



# Wootton Community Primary School

06 December 2024

**Dates for 2024-25**  
(subject to change)

**Mon 09.12.24** Dress rehearsal for Christmas performance

**Tues 10.12.24** Christmas performance 1.30pm and 6pm

**Thurs 12.12.24** Christmas performance 1.30pm and 6pm  
Christmas Jumper Day

**17.12.24** Reception and Yr 6 height and weight checks

**Weds 18.12.24**

Christmas dinner

**Thurs 19.12.24**

Christingle

**Fri 20.12.24** Parties!

**23.12.24-03.01.25**  
**Christmas Break**

**17.02.25-21.02.25**  
**Half-term break**

**Mon 24.03.25**

Parents evening

**Weds 26.03.25**

Parents evening

**07.04-21.04.25**  
**Easter break**

**12.05-15.05.25**

Year 6 SATS

**20.05-23.05.25**

Year 6 residential (more details to follow)

**26.05-30.05.25**  
**Half-term**

**Mon 02.06.25**

INSET day (school closed to children)

**Fri 18.07.25** End of year reports home

**Weds 23.07.25**

Teacher 'open evening'

**Fri 25.07.25 Year 6**

**Leavers presentation @**

11am

12 noon family picnic with optional finish time 1.30pm

Dear Parents/carers,

Wow! What an incredible **Christmas fayre** that was - thank you so much for coming along and helping the PTA to make an amazing profit of £1,539.28! None of this would have been possible without the hard work from a few key parents leading up to the event and then to all the help we had on the day.

We are so looking forward to sharing our **Christmas performances** next week on **Tuesday 10th and Thursday 12th. Children need to be back in school at 5.40pm both evenings.** These will be filmed so it is really important that all the children return, thank you. Please drop off and collect the children from their classroom doors - the Year 6 external door by the front entrance will be opened for this class. Please collect your children at 7pm. We know some parents are disappointed to have missed out on evening tickets and we appreciate this is frustrating. However, we only have a limited number of seats due to the hall capacity, and it is not possible to ask the children to perform more than 2 evenings so unfortunately, we are not able to offer any more evening tickets. Entry for parents will be via the hall door and it is vital that you have your tickets with you, thank you.

We have received a beautiful **artificial tree** from Waitrose and would like to donate this to a family who may be struggling this year to afford all that Christmas brings! If you would like to be considered for this, please let the office know (please don't feel embarrassed to do so). If we have a lot of names we will put them in a hat. We will also have our real tree from inside school going free on the last day of term if anyone would like this; again please let the office know.

Next **Thursday 12th** we are supporting the Wessex Cancer Trust with Christmas jumper day. Children can wear a Christmas jumper, top or Christmas accessory **WITH** their school uniform for a donation to the charity, thank you.

On **Thursday 19th December** we will be going to St Marks church for our Christingle service. Sadly we only have room for the children so cannot invite parents - however if you are able to walk to and back from the Church, you would be able to watch. We cannot accommodate younger siblings and you would need to be available from 9am to 10.45am. If you can help please contact the office, thank you.

Our school **post box** is open. If your child would like to post their Christmas cards in here **PLEASE** ensure that the child's **YEAR GROUP** is written on the envelope with the name as we have several children with the same name in school, thank you.

Year 1 have been very lucky to have received a kind donation from Hugh's Grandad's company **Cheap Skips** to purchase some more resources for their outside area, thank you so much.

Just a reminder that all **outstanding school meals, clubs and visits** must be paid by Monday 16th December, thank you.

Sadly we are seeing more and more the negative impact that screen time and media platforms are having on **children's mental health and wellbeing**. We strongly recommend that you ensure children have time off screens at least an hour before bedtime as the blue light does impact the quality of children's sleep and that mobile phones and consoles etc. are regularly monitored. Please find attached an information sheet with some helpful guidance for you.

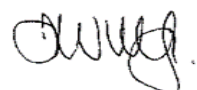
It was a great **assembly** today where we heard from: Sonny and Hugh in Year 1 who took part in the Santa Dash (despite the rain!), Evelyn in Year 3 who brought in her swimming award, Amira, Jessica and Enya in Year 3 who shared their Gymnastics certificates and Hayley and EmilyRose in Year 5 who have been busy at Brownies.

