

Beechwood Newsletter



As we come to the end of this term, we want to recognise the hard work and achievements of all the children at Beechwood. Well done and enjoy your Christmas break.

Attendance

As we approach Christmas and the end of the autumn term, we are excited to celebrate the brilliant attendance achievements of our students at Beechwood Primary School. We are proud to announce that each child who has achieved at least 95% attendance will receive a Cadbury chocolate box selection and a certificate recognizing their efforts.

We are privileged to share that there are classes showing excellence in attendance and punctuality across the autumn term. I would like to highlight the classes with the top attendance this term:

- -Class 7- 96.67%
- -Class 10 - 95.76%
- Class 6 - 94.54%
- Class 13 - 94.34%

...closely followed by Class 4 and Class 9.

Well done, everyone! Let's continue this excellent performance throughout the academic year.

Looking ahead, we are also planning for the end-of-academic-year attendance prizes, which will include bikes and scooters. These prizes will be purchased based on the suggestions of the school council.

Attendance is a collective effort, and we want to take this opportunity to thank all the children, teachers, and parents who contribute towards our children's attendance and punctuality. Your efforts in helping them arrive on time, ready for learning, and settled for the day are greatly appreciated. Thank you for your continued support, and let's keep up the great work!

Trips, Visits and Experiences

Santa Dash

On 6th December, children from year 1-6 took part in a virtual 'Santa Dash' along with other schools in Leeds. The children came to school in their Christmas jumpers and ran around the Golden Mile with their year group. The challenge was to see how many times they could run around it in 15 minutes. Everyone really enjoyed taking part!



Advent assembly

We were very lucky last week because Rev. Anne came in to school to teach us all about the importance of Advent to Christians. We talked about what Advent means and lit the four Advent candles that are used in Church. Each candle has a special meaning so they are lit on the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day to prepare for when Jesus was born.



Year 5 Victorian Christmas trip

On Wednesday, year 5 visited Skelton Grange to take part in a Victorian Christmas workshop. During the session, the children learned how to play different parlour games that the Victorians would have played on Christmas Day. They had great fun playing games such as Hiding in Plain Sight, Kim's Game and Blind Man's Bluff. They also

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had the chance to learn about the history of Christmas Crackers and how they were invented by a sweet maker in London. The children made their own crackers using paper tubes, a joke, paper hat, sweet and cracker device. Finally, year 5 headed into the woods to sit by the campfire. They spent some time reflecting on 2024 and setting intentions for 2025. They were very surprised to see St Nicholas make his way towards the fire with a small gift for each child!



Christmas performances

This week, we started the Christmas festivities in school with year 1 and 2's performance of 'A Midwife Crisis' and nursery enjoyed their craft and carol session on Wednesday. It has been lovely to see so many parents in school and we are looking forward to the rest of the performances next week.



D:side

Children in KS1 and KS2 have taken part in PSHE lessons with d:side over the last couple of weeks to learn more about how to keep safe while using the internet. This included learning how to keep our personal information safe, what to do if we are unsure of something on the internet and how to use social networking safely.



Staff news

Mrs S. Shaw is leaving school at the end of term. She has worked at Beechwood for 14 years and helped support lots of children and parents with their reading journey in school. She has also played an important part in our International school links,

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including to help organise the Mayo boys visits and Heritage Day in school. We would like to thank her for all her hard work and wish her every success in the future.

Miss Borges is also leaving school at the end of term. We would like to thank her for all her hard work while working at Beechwood and wish her good luck in her new job.

Mrs Clark who has been working in our office since September is also leaving. We wish her lots of luck as she moves on.

We will be welcoming Mr White as our new Y2 teacher in class 6 from January.

Winter Fair

A huge thank you to all the staff, FOBS members, children and parents for making the Winter Fair such a success. You managed to raise the fantastic total of £700. Well done everyone.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

This week's online safety focus is on the messaging app Snapchat. The app allows users to send images, videos and texts that 'disappear' after 24 hours after being viewed, However, users are known to take screenshots. The guide is an update for parents and carers about how the app works and what you can do to keep your child safe while using it. The age restriction for the app is 13 years +. Please see below for information to help support you.

Safeguarding

If you are worried about any safeguarding situation or about your child being harmed, then you should contact Miss Roberts (Designated safeguarding lead) or Mrs Giles (Deputy designated safeguarding lead) to share your concerns.

