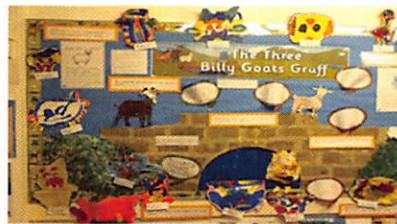
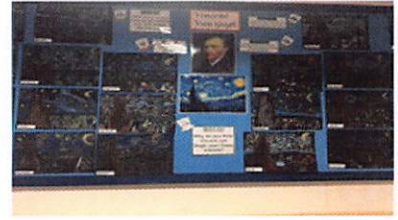
**Thank you parents for  
recommending our school  
and helping to build up  
our pupil numbers. Please  
continue to do this.**

**Music Lessons**

Parents are now able to  
renew and book music  
lessons and activities for  
Spring 2024 from the  
Music Store.

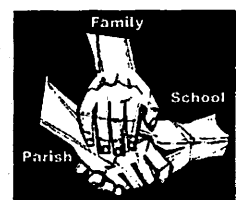
<https://traded.enfield.gov.uk/musicstore>

If any families need  
support to choose and  
book lessons, please  
contact the Enfield Music  
Service **before** the  
deadline ( 3<sup>rd</sup> December  
2023) on 020 8807 8881  
or  
email [Enfieldmusic@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:Enfieldmusic@enfield.gov.uk)





# Family – Parish – School Links



## St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Autumn 2023 Second Half-Term



### Newsletter for Parents – Nursery and Reception

Religious Education	
Topic Theme: Advent and Christmas	
Students will explore the events, rituals and practices of Advent and Christmas, in time with the Church Liturgical Year.	
Learning opportunities include:	Monitoring opportunities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing the story of Christmas.</li> <li>Coming to know Jesus is God the Father's Son.</li> <li>Coming to know that Mary is the mother of Jesus.</li> <li>Experiencing that a Church is a special place where God's people gather to pray.</li> <li>Experiencing praying with others as a celebration.</li> <li>Experiencing liturgical celebrations in a variety of simple settings.</li> <li>Joining in simple prayers and hymns.</li> <li>Considering ways in which a Christian family and parish share and celebrate life, and show care for one another.</li> </ul>	Students' development will be monitored through observation and the collection of work samples for their portfolio.
Affective and Spiritual Dispositions	
<p><i>It is hoped that pupils will develop:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An understanding that the stories of Jesus in the Bible link with the liturgical seasons of the church year.</li> <li>A familiarity with the Seasons of Advent and Christmas, during which we anticipate and celebrate the incarnation: God in our world.</li> </ul>	
Activities to try at home	
<p>Parents are the first educators of their child in faith. Students' learning in religious education occurs best when school and family are engaged in talking about the same topics. You could help your child by trying one or more of these activities while this topic is being taught:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk with your child about Advent and Christmas – how it is celebrated in the Church and in wider society. Note the different cultural expressions of Christmas: cards in other languages, foods of other cultures, customs and celebrations of other communities. .</li> <li>Talk to your child about birth: their own, yours and other members of your family. Talk about your</li> </ul>	



ancestors: grandparents and great grandparents. Think about your own family heritage.

- Read stories about Christmas. Remember there are two distinct stories in the Gospel: many picture stories amalgamate the two!

#### An idea for prayer at home

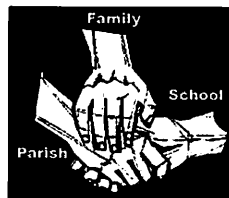
##### Prayer Activity

Have an Advent wreath as a focal point in your home. Light a candle for each week of Advent and pray 'God of light, help us to be people who walk with you towards the birth of your son.'





*St. Mary's Catholic Primary*  
*Religious Education Newsletter*  
*Autumn 2023 (second half-term) -*  
*Years 1-6*



**Religious Education**

**Key Idea: From Advent to Christmas**

This topic is intended for the second in the academic year 2023/2024. As the days shorten and winter comes upon us we are invited to consider the light of Christ who came into the world at Christmas. As the Gospel of Mark has no story of the birth of Jesus, this topic looks at who Christians around the world celebrate the coming of God into the world.