We also presented the Jolly Jar winners with their prizes along with the three top score winners for the snowman can alley - well done to Harry D in Year 5, Cooper in Year 6 and to Darrell (Nicolas's brother in Year 3). Cooper was also the winner of the reindeer hoop, well done all.

Our top 5 **homework achievers**, gaining five House Points each this week are:

| Top 5                  | Maths Shed   | Spelling Shed | TTRS        | Numbots      |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>        | Adiella (Y3) | Ahbab (Y3)    | Patryk (Y3) | Jackson (Y3) |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>        | Brooke (Y5)  | Patryk (Y3)   | Jenson (Y4) | Joseph (Y4)  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>        | Betty (Y3)   | Louis (Y6)    | Owen (Y4)   | Ewan (Y6)    |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>        | Harry M (Y4) | Piper (Y6)    | Max (Y6)    | Caleb (Y6)   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>        | Matthew (Y6) | Evan (Y6)     | Daisy (Y5)  | Teddy (Y4)   |
| Top Class for the week | Year 3       | Year 6        | Year 4      | Year 3       |

I am really looking forward to sharing the Christmas performance with you next week. In the meantime, have a great weekend.



Jane Wilford

## WHAT RECEPTION HAVE BEEN UP TO

This week in Reception class we welcomed a new member of staff to support us this year and her name is Miss Roberts. The children have been so welcoming and have helped her get to grips with our routines and telling her about themselves. In English we have finished our writing of CVC words and started to read our new text 'Stickman'. This will be our focus for the next couple of weeks. In maths we have been doing some more work related to number bonds and for some of the children they have started to recall a few number bonds. We have put our tree up which the children helped to decorate so we are feeling very festive now! The children have been developing their language skills by telling us in great detail about what their elves have done at home.

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## WHAT YEAR 1 HAVE BEEN UP TO

The class have been working really hard in Maths this week, reading, writing and representing teen numbers. We completed part-whole models to show the tens and ones in teen numbers, matched pictures to the correct teen number and drew pictures to represent teen numbers. We focused on using finger spaces, full stops and capital letters in English, as well as using our phonics and carefully sounding out each word. The class wrote some fantastic sentences about Bob and his journey to the moon! In History we thought about what life was like for Neil Armstrong and Christopher Columbus. We thought about entertainment, travel and clothes during the two different time periods and compared it to life now. We also began to plan our space prints and thought really carefully about the shapes, sizes and colours we want to use for different effects. In Computing we once again continued the artistic theme, using making choices over different paint tools to create a range of images based on artists' work. Finally, our song is shaping up nicely and we are looking forward to sharing our performance with everyone next week at the Christmas shows :)

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## WHAT YEAR 2 HAVE BEEN UP TO

This week Year 2 has completed some reading and Maths booklets. The class worked really hard on these and tried their very best- which we explained is all that matters. We are really proud of the effect and maturity shown by the whole class.

In English this week, we continued our stories about our new penguin character. The writing has been amazing quality, with a huge range of exciting vocabulary used.

In Maths we have been working up to adding two 2-digit numbers together. We started the week by using practical resources to add tens and then ones. then moved onto using visual representations and we ended the week solving them all independently using our place value knowledge. This was a challenging Maths week, but the class was amazing and followed each step to successfully learn our new methods.

In Science we looked at inventors and how and who invented common materials that we use today. We learnt about Alexander Parkes, who invented plastic. We thought about the huge impact his invention has had on the whole world, good and bad.

Another really good week! Well done Year 2!

## WHAT YEAR 3 HAVE BEEN UP TO

What a busy week, year 3 has had. Along with the rest of the school, Year 3 have been completing some summative assessment papers this week. These 'tests' or 'booklets' allow us to see how much of the curriculum the children have retained and helps guide us as to which misconceptions need addressing.

I have been very impressed with the manner in which the children have conducted themselves this week. They have shown great maturity, confidence and desire to do well. In the wider curriculum.

