



NEWSLETTER



Merry
Christmas
and
HAPPY NEW YEAR



Kind, Confident, Successful Learners



Message from Mrs Gibbard



Dear Parents and Carers,

As always, December has been a magical month here at Barnett Wood filled with joy, music, creativity, and lots of excited children!

There have been several festive highlights, including our Reception 'Music and Mince Pies' extravaganza on Wednesday this week and the Christmas performance by Year 1 and 2 at St George's Church last week. Our amazing children showcased their remarkable singing and storytelling skills and brought big smiles to everyone watching. A big thank you to all the staff and parents who supported and encouraged the children during their preparations for these events.

Our recent Christmas Fair was a also tremendous success, raising approximately £2,600 for our school! This fantastic achievement was only made possible by the hard work and dedication of our incredible Barnett Wood Friends Association. Their tireless efforts in organising this event (as well as all the other events this term!) are truly appreciated. The grand total raised so far this year is over £3.5k! Thank you to Hannah, Lorna, Gemma and Charlotte, and all the parents that volunteered to support events this term. The funds raised will be used to enrich our children's educational experiences, offering them exciting opportunities and resources. We are currently ordering new books for our phonics scheme which we are very grateful for. Each class would also like to say a big thank you for their Amazon voucher from the Friends to purchase resources for the class.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the staff, parents and carers for your continued support this term. Your involvement in your child's education is invaluable, and together we can create an environment where every child can flourish and reach their full potential. Thank you also for your thoughtful cards and gifts!

Wishing you all a very merry (and hopefully restful!) Christmas,
and a Happy New Year.

Kind regards,

Mrs Gibbard



News from the Classrooms...

Don't forget to check your child's year group page every Friday for news straight from the classroom. Click the pictures below for the relevant year groups:



Year R

Hedgehogs and Squirrels



Year 1

Owls and Rabbits



Year 2

Badgers and Foxes

A message from our Governors...



Dear Parents, Carers, Staff, Children, and Friends.

As we approached the festive season in late November, we received a long overdue endorsement of our School with Ofsted finding our wonderful setting was Outstanding across all areas! This was an amazing early Christmas present and something that everyone involved should be immensely proud of.

What Does Outstanding Mean?

An "Outstanding" rating from Ofsted is the highest possible accolade that a school can achieve in any one of the 5 areas they assess. To achieve this across ALL areas acknowledges the exceptional standards of the quality of teaching, the outcomes for children, the effectiveness of leadership, and the culture, behaviour, and safety of the whole school. Ofsted's recognition confirms what we have always known: Barnett Wood Infant School is an inspiring and nurturing environment where every child feels safe, secure, and valued.

A Special Thank You

This achievement would not have been possible without the support of so many individuals. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to:

- **Our Headteacher** - Mrs Gibbard, whose constant and unwavering drive to improve our school has inspired us all to be better tomorrow than we were today. #BetterNeverStops.
- **Our Dedicated Staff**, whose hard work, passion, and commitment to each child's success is evident in everything they do.
- **Our Children**, who continue to inspire us with their enthusiasm for learning, and living the Barnett Wood Values of Kindness, Respect, Trustworthiness, Aspiration and Resilience, each and every-day.
- **Our Parents and Carers**, whose ongoing support, endorsement, and partnership are invaluable in helping us create a thriving learning environment, in school, and at home.
- **Our Friends**, whose co-ordination and innovation of fun and fundraising activities create an unrivalled school community and provide invaluable additional resources for our school to utilise, for the benefit of all.
- **Our Governors**, whose leadership and strategic vision ensure that our school remains desirable, relevant, sustainable, and focused on providing the very best environment for the entire school community to prosper.

A Merry Christmas to All

Heading into the Christmas break, we want to take a moment to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy some well-deserved rest and time with your loved ones.

