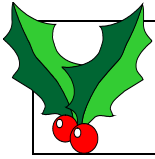




Holywell News

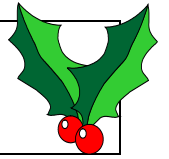


Issue No: 177
December 2024



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL - **TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY 2025**



Mr Simpson's Headlines



The Autumn Term has been a long and busy term! For our last worship session of the term, I put together a short presentation to students of some of the highlights of the term and examples of students who have been 'joy-bringers' this term; it was a wonderful collection of achievements and experiences across all year groups and it was heart-warming to remember some of the many moments of pure joy. When we're all tired and exhausted, something called a "negativity bias" kicks in ... it's quite instinctual. Adrian Bethune and Emma Kell

describe this phenomenon in their book 'Teacher Wellbeing and Self-Care': *"Our brains have this bias thanks to our hunter-gatherer ancestors. Those who could spot dangers and avoid them, survived to live another day and pass on their genes to us. ... Therefore, our brains are always on the lookout for threats and dangers so that we can avoid them and survive. The good news is that, according to psychologist Dr Rick Hanson, we can 'rewire' our brains to notice the positives more and make them 'stickier' for positive experiences in the future. Hanson is keen to point out that this isn't about putting a positive spin on everything and ignoring the difficult aspects of our lives; it's more about 'levelling the playing field' and noticing and savouring the small good things that normally pass us by."*

With students and staff, we have been reflecting on the simple things that have brought us joy over the last term (even the last week) ... perhaps this is something you could also do as a family.

Tutor groups have created 'joy jars' with moments that have brought joy. A few moments of joy for me over the last few weeks include:

- The school pantomime
- The Christmas service
- Year 6 football team winning their league
- All of the wonderful pieces of work students have been proud to share
- Music composed by students in Year 8 Music Option
- Student progress in lessons
- Christmas jumper day and our delicious Christmas lunch
- Money raised for various charities through non-uniform days and other charity events (such as the Christmas gift shop to raise money from our partner school in Tanzania)
- Newly-designed graffiti boards and values posters
- Trips to Wembley, the theatre, Mountfitchet Castle and Wrest Park

- Year 8 students taking on roles of responsibility
- Poetry published in a national collection
- ... and many, many personal sporting achievements in and out of school.



This month's 'Values definition' was written by Joseph and Molly and perfectly encapsulates what we can all try to do to be joy-bringers:

JOY December 2024

"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118: 24)

Use your time wisely to bring you and others joy.

Spend time with friends, appreciate them and create joy together.

Get enough sleep so you're full of joy, happy, ready to learn and not grumpy!

Be joyous and grateful for what you have at Christmas and through the New Year

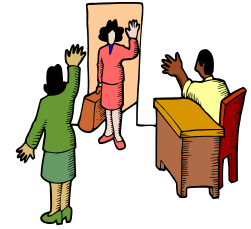
At this time, we also think of the joy of advent and the birth of Jesus. The journey to Bethlehem for Mary and Joseph must have been exhausting, and yet, just as we have persevered and taken steps forward, so too did Mary and Joseph follow the path to Bethlehem with their precious cargo. The story of the Nativity is one of peace, love and wonder and is a time to remind us of the hope and joy promised to the world. At the end of our Christmas Service, we all sang together the Christmas Carol: "Joy to the World":

*Joy to the world, The Lord is come!
 Let earth receive her King!
 Let every heart prepare Him room.
 And heaven and nature sing,
 And heaven and nature sing,
 And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your support this term and to wish you all a safe, peaceful, restful and joyful Christmas. I have every faith that the New Year will be filled with happiness, kindness and achievement.

Mike Simpson
 Headteacher

Staff News



We are very sad to say farewell to two amazing and long-standing members of staff.

Mrs Warner is a very talented English teacher who has also had lots of other roles during her 10 years at Holywell; she was Head of Year 5 and supported many students to settle into Holywell. She has also supported new members of staff and trainee teachers as they have started their careers. Mrs Warner is leaving to take on a role in a nursery close to home and we wish her every success.