We have finished filming our Stop-frame-animations in computing - and have now begun editing and adding special effects to them., In DT, our prehistoric houses have taken shape and are now mostly painted.

In PE the children have been busy perfecting their routine for the Christmas show. I can't wait for you all to see it.

Keep up the good work Year 3!

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## WHAT YEAR 4 HAVE BEEN UP TO

This week in Year 4, the class have been exploring stereotypes in PSHE and discussing how they may be influenced through the media and others. In Science, we have been learning about endangered animals, and researching our chosen endangered animal to create a fact file all about them. In Writing, we have begun a new learning journey to create a non-chronological report based on Orang-utans, influenced by the Rang-Tan advert. Most notably though, Year 4 have been such superstars this week as they completed their assessments. The class modelled exceptional behaviour that is expected for the conditions, and I was very impressed with each of them.

In addition, the class have also been working extremely hard on their Christmas performance during PE, in preparation for next week's shows.

Overall, Year 4 have been utterly amazing this week and should enjoy a well deserved rest this weekend!

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## WHAT YEAR 5 HAVE BEEN UP TO

Year 5 have impressed us this week with their hard work and determination during our Reading, Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling and Maths assessments. They have shown off all their learning and given us a few areas to revise over the coming weeks. In Maths this week we looked at reading and interpreting timetables and worked hard on this tricky skill.

Both English and History took us back to the Victorian Age again this week. First we delved into the roles of Fagin and Dodger trying to persuade Oliver Twist to become a pickpocket and wrote some very creative letters from their perspectives. Then in History we learned about Lord Shaftesbury and his campaigns to improve life for children, creating our own campaigns based on the different acts that were introduced as a result of his efforts.

Finally, we blew Miss Paterson away with our progress in learning the ukulele, performing Riptide by Vance Joy beautifully! Well done everyone, keep up the amazing work.

## WHAT YEAR 6 HAVE BEEN UP TO

This week Year Six has been diving into some more practice SATs papers! The children have worked very hard and although we don't have all our results back yet, they are looking promising. We have explained to the children that these practice papers allow me to see what needs teaching or revising next, allows them to see their own progress, allows them to become more familiar with SATs style questions and processes, and generally builds their resilience and pacing for the tests in May. We have not learned everything we need to know yet as it is only December! So we don't need to be discouraged by any mistakes, but we can already see the improvements we are making - especially in our arithmetic! Outside of the test papers, we have been refining and practising our Christmas dance, revising some maths that the children wanted more time recapping, beginning to learn about how to achieve trustworthy investigation results in science, and analysing the uses of the river Thames in geography. I am very excited to read the persuasive letters that the children have written to me in English, to persuade me to agree with them on a subject of their own interest! Well done, Year Six, for a really hard working week. Don't forget to bring in the last few costumes as soon as possible, ready for Monday's dress rehearsal.

| Chartwells         |               | WEEK 3                                                                                                                              |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |               | W/C: 18/11, 09/12, 13/01, 03/02, 03/03, 24/03                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|                    |               | MONDAY                                                                                                                              | TUESDAY                                                     | WEDNESDAY                                                                     | THURSDAY                                                    | FRIDAY                                                      |
| AUTUMN/WINTER 2024 | HOT SPECIALS  | Cheese and Tomato Pizza 🍕<br>Served with Potato Wedges                                                                              | Pork Sausages<br>Served with Mashed Potato and Gravy        | Roast Chicken<br>Served with Roast Potatoes and Gravy                         | Sweet and Sour Chicken 🍷<br>Served with Wholegrain Rice     | Fish Fingers<br>Served with Chips                           |
|                    | JACKET POTATO | BBQ Quorn Fillet 🍷<br>Served with Wholegrain Rice                                                                                   | Quorn Sausages<br>Served with Mashed Potato and Gravy       | Roasted Vegetable and Cranberry Sauce<br>Served with Roast Potatoes and Gravy | Tomato and Sweetcorn Pasta<br>🍷 🍷 🍷                         | Quorn Dippers<br>Served with Chips                          |
|                    | JACKET POTATO | Jacket Potatoes 🍷<br>with a choice of hot and cold fillings                                                                         | Jacket Potatoes 🍷<br>with a choice of hot and cold fillings | Jacket Potatoes 🍷<br>with a choice of hot and cold fillings                   | Jacket Potatoes 🍷<br>with a choice of hot and cold fillings | Jacket Potatoes 🍷<br>with a choice of hot and cold fillings |
|                    |               | Tomato Pasta 🍷 Fresh, homemade tomato sauce with penne pasta 🍷 🍷                                                                    |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|                    |               | All main meals are served with two vegetables                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|                    |               | Chocolate Brownie with Orange Slices 🍷                                                                                              | Bread and Butter Pudding with Custard                       | Oat Cookie with Fruit 🍷                                                       | Lemon Shortbread                                            | Vanilla Ice Cream                                           |
|                    |               | <b>PACKED LUNCH AVAILABLE</b><br>Ham, Cheese or Tuna baguette available daily with veg sticks and fresh fruit or dessert of the day |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|                    |               | <b>AVAILABLE EVERY DAY</b><br>Water, salad, freshly baked bread, yoghurt & fresh fruit                                              |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |
|                    |               | 🍷 Vegetarian 🍷 Oily Fish 🍷 Wholegrain<br>🍷 Fruity! 🍷 Nutritionist's Choice                                                          |                                                             |                                                                               |                                                             |                                                             |