**Attitudes and Spiritual Dispositions**

**Spiritual Outcomes:** *It is hoped that pupils will develop:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sense of the importance of prayer</li> <li>• A willingness to pray</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An attitude of respect for the many traditions of Christmas</li> <li>• Appreciation for the gift of God at Christmas</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

**Activities to try at home**

You are the first educator of your child in faith. Your child's learning in religious education will be much greater if you and the school are engaged in talking about the same ideas and beliefs. Help your child by trying this activity while this topic is being taught:

- This topic focuses on how different cultural groups celebrate Christmas. Talk to your children about any particular practices you and your family might have, particularly if, and how, your culture might be evident in what you do. If you can, encourage your children to share your cultural customs with their peers at school.



## An idea for prayer at home

### Prayer Activity

Loving God, you created people full of dignity still more wonderfully restored our dignity when we failed. At this time of Advent help us remember Jesus who humbled himself to live like us, so that we might be able to share his divinity. We ask this through Christ who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen




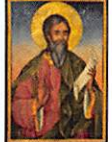



















Adapted from the Opening Prayer of Christmas Day Liturgy.





# Mission Together Advent Calendar 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>1st Sunday of Advent</b> Today's Gospel tells us to get ready for Jesus. How can we prepare our hearts for his arrival?+ <i>Mk 13:33-37</i></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>3</b></p>	<p>The Advent wreath's candles are a symbol of Christ's light. How can you be a light for others today?*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>4</b></p>	<p>Learn our Advent Carol <i>We are waiting*</i> and sing it as a class. Why not film your singing and share it with us @MissioUK?</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>5</b></p>	<p>Today is the feast of St Nicholas. Find out what St Nicholas did to bring hope to poor people.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>GLOBAL FAMILY FACT:</b> During Advent in the Philippines people decorate homes with paper lanterns called Paroles, as a reminder to look out for Jesus.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>7</b></p>	<p>Today is special feast day for Mary, our mother. Let's say the <i>Hail Mary</i>, for Our Lady and for all mums.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>8</b></p>	<p>Write an Advent prayer or poem. Try to include the words: <i>hope, wait, light, God, Jesus.</i></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>9</b></p>
<p><b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b> In today's Gospel reading, we learn about John the Baptist. What did he ask people to do?+ <i>Mark 1:1-8</i></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>10</b></p>	<p>One way we can prepare for Jesus is by building peace. Make a peace paper-chain and think about how you can build peace in school this week.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>11</b></p>	<p>Say the Mission Together Prayer for children living in war zones: <i>May all children in the world, share love, share friendship and live in the peace of God's love. Now and forever. Amen.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>GLOBAL FAMILY FACT:</b> Today in Denmark, children take part in candle lit processions to remember how Jesus' light wins over darkness.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>13</b></p>	<p>As a class, sing <i>Silent Night</i>.* Listen carefully to the words and think about what they mean.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>14</b></p>	<p>Make peace today. Say sorry to someone you may have upset this week. Or forgive someone who has upset you.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>15</b></p>	<p>Find somewhere peaceful to sit and thank God for the people who love and care for you.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>16</b></p>
<p><b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b> In today's psalm we hear the joyful words of Mary. Thank God for the gifts of faith and joy.+ <i>Luke 1:46-50,53-54</i></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>17</b></p>	<p>Yesterday was <i>Gaudete</i> Sunday. Find out what <i>Gaudete</i> means and why yesterday's Advent candle is coloured pink.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>GLOBAL FAMILY FACT:</b> On Mauke, a small island in Oceania, the people share the joy of Jesus' birth by giving hampers to strangers.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>19</b></p>	<p>Make a <i>Joyful Angel</i> and think about how you can share the joy of Jesus today.*</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>20</b></p>	<p>Joy is easy to pass on! Look out for people who are lonely today and invite them to play.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>21</b></p>	<p>As a class sing <i>Joy to the World</i>.* Why not film your singing and share it with us @MissioUK</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>22</b></p>	<p>Say a prayer for all children who are upset, sad, or lonely. Ask God to help us share his joy with them.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>23</b></p>
<p><b>4th Sunday of Advent</b> In today's Gospel, an angel visits Mary and says, 'Do not be afraid'. Ask God to help you with any worries you have.+ <i>Luke 1:26-38</i></p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>24</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rejoice! Jesus is born!</b></p> <p>Remember to thank God and your family for all the gifts their love brings.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>25</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Rejoice! Jesus is born!</b></p> <p>Remember to thank God and your family for all the gifts their love brings.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>26</b></p>	<p>The wise men are on their way to the crib. Find out when they are due to arrive?</p>	<p>Cross symbol+ refers to abridged scriptures found in our accompanying liturgical prayers. Asterisks refer to activities, assemblies, or carols. Download all for free from the Advent page of the Mission Together website.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>missio</b></p> <p>Mission Together, 23 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1NU Web: <a href="http://missiontogether.org.uk">missiontogether.org.uk</a> Reg. Charity No. 1056651</p>		