Key Dates

17 th December	2.15pm Reception Christmas Play
18 th December	9.30am Year 5 & 6 Christmas Play
18 th December	2.15pm Year 3 & 4 Christmas Play
19 th December	Year 5 Northern Ballet trip
20 th December	Break up for Christmas

6 th January	Training Day School Closed
7 th January	School Reopens

Beechwood Nursery

We have a small number of 3-year-old nursery places available for both 15 and 30 hours for a January 2025 start.

If you would like to apply for a nursery place, please email

✉ office@beechwoodprimaryschool.co.uk

or call ☎ 01132930250

School App

Please remember to download the School App so that you don't miss any communications.

<https://www.theschool.app/>



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

SNAPCHAT

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

Snapchat is a messaging app which allows users to send images, videos and texts to others. Its best-known feature is that anything sent 'disappears' 24 hours after it's been viewed; however, users are known to take screenshots or use another device to obtain a photo of their screen. In 2023, Snapchat added a chatbot function called 'My AI'.

SNAP STREAK

97

DAYS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

My AI is Snapchat's new chatbot, which replies to questions in a human-like manner. However, the software is still in its infancy and has significant drawbacks, such as biased, incorrect or misleading responses. There have already been numerous reports of young users turning to AI for medical help and diagnoses, which could be inaccurate and therefore potentially dangerous.

PREDATORS AND SCAMS

Predators can exploit Snapchat's disappearing messages by, for example, telling a user they have naked photos of them and will post them unless they're paid. Snapchat's own research found that 85% of teenagers had experienced this – on this app or others. This likely isn't helped by 'SnapMaps' – a feature which highlights your exact position in real-time. This is meant to help friends keep track of each other, but could be used for more sinister reasons.

MY EYES ONLY

Snapchat has a hidden photo vault called 'My Eyes Only'. Teens can conceal sensitive photos and videos from parents and carers in this folder, which is protected by a PIN. You can check for this by clicking on the icon which looks like two playing cards. This takes you to the 'Memories' folder which stores photos, stories and the My Eyes Only folder.

SCREEN TIME ADDICTION

Snapchat prioritises user engagement, with features like streaks (messaging the same person every day to build up a high score). The app also has sections called 'Discover' and 'Spotlight', which show tailored content to each user. However, this could also be seen as an attempt to hook users into watching videos endlessly. Furthermore, constant notifications can lure people into using the app.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some content on Snapchat simply isn't suitable for children. The hashtags used to group content are determined by the poster, so even an innocent search term could still yield age-inappropriate results. The app's 'disappearing messages' feature also makes it easy for young people to share explicit images on impulse – so sexting continues to be a risk associated with Snapchat.

ONLINE PRESSURES

Although many of Snapchat's filters are designed to entertain or amuse, the 'beautify' effects on photos can set unrealistic body image expectations – creating feelings of inadequacy in younger users. Snapchat now also has 'priority' notifications (which still get displayed even if a device is in 'do not disturb' mode), increasing the pressure on users to log back in and interact.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UTILISE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Snapchat's 'Family Centre' lets you view the details of the child's account – their friends list and who they've spoken to in the last week – and report any concerns. You must invite a child to the Family Centre for them to join. To keep the child's location hidden on the app, go into settings and turn on 'Ghost Mode' and 'Hide Live Location', and ensure they know not to share their location with anyone.

BLOCK AND REPORT

If a stranger does connect with a child on Snapchat and begins to make them feel uncomfortable through bullying, pressure to send explicit images or by sending sexual images to them, the child can tap the three dots on that person's profile and report or block them. There are options to state why they're reporting that user – such as annoying or malicious messages, spam or masquerading as someone else.

FAMILIARISE YOURSELF

Before you allow a child to download Snapchat, download it yourself and familiarise yourself with the app. Snapchat has produced a parents' guide to the app to help you understand how it works and any protections they have in place. A link for this can be found in the sources below.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Snapchat's risks can be easier to handle if you nurture an open dialogue. For example, discuss My AI's responses to questions and how reliable they are. Talk about scams and blackmail before letting children sign up. If they're lured into a scam, encourage them to tell you immediately. Talk openly and non-judgementally about sexting, emphasising its inherent risks. Furthermore, explain how popular 'challenges' on the platform can have harmful consequences.

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.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/snapchat-2021>

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