## Star Pupils

Murphy  
Year 1

Jude

Please come and see your child presented with their certificate and hear the wonderful reasons as to why they have been chosen as their class Star

Gravett  
Year 2

Mabel

Pupil this week in our celebration assembly on

Dahl  
Year 3

Adiella

**Friday at 8.45am.**

Sutcliff  
Year 4

Elijah

Please sign in at the office.

Q' Raúf  
Year 5

Levi

Rundell  
Year 6

Harley

**Please ensure you email an absence note within 2 weeks of your child being absent, otherwise it will be marked down as unauthorised.**



|                     | Pupils Absent this week (%) | Rolling Absences since Sept (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Donaldson           | 6.34                        | 7.96                            |
| Murphy              | 8.93                        | 7.22                            |
| Gravett             | 11.66                       | 4.39                            |
| Dahl                | 7.34                        | 3.5                             |
| Sutcliffe           | 5.8                         | 4.23                            |
| Q' Raúf             | 10.34                       | 7.29                            |
| Rundell             | 4.06                        | 4.33                            |
| <b>Whole School</b> | <b>7.71</b>                 | <b>5.51</b>                     |

***The class with the best attendance this week is:  
Rundell***

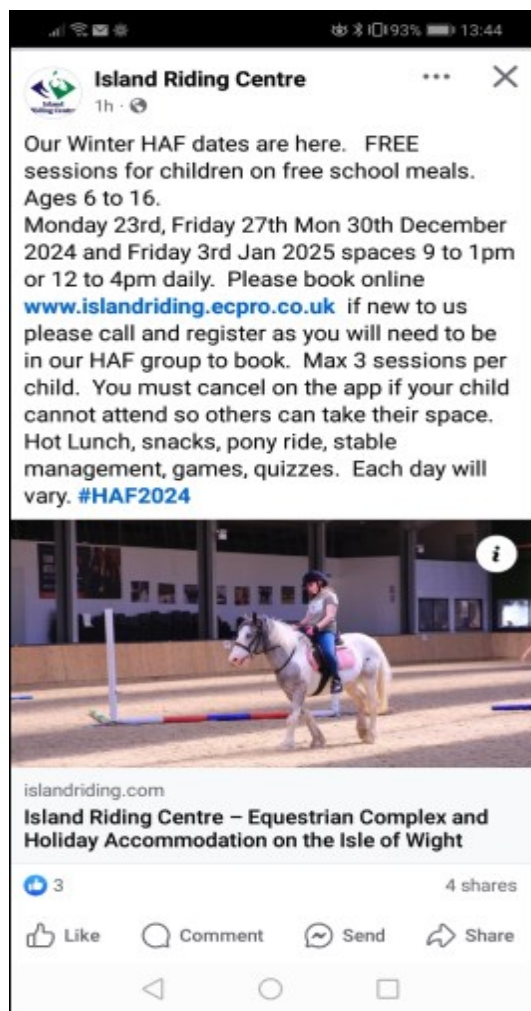
|                      | Lates This Week | Lates since September |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Donaldson            | 2               | 21                    |
| Murphy               | 2               | 32                    |
| Gravett              | 2               | 11                    |
| Dahl                 | 7               | 50                    |
| Sutcliffe            | 10              | 36                    |
| Q' Raúf              | 6               | 62                    |
| Rundell              | 3               | 122                   |
| <b>Whole School</b>  | <b>32</b>       | <b>204</b>            |
| <b>Total Minutes</b> | <b>473</b>      | <b>2366</b>           |