# Let's stir up some Festive Fun!

## Primary Festive Menu

### Main Event

Traditional Roasted Turkey & Stuffing,  
served with Crispy Roast Potatoes,  
Steamed Carrots & Sprouts.

—

Carrot & Stuffing Plait, served with Crispy  
Roast Potatoes, Steamed Carrots &  
Sprouts.

---

Tomato Pasta with a Sprinkling of Cheddar  
Cheese

### Dessert

Christmas Shortbread Biscuit





# Book now for lessons in the Spring term!

## **MUSIC CAN HELP US:**

- Build confidence
- Enhance memory
- Express ourselves
- Be creative

EMS Instrumental & vocal lessons  
start from around £7 per week

Click here to book



Closing date: 3rd December 2023





# Christmas

TREE APPEAL 2023

Scan the QR code to buy or donate towards presents, so children experiencing poverty in London receive a gift this Christmas

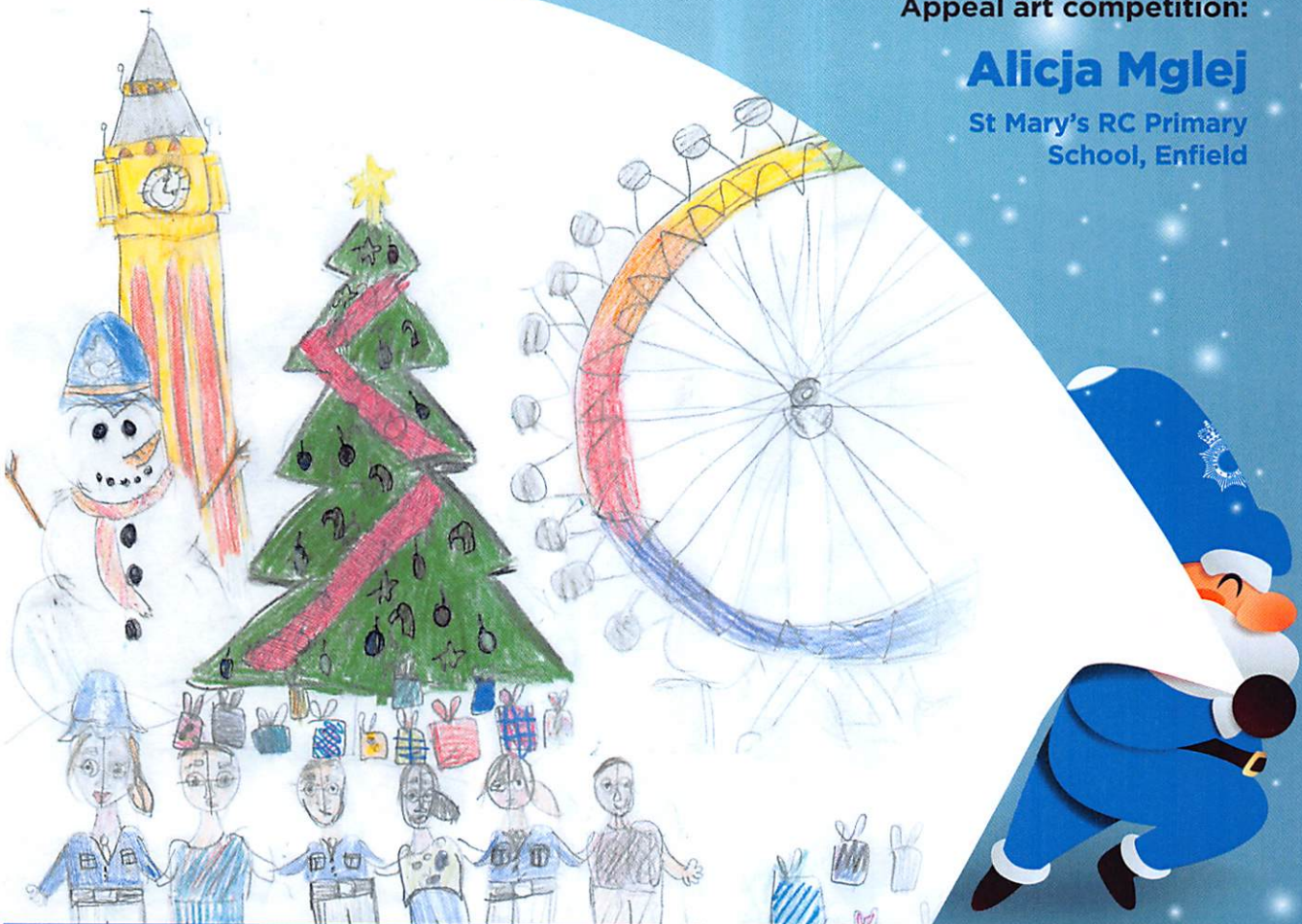


[www.metchristmastreeappeal.org/donate](http://www.metchristmastreeappeal.org/donate)

Winner of the Christmas Tree  
Appeal art competition:

**Alicja Mglej**

St Mary's RC Primary  
School, Enfield



METROPOLITAN  
POLICE

The  
ChildhoodTrust  
Alleviating the impact of child poverty





# Online Safety Newsletter December 2023

## Minecraft

Minecraft remains ever popular and with Christmas ahead of us, maybe your child will be receiving this game as one of their presents. Minecraft Legends is rated as PEGI 7 meaning it is suitable for those over 7 years of age. The App store rate Minecraft as 9+.

You should be aware that there is a multiplayer option so players can chat to each other, and in-app purchases are available. Parental controls are available, either within Minecraft or on the console itself e.g. Nintendo Switch or PlayStation. Find out more here:

<https://www.minecraft.net/en-us/article/parental-controls>

## Toxicity in game play

Safe In Our World and Ubisoft creators of games such as Assassin's Creed) have co-developed the 'Good Game Playbook'. The playbook will be sent to players reporting disruptive behaviour as well as the individual reported. This is to support the person affected as well as to try and educate the person reported about the harm their behaviour might have on others.

You can read the handbook here:

<https://safeinourworld.org/news/ubisoft-safe-in-our-world-partner-to-combat-in-game-toxicity/>

## Get to know Age Ratings

Age ratings are in place to help protect your child, so we thought we'd provide you with a little reminder of how important it is to check the age ratings of what your child is accessing online. Here are the age ratings of some of the more popular apps that young people are accessing. **Did you know that WhatsApp has an age rating of 16?**



Whether your child is viewing films, accessing apps, playing games online, using social media or downloading other apps – check the age rating first to see if your child is old enough. In addition, the likes of PEGI include further content descriptors, which will give you an indication of the type of content that your child might view e.g. violence, if accessing the app/game etc.