Mrs Collins is our fantastic Cover Manager – not only does she arrange all the cover when staff are away from school, but she also covers lessons herself too. She has supported many students and staff during her 20 years at Holywell and she will be a huge loss to the school. Mrs Collins is leaving to take on a receptionist's role at her local GP surgery and we wish her happiness in this new job.

Joining us in January to cover Mrs Warner's English classes will be Mrs Brady. Mrs Brady is a very experienced English teacher and she has been into school this week to do a handover with Mrs Warner.



“Reach More Parents” by WEDUC Communications from School

Please note that we use “Reach More Parents” by WEDUC to communicate with families. We STRONGLY RECOMMEND that at least one parent / carer downloads the WEDUC app. We will be further developing our use of this app during the school year to communicate achievements, attendance and behaviour issues.

If parents/carers need an enrolment code, please email Miss Watson on awatson@holywellschool.co.uk who will be able to supply one. Thank you.

Preparing for Snow

Please remember a few key points of how the school handles this.

We work extremely hard to stay open – including having our own snow blower! However, if the weather does overwhelm us and it is decided to close the school before the start of the school day (eg. in the event of severe weather conditions), we will notify you in the following ways:



- by message on WEDUC
- on the school's website (www.holywellschool.co.uk)
- on the Central Bedfordshire Council website using their 'State of Schools' (SOS) system: <https://apps.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/webApps/SOS/>

- Via the local radio station (BBC Three Counties (95.5 or 103.8 FM / www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties)

It is usually when Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Transport departments deem the roads too dangerous for buses to run and cancel transport that we decide to close the school. In the event of *us* deciding to close, we contact the bus companies to ensure that they do not bring students into school.

School Caterers

Please note the School Caterers operate a cashless system, so no money is taken at the kitchen. Please can parents regularly check the balance on their child's Parent Pay account via the ParentPay website: <https://www.parentpay.com/>.



If your child is away from School

**A telephone call or WEDUC notification
is required on the
first day of absence, before 8.30 am.**

The Office Staff prepare the official registers and need to know the reason for **all** absences. It is therefore important that they are made aware of absences and they will inform your child's Form Teacher.

Please could parents remind students to report to the office if they arrive at school after registration. Students leaving school during the day, for whatever reason, must also use the front entrance to the school and sign out.

Attendance and Holidays in Term Time



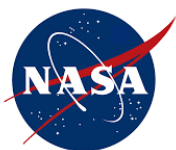
Parents / Carers should be aware that under current government guidelines **we can NOT give permission for any holiday in term time.** Holidays will be classed as **unauthorised absence** for your child. **Please note that requests for leave of absence should be sent into school at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence.**

There may, however, be events that a student takes part in out of school which require him / her to miss a school day – we will continue to consider that sort of request. However, it is clear that the government and external authorities will want a very persuasive argument for us to be allowed to record any absence as a permitted time out of school. **No leave will be authorised during the first two weeks of the school year or during exam periods.**

Science Department News

It has been an action-packed first term with students in all years engaged in their learning and working hard to develop their scientific knowledge and skills.

Year Five: Back in September, we welcomed our new Year Five students and they quickly settled into life at Holywell. Their year began with a focus on developing practical skills. It was wonderful to see the students estimating, measuring, and recording whilst carrying out lots of practical work. Our next topic on forces allowed the students to build on the work they did in lower school. The 'working scientifically' focus continued and students investigated friction, streamlining and air resistance. Finally, we moved on to the topic of space. Students took part in a solar system scavenger hunt, learned all about the rocky and gas giant planets, and considered what is required to live on the moon whilst designing a moon base. The winning moon base designs will get a rather unique prize...



Exciting news! In January, we will welcome Commander Jack Hathaway to Holywell. Commander Hathaway is coming to talk to our Year Five students all the way from NASA, USA! We thank our friends at Cranfield University for this amazing opportunity. He will spend some time with our moon base competition winners and discuss their designs.