***Our school target is 96.5%.***

***We are currently BELOW target and aim for our children to be in school 100% of the time!***

# SEND NEWS

The school nurse will be visiting school again on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 between 9.30-12. If you would like to discuss anything related to sleep, toileting, diet, hearing or vision concerns, hygiene, bereavement or a long term medical condition (eg asthma or eczema) please contact Mrs Grimes ([senco@woottonpri.iow.sch.uk](mailto:senco@woottonpri.iow.sch.uk)) to complete a referral form in the first instance and then to arrange an appointment.



## IOW ND MDT: ND Profile Tool Guide

### ND Profile Tool Guide for Parents and Caregivers

#### What is the ND Profiling Tool?

The ND Profiling Tool is a visual document that assesses nine developmental strands of a child or young person aged 0-19. This includes speech and language, energy levels, attention skills, emotion regulation, motor skills, sensory levels, flexibility and adaptability, empathy and cognitive ability.

Each of the nine diversity spectrums has been extensively reviewed and evaluated by clinicians, specialists in that area, caregivers, and service users, to ensure adequate descriptors and language is used to describe the observable behaviours. It provides a holistic view of a child or young person's needs and suggests types of strategies that can be put in place to help manage those needs in different areas of a life, such as at home, at their Early Years setting, school or college, and in the community.

#### What happens during the profile assessment?

Parents/carers will be invited to book an Initial Consultation with the IOW Neurodiversity Multidisciplinary Team. During that appointment the profiling tool will be explained, and a safe space offered to discuss current concerns. Parents/carers will be asked to discuss each profile area and to scale a need according to their perspective. The profile takes about an hour to complete including time to discuss general and more immediate concerns.

#### What happens after we complete the profile?

The ND Profiling Tool will offer an insight into your child or young person's needs and will help identify the types of strategies that can be put in place to help. This will be in the form of a Profile Summary which is designed to be a starting point for further discussion and support. The ND Profile Overview document will be sent to you. You can share the Profile Overview with anyone or any organisation as you wish and of course, the child or young person themselves when they become able to understand the idea of their own ND needs.

You will be offered support from our dedicated Neurodiversity Team and partner services, who can provide specialist advice where appropriate.

#### Can families request a ND clinical assessment?

- If a child or young person is currently on the waiting list for an ND assessment, they will remain on the list. Equally, if someone would like to request an ND clinical assessment after completing a profile, they can discuss this with the neurodiversity team, GP, or school.
- We would encourage those on the waiting list to complete a ND Profile while they wait. This will not affect their position on the waiting list but will help to identify strategies that can support the child or young person and their family while waiting.

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## IOW ND MDT: ND Profile Tool Guide

Similarly, families can access support from the Neurodiversity Team following a diagnosis.

#### Glossary of Terms:

ND – Neurodiversity/Neurodivergent  
ND MDT – Neurodiversity Multi-Disciplinary Team  
IOW – Isle of Wight  
ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
ASC – Autism Spectrum Condition

NB: The ND Profiling Tool has been co-produced by Portsmouth City Council in partnership with Portsmouth Parent Voice, Dynamite and partners across education, health, social care, and early years.



For bookings and appointments relating to this report, webinars, or general enquiries, please SCAN the QR code.

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# SPORTS NEWS

## U11 Boys Football Rural League vs Holy Cross

On Monday, our U11 Boys travelled to Holy Cross Primary to play them in their league fixture. We had discussed prior to the game that it was going to be a tough fixture having already them in another competition. This proved to be the case and Holy Cross quickly established themselves and built a solid two-goal lead.