We are incredibly proud of everything we have achieved together this year, and with the Ofsted report as a reflection of the hard work of our entire school community, we are confident that 2025 will be another exciting and successful year. We are committed to continuing to improve and provide even more opportunities for our children and wider community to succeed and flourish next year and beyond

Warm regards,

Your Governing Body



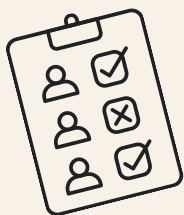
Attendance - A message from Mrs Theobald



We firmly believe that all children benefit from regular school attendance and that

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

School Matters!



Class attendance for September to December

Reception		Year 1		Year 2	
94.9%	94.5%	94.2%	95.6%	94.6%	96.4%

Whole school attendance update
 To date, our whole school attendance figure is
95.1%
 This has continued to drop slightly since our last newsletter.
 We need your help to achieve our target of 97% in the new year, please!



Congratulations to Foxes for maintaining the highest attendance for the academic year so far! What an achievement!



What does this look like in terms of number of days absent?	100%	97%-99.9%	93% - 96.9%	90% - 92.9%	Below 90%
	Attendance Superstar!	Well done, excellent attendance!	Be careful!	Improvement needed.	Persistent absentee.
September-Now	0 days	2 days	4 days	6 days	7+ days
Academic year Sept-July	0 days absent	approximately 4 days absent	approximately 10 days absent	approximately 15 days absent	approximately 19 days absent



Fines for absence

Please ensure that you take some time to read section 8.2 in our Attendance and Absence Policy about sanctions, including penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence from school.

Attendance and Absence Policy

Polite reminder for reporting absence

This month we have had a number of parents/carers who the office have had to phone to find out why their child is not at school. Our Attendance and Absence Policy states that we must be informed by 9:30am on each day of absence. For prolonged periods of absence due to illness we may ask parents to provide us with medical evidence from the doctor for our records.

Thank you for your support.

Christmas at Barnett Wood



Mental Health and Wellbeing



myHappyMind

At Barnett Wood Infant School, we are committed to providing a holistic education that nurtures both the academic and emotional development of our children. We have recently invested in a programme called 'My Happy Mind' at school to help our children, families and staff. The myHappyMind programme aligns perfectly with our vision of fostering kind, confident, and successful learners. By integrating this programme into our curriculum, we aim to create a positive and supportive environment where every child can flourish.

Mental health activity is often focused on supporting individuals when they face challenges. Whilst this is critical, we believe that it's also important to support our children in building their resilience and self-esteem proactively.

What is myHappyMind?

myHappyMind is an NHS-backed curriculum in primary schools, secondary schools, and nurseries and is focused on building resilience, self-esteem, and happiness in children. It is an award-winning programme that has received national recognition for its exceptional work in schools, nurseries, families, and organisations across the UK. Backed by NHS, it uses preventative strategies firmly rooted in science, research, and the fields of neuroscience and positive psychology.



The myHappyMind modules

The programme is structured around five key modules:

1. **Meet Your Brain:** Understanding how our brain works and how to take care of it.
2. **Celebrate:** Recognising and celebrating our unique strengths and practicing gratitude.
3. **Appreciate:** Learning the importance of gratitude and how to make it a daily habit.
4. **Relate:** Building positive relationships and understanding the value of good friendships.
5. **Engage:** Setting meaningful goals and developing resilience to overcome challenges.

Benefits for Our Children

Research has shown that the myHappyMind programme can lead to significant improvements in children's mental wellbeing. Some of the key benefits include:

- Enhanced self-esteem and confidence
- Better stress management and coping strategies
- Improved relationships with peers and teachers
- Greater resilience in facing challenges

Parent Involvement

We believe that the success of the myHappyMind programme is greatly enhanced by the involvement of parents. Your support and engagement are crucial in reinforcing the positive habits and skills your children will be learning. To further embed this learning, myHappyMind has developed a Parent App. These resources can be accessed online on your computer, or through an app on your phone. The Parent App will support you as a parent in understanding what your child is learning, activities for you to do together at home and also a Kids Zone featuring myHappyMind Games plus much more!