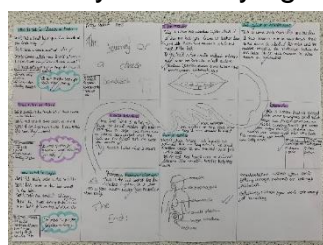
Year Six: The highlight of the first term for many students in Year Six was earning their Bunsen burner licence! To achieve this important milestone, students had to demonstrate a secure understanding of safety in the lab, set up a Bunsen burner correctly, light it safely and use it to investigate the burning time of various materials. An anxious time for some transformed into confidence and we were thrilled with the effort shown by all students.



Year Seven: In Year Seven, the learning focus has been on 'Investigating Science', 'The building blocks of life' and 'Forces and their effects'. The students have shown tremendous endeavour and engaged brilliantly with a more practically driven approach. We are delighted with how well the students' practical skills are developing. Many students were inspired as we zoomed into the magical microscopic world using our microscopes, and much fun was had when racing rubber band racers or trying to decide where the organs of the human body are located. Bravo! Year Seven.

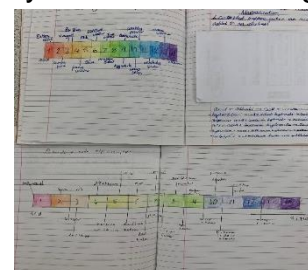


Year Eight: Year Eight thoroughly enjoyed our Health and lifestyle topic at the beginning of the year. Studying diet and nutrition, food testing, and the digestive system made learning



relevant to everyday life. There were many inspired pieces of work showing the 'Journey of a cheese sandwich'!

The highlight for many students was our work on acids and alkalis. Chemistry always provides the 'Wow!' moments, the magic of reactions! Testing various substances with



different indicators produced a rainbow of colours and an appreciation of the acidity and alkalinity of everyday items.

As we end our first term, we look forward to the exciting learning opportunities in the new year. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas!

Holywell Science Department

Music Department News

Christmas Service December 2024



On the 17th December, 40 members of the choirs, recorder group and readers took part in the Christmas service to parents and friends in St Peter's and St Paul's Church. They performed 'The Christmas Jazz' which tells the Christmas story from the point of view of the animals. The songs are challenging and the choirs performed with skill and enthusiasm. Their hard work this term definitely paid off and it was a very enjoyable evening. The service has been repeated today (last day of term), four times, so that all of our students will have the opportunity to watch it. Thank you to all the students who took part.

Instrumental Lessons

Please contact Mrs Gough if your child would like to start learning a musical instrument in January and you would like some more information. We can offer lessons on piano, brass, woodwind, strings, guitar, drums and singing.

Upcoming Music Department Events:

KS2 choir will be taking part in the 2025 Young Voices concert on Monday 10th February.

KS3 band will be participating in the Beds Band Factory competition at Redborne Upper School on Tuesday 13th February at 7pm

180 KS2 students will go to watch the Philharmonia Orchestra from London performing at the Corn Exchange in Bedford on Friday 21st March.

Spring recital – Tuesday 1st April 6pm

PE Department News

It's been an extremely busy half-term, with lots of fixtures and clubs taking place.

We have seen students represent the school in KS2 and 3 Cross country, table tennis county finals, 7 girls netball, Y6 boys football friendlies and KS3 girls' basketball – phew! A massive 'thank you' to all of the students that have taken part and attended clubs...and to the staff that have run them!

Cross Country – On November 15th, we took a squad of 16 students to RBA for the 1st cross country event of the season. It was a tough course but the students all showed great perseverance! Special mentions to Grace in Year 5 (7th) and Connie in Year 8 (5th).

Table Tennis – The Key Stage 2 Boys Table Tennis team played extremely well against some tough opposition, at the recent County Finals. Both games had some tense matches and very close scores, however we ended up being defeated in both games, 6 matches to 2. All the players showed great resilience and determination throughout the games, along with great skills and techniques being used to outwit their opponents.

Y7 Netball – The year 7 girls netball team has been really hard to pick this year because we have had on average 20 girls turning up each week for training. The Girls had some great wins against Pix Brook and Henlow. With Emma Turner scoring most of the points in the Henlow game as well as Neve Folds being our top points scorer overall this year. The whole team represented the school so positively! We look forward to seeing how they do next year!