Not long after half time Wootton were still in the game; and scoring to make it 3-1 started to make Holy Cross worry. A couple of 50/50 decisions that did not go our way, when there was a clear chance of scoring, took the steam out of our resurgence. Had a goal come from one of those opportunities I think the result may have been different.

Unfortunately, Holy Cross rallied and scored again to settle the tie. 4-1: the final result.

This team continues to develop and have had to play some very hard matches in the past few weeks. It is only by playing the best that you can test yourself and improve. Chins up boys – you're doing well!

Well played and thank you to Evan S, Jacob S, Cooper H, Max G, Theodore S and Jack B from Year 6 and Sebby R, Kenny P, Dylan J and Harry D from Year 5.

**Wootton's Player of the match: Harry D** - for his tireless effort supporting the defence.



## **U9 Boys Football Rural League vs Nettlestone**

The U9 Boys team played their second game of the season on Wednesday. Nettlestone brought a talented team and it was clear this would be the toughest our team had faced. Wootton rose to the challenge and put together some very dangerous attacks.

Lucas C is a special player and he really bossed the midfield. He constantly snuffed out dangerous opportunities and was the calmest player when in possession. His passing frequently put the opposition on the back foot.

Two own goals, caused by great crosses/shots meant Wootton led at the break. However, Nettlestone were never out of the game. They pulled one back, only for Teddy B to score his first goal for the team. Again, Nettlestone scored to keep the game cagey.

A special mention to Joe C who is a great, instinctive goalkeeper. He produced several key saves that meant Wootton could finish as 3-2 winners. One of which, as I have mentioned below, was simply brilliant. Going in the opposite direction, he flung back an arm to a snap shot from a cross to superbly tip the ball around the post!

Two wins from two. This team continues to impress and they have a great opportunity to progress to the latter stages of the competition.

Well played and thank you to Harry M, Joseph C, Teddy B, Zach H, Eden D and Lucas C from Year 4 and Louis L and Harry Mc from Year 3.

**Wootton's Player of the Match: Joseph C** – he produced the best save I have ever seen by a Wootton goalkeeper! Incredible!



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[www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com)



Is your child registered for  
**SCHOOL MILK?**

Child  
**UNDER 5**

Every child under the age of five is entitled to free school milk. Simply register your child online.



Child  
**OVER 5**

Every child over the age of five is entitled to milk at a subsidised cost of around £20 per term. Register your child and pay online.

Children in receipt of benefits-based free school meals are eligible for free school milk. Speak to the school for further information.

Free milk for under 5s is funded by the Department of Health and milk for over 5s is subsidised by DEFRA.

**REGISTER YOUR CHILD TODAY**

Register online  
[www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com)



Need help?  
Send us a message  
at [www.coolmilk.com/contact](http://www.coolmilk.com/contact)  
or give us a call on **0800 321 3248**



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**NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!**  
**THE ULTIMATE 'ARTY PARTY'**




**MON 30**  
**&**  
**TUE 31**

**10.30am**  
**TIL**  
**3pm**

**AT**  
**QUAY ARTS**  
**NEWPORT**

**FREE TO CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFIT RELATED**  
**FREE SCHOOL MEALS OR £25 PER DAY**  
**ACTIVITIES AND FOOD INCLUDED**



**NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!**  
**THE ULTIMATE 'ARTY PARTY'**



**Monday 30 Dec**  
Learn incredible circus skills with  
'Stix Guy Kai'  
Enjoy costume making  
Make your own juggling balls



**Tuesday 31 Dec**  
A morning with Isle of Wight Pottery  
Sketch and Scrapbook - Craft Session  
New Years Eve Party!

**MON 30**  
**&**  
**TUE 31**

**10.30am**  
**TIL**  
**3pm**

**AT**  
**QUAY ARTS**  
**NEWPORT**

**FREE TO CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFIT RELATED**  
**FREE SCHOOL MEALS OR £25 PER DAY**  
**ACTIVITIES AND FOOD INCLUDED**



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

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

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.

### 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.



The National College

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