It is important to note that whilst age ratings do allow you to see if something may be appropriate for your child, it is also important to review the content yourself. This will allow you to make an informed decision as to whether it is suitable for your child to access and if it would be beneficial to apply further parental controls.

### Further information

Parent Zone have published this article about why age ratings matter: <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

## Artificial Intelligence (AI)

It can be difficult to keep up to date with new technologies and to know if there are any related risks that we need to be aware of when using new technologies. AI is being talked about a lot, so it is worthwhile learning more about it now to help support/answer questions if our children show an interest. Twinkl provide a brilliant overview of AI here:

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/blog/parents-guide-top-tips-for-navigating-generative-ai-safely-with-kids>



# Snapchat

## What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a social media app used for messaging and sharing photos and videos. **You must be 13+ to sign up.** Users can send messages (snaps)



to others that can only be seen for a set time e.g. 10 seconds and users can also upload snaps to stories, which disappear after 24 hours.

## What should I be concerned about?

There are risks to using Snapchat, including the risk of your child viewing content that is not appropriate for them, location sharing and contact from strangers.

## Family Centre features

Family Centre includes features such as allowing you to see who your child is friends with, who they are communicating with (not the contents of conversations though) and who your child has sent messages, photos or videos to in the last week. You will also be able to report any accounts that you are concerned about as well as restrict sensitive content. Snapchat have also published a safety checklist to help support conversations about how to use Snapchat safely:

- <https://parents.snapchat.com/en-GB/parental-controls?lang=en-GB>

## New safeguarding features

Snapchat have recently announced their newest features to help protect 13-17-year-olds. The first feature is in-app warnings so a pop-up warning will now be displayed if someone tries to add them as a friend that they don't have mutual contacts with, or the person isn't in their contacts.

The second feature is 'stronger friending protections.' Currently 13-17-year-olds must have several mutual friends in common for that user to show up in search results or as a friend suggestion, but this number has been increased. **These two features are available to users aged 13-17-year-olds, this is one of the reasons why it is always important for your child to sign up with their correct date of birth, so they can benefit from any such features.**

- <https://values.snap.com/en-GB/news/new-safeguards-for-snapchatters-2023>

## Safety tips

Please make sure the appropriate privacy settings are set up on Snapchat and your child knows how to block and report other users if necessary:

- <https://support.snapchat.com/en-GB/article/privacy-settings2>

## More information

- <https://www.virginmedia.com/blog/parental-controls/snapchat>

## Fake Profiles and Cyberbullying

Setting up a profile impersonating somebody else with the intention of being unkind to others/to cause embarrassment to the individual is a form of cyberbullying.

If your child has set up a fake profile, talk to them about how this is a form of bullying and therefore not acceptable.

It is important that we talk to our children about the issue of cyberbullying and let them know that if they are ever a victim of it then it is not their fault, and they should tell you (or a trusted adult) straightaway. Talk to your child about reporting and blocking tools on social media or online games and show them how to use them to report any form of bullying.

You can read more about cyberbullying here:

- <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying/>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/bullying-and-cyberbullying/>

Additionally, Report Harmful Content have listed how you can report impersonation accounts on the different social media networks here:

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/advice/impersonation/>





# Information for parents:

## 2024 multiplication tables check



Standards  
& Testing  
Agency



# Multiplication tables check

## Do you have a child in year 4 at primary school?

If so, your child will be participating in the multiplication tables check (MTC) in June.

The purpose of the check is to determine whether your child can fluently recall their times tables up to 12, which is essential for future success in mathematics. It will also help your child's school to identify if your child may need additional support.

## What is the multiplication tables check?

It is an on-screen check consisting of 25 times table questions. Your child will be able to answer 3 practice questions before taking the actual check. They will then have 6 seconds to answer each question. On average, the check should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

## What if my child cannot access the check?

There are several access arrangements available for the check, which can be used to support pupils with specific needs. Your child's teacher will ensure that the access arrangements are appropriate for your child before they take the check in June.