Y7 B team football – On 2nd December, 28 students (and 3 sports leaders) traveled to Alameda for a B/C/D team friendly. Over the 3 games that each team played, lots of goals were scored, plenty of great saves were seen and some amazing last-ditch tackling was on show! Well done to all the boys that took part.



Leon Barnett Academy – On 25th October, a selection of Y7 and 8 students were invited to a training session led by coaches from the Leon Barnett Academy, at the Cranfield 4G. It was great to see the next generation of coaches testing out their

leadership skills with our students – we also saw a few ex Holywell students who were in the Academy! For more info: <https://www.leonbarnettfootballacademy.co.uk/>



After Christmas, we have our first Y5 boys football fixtures followed by KS2 and KS3 girls football. Rugby season starts as well so there will be lots of fixtures for our KS2, Y7 and Y8 boys team and also our KS3 girls. We will also have some KS2 and KS3 badminton fixtures so plenty of opportunities for students to get involved.

Lessons

It is still cold outside so please can you continue to ensure that students bring the correct kit for their lessons - please see the PE kit section in the students' planners. For lessons on the field, such as rugby, football and health and fitness, students will need football boots (shin pads for football, gumshields for rugby) and long, black socks. Students should also ideally bring a spare top and bottoms to lessons, in case they get muddy. Students will be told which lessons they have after Christmas in their PE lessons, before they break up.

Clubs

If attending a PE club, students should wear their normal school uniform to school and then change into PE kit before the club. If the club is inside, then a pair of trainers is all they need! If they have PE on the day of the club they are attending, students should wear their PE kit to school BUT bring spare kit to change into if there's a chance they could get muddy!

PE Clubs Timetable – Spring 1 - 2025

	13:05-13:35	13:35 – 14:00	15:45-16:45
Mon	Y5/6 Mixed Table Tennis (MK) – Sports Hall Y7 Boys Rugby (ME) – Field	Y7/8 Mixed Table Tennis (MK) - Gym Y5/6 Mixed Netball (SM) – Sports Hall	All Years Mixed Badminton (MK) - Sports Hall
Tues	Y5/6 Mixed Rugby (JU/ME) - Field Y7 Boys Badminton (ZI) - Sports Hall	Y8 Girls Sport & Wellbeing (ES) <i>Invite only</i> – Sports Hall	
Wed	Y8 Boys Rugby (ZI) - Field Y8 Girls Badminton (ES) - Sports Hall	Y7 Girls Badminton (ME) – Sports Hall	
Thurs	All Years Mixed Gymnastics (CSI) – Gym Y7 Boys Rugby (ME) – Field	Y7/8 Girls Rugby (CSI/MK) – Field Y5 Boys Football (ZI) – Field	Y5/6 Mixed Dodgeball (MK) - Sports Hall
Fri	Y7/8 Girls Football (MK) – Field	Y5/6 Girls Football (MK) – Field	Y7/8 Mixed Dodgeball (MK) - Sports hall

Thank you for all of your support this year; we hope you all have a great Christmas!!

English Department News

In English, students have been busy learning, creating and having fun!

Year 5: Have just finished a poetry unit, where they got to explore all different styles of poetry and do some performances in their classes! As an English Department, we teachers have been blown away with some beautiful poems created by our wonderful Year 5 students! Well done everyone! We move onto *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* next!

Year 6: As well as doing SATs Mocks, the Year 6s have been doing lots of writing challenges around the novel, *Journey To The River Sea*! The most recent piece is writing about getting “Lost” in the Amazon Rainforest! Students have captivated amazing descriptions through the use of their senses to create such fantastic pieces! Keep up the great work Year 6!

Year 7: Students have completed the *Holes* Unit and are well underway with their persuasive writing unit, “The Balloon Debate!”. We already have some very interesting chosen people and some great speeches drafted! Using “DAFOREST” to persuade their audience, students are learning how to structure a speech using KS4 techniques! They’ve all had a super start to this unit, well done!

Year 8: We are half-way through Charles Dicken’s, *A Christmas Carol*! Using GCSE style analysis, students are picking apart the characters and looking into key contextual themes! The trip to the Old Vic in London at the end of November was magical and really ignited the spirit of Christmas! Keep it up Year 8, very well done!