Please see the attached letter with this newsletter for instructions on how to access the myHappyMind parent app.

Adverse Weather Plan



We have had a relatively mild winter so far, but in order to be prepared for any future adverse weather in the next term, we want to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children, staff, and families during potential severe conditions. Please take note of the following important information regarding our procedures at Barnett Wood.

Adverse Weather Procedures

In the event of severe weather, such as heavy snowfall or icy conditions, we will assess the safety of the school site and the surrounding areas. Our primary concern is the safety of our children and staff. Here are the steps we will take:

- **Assessment and Decision:** The Headteacher, in consultation with the caretaker and Surrey County Council, will assess the situation early in the morning. Factors considered include the safety of the site, travel conditions, and the ability of staff to reach the school.
- **Communication:** If the decision is made to close the school or alter the school day, we will notify parents by 7:30 AM. Notifications will be sent via:
 - Email
 - School website
 - Social media platforms
- **Partial Closure:** If some staff members are unable to reach the school, we may operate with a reduced number of staff. In this case, we will welcome children who cannot stay at home, but we encourage parents to keep their children at home if possible. Absences due to weather conditions will be authorized.
- **Full Closure:** In the event of extreme weather making it unsafe to open the school, we will close for the day. This decision will be communicated by 7:30 AM, and updates will be provided for the next day by 4:30 PM

For more information, please visit our website here:

[Adverse Weather / Snow Plan | Barnett Wood Infant School](#)

General Reminders



- **Timings:** Gates open at 8.20am, classroom doors open at 8.30am. Gates/doors close at 8.35am and collection for all at 3.05pm.
- **Snacks:** Children are provided with a piece of fruit/vegetables at break time. Please be aware that a number of our children have severe allergies and therefore we are a nut free school - please respect this and ensure no products containing nuts are included in packed lunches or snack boxes.
- **Named water bottles to be in school daily** - no squash or juice please!
- **Absence** – please phone (01372 272701) or email (info@barnett-wood.surrey.sch.uk) school as soon as you know that your child will be unable to attend school that day.
- **Sickness / tummy bugs** – please remember that children cannot come into school until 48 hours after the last episode of sickness or diarrhoea, in order to prevent spreading the infection.
- **Named clothing and personal items** – please ensure that all items are named as we cannot guarantee lost unnamed items are returned to the owner
- **Coats** – please remember that your child/ren need a coat suitable for the weather to be in school with them. Our outdoor learning spaces are used every day.



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY



Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS



The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES



Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS



Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD



Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS



Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS



Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE



Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY



Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>

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The DSLs can be contacted via the school office on
01372 272701 or via email: dsl@barnett-wood.surrey.sch.uk

Dates for Diaries



Our remaining INSET days for this academic year are:

Monday January 6th 2025

Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Monday 2nd June 2025

First half of Spring Term:

Monday 6th January	All day	INSET Day - school closed
Tuesday 7th January	8:30am	Children return to school
Tuesday 14th January & Thursday 16th January	TBC	Friends of Barnett Wood Showtime Cinema Event
Wednesday 22nd January	8:45am	Rabbits Class Assembly in the hall to Parents/Carers
Friday 24th January	4:30pm-5:30pm 6:00pm- 7:00pm	Reception School Disco Year 1 and Year 2 School Disco
Wednesday 29th January	8:45am	Owls Class Assembly in the hall to Parents/Carers
Monday 3rd February	All Day	Year 1 Victorian Day More information to follow
3rd - 7th February		Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 11th February	4.00 - 6.00pm	Full Governing Body Meeting
Friday 14th February	All day	Last day of Half Term Normal finish time at 3:05pm
Monday 17th - Friday 21st February HALF TERM BREAK		