The check was designed to be inclusive and accessible to as many children as possible, including those with special educational needs or disability (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). However, there may be some circumstances in which it will not be appropriate for a pupil to take the check, even when using suitable access arrangements.

If you have any concerns about your child accessing the check, you should discuss this with your child's headteacher.



## **Do I need to do anything to prepare my child for the check?**

No, you do not need to do anything additional to prepare your child for the check. As part of usual practice, teachers may ask you to practise times tables with your child.

Schools will have unlimited access to a 'try it out' area from April. They can use this to make sure pupils have the necessary support to access the check. This includes opportunities for pupils to familiarise themselves with the check application and try out any access arrangements that may be required.

## **How will the results be used?**

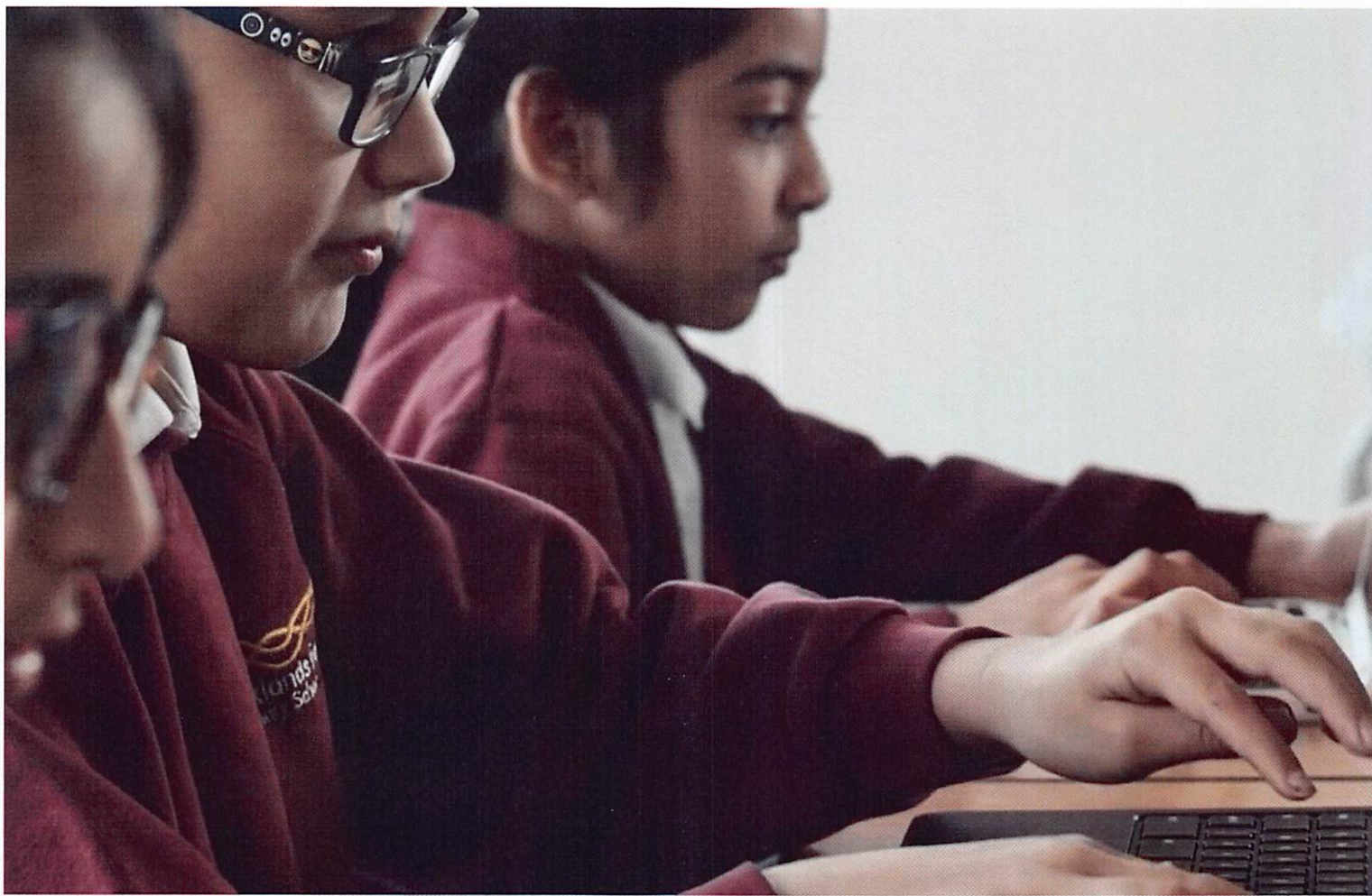
Schools will have access to all their pupils' results, to allow them to identify pupils who need additional support.