A very busy, fun and creative term! I hope all students have a wonderful Christmas and a very happy new year!

Miss Mayles and The English Department”



Payment for Uniform, Trips and Sundries

Please note that we are now a cash-free school and request that payments are made online whenever possible, with the link on our website.

Tucasi (Scopay.com) For payment of the following:

- Ordering School ties / blazer badges
- Trips
- Lost or damaged library books



If you have not previously logged in to Tucasi you will need an access code from the school. Please email finance@holywellschool.co.uk for this code.

If you are unable to pay online we have the facility to pay by credit/debit card in person at the school office or via telephone.

Parent Pay (Payment for tuck/school dinners)

Please remember to check your child's Parent Pay account balance regularly. You can set up to receive a reminder email when the account credit goes below a certain level. To do this log in to your parent pay account>communication>alert settings>balance alerts> under threshold set an amount and tick email alert. Once the credit goes below this level you will receive an email reminder to top up the balance.

For queries with regards to Parent Pay please email: school@holywellschool.co.uk

For web pages for the above please go to <https://holywellschool.co.uk/Parents>online payments>.

Charity News

Christmas shop: Over the last week we have been busy wrapping and selling all number of gifts for children to buy for their loved ones! This has proved very popular and we know the students enjoyed picking out their gifts. Thank you for supporting us with this and **we raised £309.23. for our partner school in Tanzania.**



Christmas Jumper Day: Our Christmas Jumper Day on 18th December this year was to raise funds for Msijute Primary School – our partner school in Tanzania and Save the Children and raised the sum of **£325.64.** Thank you very much for your support.

Children in Need: As the result of a Mufti Day, the amount we raised for Children in Need was **£392.06.**



Bishop of St Albans' Harvest Appeal / Young Minds: The sum raised from the non-uniform day for Young Minds and Bishop of St Albans Harvest Appeal on 25th October was **£528.25.**

Non-uniform days are a simple way to raise money and to make a HUGE difference. Wonderful generosity Holywell!

PRACTICAL REMINDERS



- **Hydration Guidance:** All students should have a water bottle (labelled) and they are encouraged to take regular sips during the day.
 - Bottles must be anti-spill bottles - NOT GLASS - with sports tops
 - Water bottles should be carried separately from school books and library books
 - Water bottles are not allowed near electrical equipment
 - Water bottles and drinks must be for personal use only
 - Teachers have the final word in lessons as to when and if they can be used
 - Bottles must contain still WATER! Flavoured still water or sugar-free squash is also an acceptable alternative, however, water is best! (Fizzy drinks – including sparkling water drinks or power drinks – are not allowed in school.)
- **Uniform** – In order to represent our community appropriately it is important that our students wear the correct school uniform with pride and look well presented at all times. Below is a reminder of our school uniform and expectations. PE Kit should only be worn into school on days where students have PE. If you are refreshing uniform over Christmas, please make sure that the correct uniform is purchased ready to be smart in January. Make sure that shoes are shoes (no trainers)! Trousers and skirts should be grey and not black; skirts should be the correct length

UNIFORM	
Blazer	Black
House Badge*	For blazer
Trousers / Tailored Short Trousers	Plain grey tailored trousers, not cords or denims
Skirt	Plain grey, pleated skirt, knee-length
Jumper/Cardigan	Plain grey, 'V; necked
Shirt	White
School Tie*	Black and gold clip-on
White shirt / blouse	(Polo shirt - Summer term only)
Socks	White, grey or black (No trainer socks)
Shoes	Black (no boots, trainers or heels higher than 4cm)
Coat	Any plain style
SPORTS UNIFORM	
Rugby Shirt	Black/Gold reversible with school logo
Shorts/jogging bottoms/sports leggings	Black
Skirt / skort	Black
Sports shirt	With school logo
Socks	Long black and short white
Trainers	NB. not basketball boots
Football boots	
Mid layer (optional)	Black with school logo
Base layer (optional)	Black
Shin pads	
Gum shield	