## **Will I receive feedback on my child's check?**

Yes. Your child's teacher will share your child's score with you, as they would with all national curriculum assessments. There is no pass mark for the check.







## Further information

Your child's teacher will be able to answer any questions about the MTC.

For further details you can also visit [www.gov.uk/STA](http://www.gov.uk/STA).

Further information about the personal data we collect, process and store for the MTC is available in our [privacy notice](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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Information for parents: 2024 multiplication tables check

Electronic version product code: STA/23/8909/e ISBN: 978-1-78957-902-4

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1. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/multiplication-tables-check-privacy-notice/privacy-notice-multiplication-tables-check](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multiplication-tables-check-privacy-notice/privacy-notice-multiplication-tables-check)



# Worrying world news: How can I help?

A Kooth article  
originally published at  
Kooth.com





**This article was written by a Kooth writer and contains the following themes: upsetting news, difficult emotions.**

When things we see, hear, and read about on the news are worrying or upsetting, it can leave us feeling helpless and out of control. It can also connect us with tough feelings, such as anger, sadness, frustration, and confusion - especially when it's hard to make sense of what is going on.

We might also want to do something to help but aren't quite sure what to do or where to start. If that feels familiar, please read on.

### **How can I help?**

When there's a crisis, it's natural for people to want to do something to help. Not only can it make a real difference to those in need, but it can also help you in the following ways:

- It can give you a positive focus when things feel distressing.
- It might relieve or lessen your difficult feelings.
- It might help you feel more in control.

### **Things you can do to help**

Here are just a few things you might want to think about if you want to do something in response to concerning local or world news.





## #1. Make a contribution.

There are many ways to contribute to important causes, from raising money, donating supplies (such as clothes), organising charity events, or volunteering your time. If this is something you want to think about, you could talk to your form tutor, head of year, or student council at school to see what they have planned already, and also to share any ideas that you might have, too.

**If you are donating your own money, make sure you tell an adult. Only give what you can afford, and don't leave yourself without (e.g. don't use all your lunch money).**

Charities like [Oxfam](#) and [The British Red Cross](#) also have some great initiatives, such as events and collections to raise money for specific causes.

Plus, checking out your local charities, groups, and organisations might be a good way to find something closer to home you can get involved in, too. Local events and collections are sometimes posted online, so do take a look at local pages on social media or local websites.

**TOP TIP: Many organisations collecting supplies to send to those in need are looking for very specific supplies, such as baby clothes, food, medical resources, and hygiene products. If you want to help initiatives like this, don't forget to check out their lists to make sure that your donations are genuinely needed so that they don't go to waste.**



## #2. Think carefully about what you share or interact with online.

There is such a lot of information shared online, and it can be difficult to know what's true and what isn't. Something we can all do to help is to think more about what we share or interact with online. Asking yourself the following questions is a good first step:

- Does this information sound/look right? For example: does the story or image feel accurate to you?
- Where has this information come from? For example: is the source trustworthy? Sometimes websites that spread "fake news" articles might convince you that they are a reputable source by using typical .com, .co.uk, or .org in their URLs. But if the URL also contains an unusual ending (e.g. .com.co or .com.lo), it could be an indicator that it's not credible.

Digging deeper by researching the organisation (or the authors themselves) could be a helpful way to see if what you are reading, watching, or viewing is from a trustworthy place. Other indicators to look out for are poor website design, poor grammar or awkward, unprofessional writing, broken links, and a high volume of adverts.

Of course, this isn't to say that all sources with those elements are unreliable, but it's a good place to start to raise your awareness and get into the habit of looking beyond the news story.

- Are there similar stories out there already from reliable sources? For example, is this something you have seen or heard about before from a website or news source that is trusted and has a good reputation?



### **#3. Make a stand.**

If you feel really strongly about something you've seen, heard, or read about, writing to your local MP enables you to make a stand, share your voice, feel empowered, raise awareness, and even contribute to change.

It might sound like a small act, but if lots of people are doing the same, it can really make a big difference. If this is something you'd like to do, you can ask an adult you trust to help you get started, such as somebody you live with, or a teacher.

### **#4. Be kind to others.**

This sounds really simple, but world news that is happening far away can still affect people we know or come across in everyday life. School friends, teachers, neighbours, and family members - anyone can be affected by world news. People we know might have family members or people they love who are directly impacted by something happening far away. Kindness is something we can offer that doesn't cost a penny but might mean the world to someone else.

As well as being kind to others, don't forget about yourself. It can be so difficult to control what's happening around us, but what we can do is learn to manage the thoughts and feelings that may arise.



# Free, safe and anonymous mental health and wellbeing support

It's quick and easy to sign up to Kooth and will only take a few minutes. No formal referral from a GP is needed and you can self-refer at anytime.

## Support options

You can access a range of support options including:

- Chat with a member of our team (\*live chat or send us a message anytime)
- Self-help tools
- Community support (discussion boards and live forums)
- Helpful articles (from the Kooth team and our community)

## Live chat hours

You can live chat with a member of our team between:

- 12pm - 10pm on weekdays
- 6pm - 10pm on weekends

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Service



# LEARN THE UNDERWEAR RULE



AND YOU'VE GOT IT COVERED!

**P** RIVATES ARE PRIVATE

**A** LWAYS REMEMBER YOUR BODY BELONGS TO YOU

**N** O MEANS NO

**T** ALK ABOUT SECRETS THAT UPSET YOU

**S** PEAK UP, SOMEONE CAN HELP

ChildLine  
0800 1111

ChildLine is a service provided by the NSPCC.  
2013391. Registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717

NSPCC  
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.



# LEARN THE UNDERWEAR RULE

TALK PANTS AND YOU'VE GOT IT COVERED!

## **P** RIVATES ARE PRIVATE

Parts of your body covered by underwear are private. No one should ask to see, or touch them. Sometimes doctors, nurses or family members might have to. But they should always explain why, and ask if it's OK first. No one should ask you to touch or look at parts of their body that are covered by underwear.



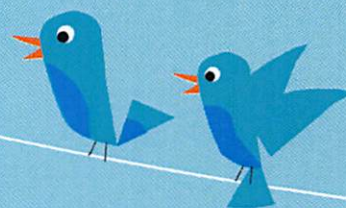
## **A** LWAYS REMEMBER YOUR BODY BELONGS TO YOU

It's your body, no one else's. No one should make you do things that make you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. If anyone tries, tell an adult you trust.



## **N** O MEANS NO

You have the right to say 'no' – even to a family member or someone you love. Remember, you're in control of your body and your feelings are important.



## **T** ALK ABOUT SECRETS THAT UPSET YOU

Secrets shouldn't make you feel upset or worried. If they do, tell an adult you trust. You will never get into trouble for sharing a secret that upsets you.



## **S** PEAK UP, SOMEONE CAN HELP

Talk about stuff that makes you worried or upset. An adult you trust will listen, and be able to help. It doesn't have to be a family member. It can be a teacher or a friend's parent – or even ChildLine.



ChildLine is a service provided by the NSPCC.  
2013391, Registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717

NSPCC   
Cruelty to children must stop. FULL STOP.