Items marked with * are available from school

- **Chewing Gum** – Chewing gum is **not** allowed and should not be brought into school.
- **Mobile Phone Policy** – Reminder that we are a non-smart-phone school. **Smart phones are not to be brought on-site**. Non-smart phones for communicating with parents out of school hours are allowed with a permission slip and are the responsibility of the child. If smart-phones are found on-site, they will be confiscated and will need to be collected by a parent. Full policy on the website.
- **Behaviour – To / From school and on the buses** – we expect the same high standards of student behaviour on the bus and walking to and from school. Students should also make sure they are behaving safely at all times – eg. seat belts on, walking a safe distance away from the pavement, not crossing in front of vehicles, etc.
- **Haircuts** – Keep it professional! No fashion cuts, no lines or patterns, no colours, nothing shorter than Grade #2.
- **Essential Equipment** - Having the right equipment in school is essential to students demonstrating that they are ready to learn and taking their lessons seriously. Whilst we understand that everyone forgets things from time to time, we're seeing an increasing number of occasions where students are not bringing any, or consistently missing key pieces of equipment into school. We'd like to therefore take this opportunity to remind students that it is their responsibility to ensure that they have the correct equipment in lessons and that they come into school ready to learn. We've updated the list of what is essential below and would appreciate your support in ensuring that students come to school with the correct equipment.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

- School Organiser
- Handwriting pen
- Green pen
- Red pen
- Blue pen
- Black pen
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Mini white board
- White board pen
- Pencil Case
- Reading book
- Water bottle (labelled with name!)
- Bag (rucksack)



ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

- Coloured pens or pencils
- Pencil sharpener
- Calculator
- Protractor
- Dictionary



MFL News

It was a busy half-term in the MFL department filled with a variety of extra-curricular opportunities for all our students to get involved in. Let's start with congratulations and a huge **WELL DONE** to our monthly MFL celebrities.



Languages for Peace Competition



In November, our Value of the Month was Peace. The MFL department contributed to the theme by challenging students to design inspiring *Languages for Peace* posters.

Thank you to all the students who participated in the competition. The posters beautifully highlighted the crucial role languages play in fostering peace and unity across the world.

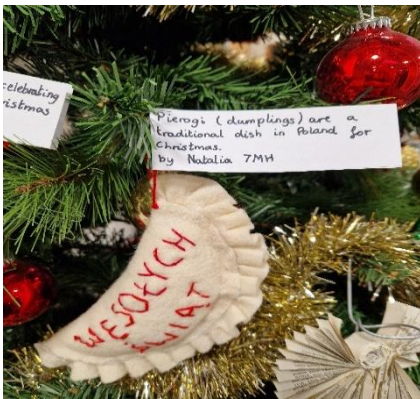
Every participant was recognised with prizes, House Points, and small edible treats to enjoy. All posters were absolutely stunning, making it nearly impossible to select a winner. The extraordinary effort and creativity showcased in each poster were truly inspiring.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who participated and supported this initiative.

Congratulations to our joint winners, Ruhani (Year 8) and Elbert (Year 7)!



Christmas Bauble Competition



We were excited to run a **Christmas Bauble Competition**. Students were invited to showcase their creativity by designing a festive bauble for the school's Christmas tree including **traditions from around the world**. The goal was to honour the diversity and beauty of holiday traditions across the globe. Thank you to our wonderful students who embraced the idea and decorated our tree beautifully. We now have something to treasure for years to come! Choosing a winner was no easy task, as the entries were all outstanding, but **Natalia from Year 7 and Maisie in**

Year 5 were awarded the prize for the most innovative design idea. All students received House Points and small prizes for their amazing contributions.





Duolingo

All French and German students have access to Duolingo. Their username and password details are recorded at the front of planners. We encourage students to access the app regularly to further develop their foreign language skills.



Duolingo is an app and website that uses a gamified approach to language learning, with lessons that incorporate translating, interactive exercises, quizzes, and stories.



This half-term, Mariam in Year 5, demonstrated incredible dedication, earning an unbelievable 10,500 XP during the class' competition!

French Exchange

Our French pen pal exchange is thriving!

We shared Halloween and Christmas cards with our partners in Chaumont and are excited to connect with them on a Zoom call in the new year.



Oxford German Olympiad

Students in Years 5 and 6 who study German are invited to participate in the Oxford German Olympiad.



The Olympiad is a prestigious annual competition organised by the Oxford Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages in collaboration with other partners, such as the Oxford German Network. The event is designed to promote the study of the German language and culture among students in the UK.

This year's competition focuses on the theme of *Games and Sport*. Students who wish to enter must complete the following tasks independently, without any input from their teachers:

- Draw a picture of the best ever *Spieltruhe* (= *play-chest*) filled with all your favourite games, and label them in GERMAN.
- You must use at least 12 labels and they have to be in GERMAN.
- Colour in your work and present it as neat as possible.
- When completed submit your work to Mrs Morey in room 3 by 3rd February 2025.
- Winners will be announced by the University of Oxford in March 2025.
- The German Olympiad is administered by the Oxford German Network, as part of the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages at the University of Oxford.
- More details in this link: <https://www.ogn.ox.ac.uk/content/oxford-german-olympiad-2025>

PTFA Update

As you may have noticed, the PTFA have not run any events this term. Cara, Jenny and Jo have really enjoyed their time working in the school and organising the fund-raising events and will miss them dearly but times are changing for them and they are unable to devote their time and energy to the PTFA any longer. We were hoping that some new volunteers would take over the leadership roles for running our PTFA, but no-one has come forward to take this on. This is the last appeal for anyone who is interested in taking over the reins – if no-one comes forward, the PTFA will be forced to close.

The PTFA raised over £2000 for our school last year and are really proud to have contributed to buying equipment for the music and EAL departments. The reserves in the PTFA fund will be used to buy some new laptops for English, Maths and the SEND departments. There will be a 2nd-hand uniform shop at the end of the year but unless we get a new leadership team we will be saying farewell to the PTFA.

Please contact Mr Simpson (mgsimpson@holywellschool.co.uk) if you're interested in taking on this role. ... and a personal thank you to Cara, Jo and Jenny for all their hard work, time and support over the last few years – they have done a wonderful job and have left a wonderful legacy through the money raised.



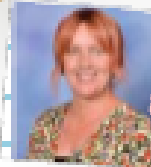
Holywell Safeguarding Newsletter

MEET THE TEAM

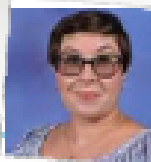
December 2024
Issue 3



**Mrs Stewart-
McAlpine**
Deputy Head & DSL



Mrs Johnson
Family Support / Deputy DSL



Miss Collins
Student Support /
Assistant DSL

Welcome to our Safeguarding Newsletter.

We are hopeful you will find it useful.

The Safety and Wellbeing of our students are a priority to us!

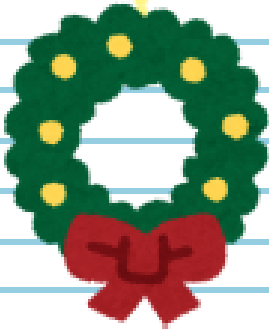
We hope that we can connect you to local and national support, if you need it for you and your families.

Our focus this edition of our newsletter is providing information to support for self-care over the Christmas period. There are many website available, we have detailed information on a couple of websites that we hope will prove useful

If you have a topic you would like us to cover, or you are in need of support, information or advice, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the team!



Useful Websites



Young Minds are a mental health charity for children, young people and parents.

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

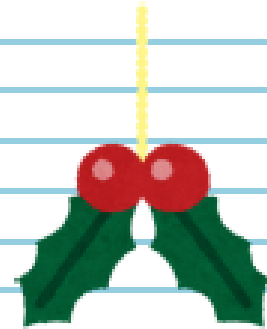
The Mix supports under 25's

<https://www.themix.org.uk/>

Mind BLMK

Mental Health and wellbeing Support for over 18's in Bedford, Milton Keynes and Luton

<https://www.mind-blmk.org.uk/>



Useful Websites

Central Bedfordshire specific;

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/113/youth_services

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/257/staying_safe

National Support Websites;

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/shout-85258/>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

<https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/calm-zone/>



YOUNGMINDS



Christmas Survival Guide

Have realistic expectations

When children are out of routine and excited (or disappointed) there may be behaviour changes. Be realistic with behaviour expectations. So have realistic expectations of yourself. It's OK for everything not to be perfect.

Plan rewards and consequences

Normal rules often go out of the window at this time of year. Think about consequences in advance. It's unlikely you will take all the presents away so that threat rarely works. Instead maybe think of smaller steps.

Be consistent

Mean what you say. When routine changes it can be hard to maintain consistency but if you follow through with what you say it helps. This is where some quick planning can help.

Take a break

Step away from the noise and have some down time. This is a good opportunity to watch a family movie and spend quality family time resting.

Having fun doesn't always mean being busy. Make having a break a fun family activity.

Winter Wellbeing Tips for young people

Eat Well

As the weather turns colder, it can be tempting to comfort eat the wrong sorts of food. Try to stick to healthy food packed with the nutrients you need to stay well and fight off the winter germs. The odd treat now and then is fine, though.

Keep Moving

Physical activity is great for our overall wellbeing, including our mood. Find an activity you enjoy that you can do during the winter, whether that's cycling in the rain or yoga in your warm, dry living room.

Stay Connected

The winter months can feel lonely for some and many people tend to stay indoors as it gets colder and darker. Connecting with others is vital for positive mental wellbeing so make those connections in different ways to suit the season. Chat on the phone, send someone a card or join an online group.

Rest and Relax

Don't forget how important sleep is for our wellbeing. When we're pushed for time or feeling stressed it can negatively impact our sleep. A relaxing bedtime routine can help, such as a warm bath and reading in bed.

Make Some Space for You

The winter months can feel hectic with the run-up to Christmas, seeing family and friends and fitting work in around it all. Make sure you take some time to do something that gives you some headspace, such as taking a walk in nature or listening to your favourite tunes.



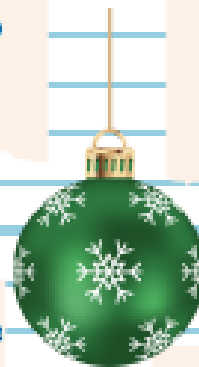


Holywell Support this Half Term



At Holywell we have been fortunate in accessing some wellbeing support for our students from outside agencies both one-to-one and in small groups in addition to offering support to parents.

Holywell are very delighted to still be working with an amazing accredited wellbeing and boxing coach - this half-term she ran a Boxing Saves Lives intervention for a group of our Year 6's.



The Safeguarding, SEND and the EAL Teams offered a joint parent-carer drop-in late November where we welcomed a representative from Carers in Bedfordshire, offering support for both children and parents - including coffee, teas and biscuits!

Holywell have also been able to secure organization Link2Change to a group of our Year 8 students this half-term. This intervention had a focus on online safety and healthy relationships

Holywell School is now LIVE across Social Media Pages



@HolywellCoE



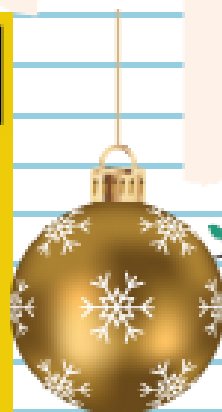
Holywell School Bedfordshire



@Holywellcoe



Please like/follow to receive updates



www.holywellschool.co.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



AUTUMN TERM 2024

End of Term – Friday 20th December

SPRING TERM 2025

Closure Day – Monday 6th January

Term Begins – Tuesday 7th January

Half Term – Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February

End of Term – Friday 4th April

SUMMER TERM 2025

Closure Day – Tuesday 22nd April

Term Begins – Wednesday 23rd April

May Day – Monday 5th May

Half Term – Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May

End of Term – Tuesday 22nd July

Please note that dates may differ from other schools

SUMMER TERM TEST DATES 2025



Year 6 Students
Key Stage 2 SATs

Monday 12th May - Thursday 15th May 2025

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK HOLIDAYS AT THIS TIME



A REMINDER THAT STUDENTS
RETURN TO SCHOOL ON:
TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY 2025

