



# Friday Post

Friday 17th October 2025

## Our School Value: Thankfulness

**Key Verse:** *My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one that this; to lay down ones life for one's friends. John 15:12-13*

Dear families,

We have enjoyed an action packed week of learning here at St Leonard's. This has ranged from imaginative play in Hedgehogs new outdoor 'Farm Shop;' Meerkat Mail writing in Owls and Anderson Shelter designing in Foxes. I am so impressed with all of the creativity and curiosity to learn more.

Thank you to parents from Reception and Year One who have joined their children for our phonic 'Learn with Me' sessions. We've had so much lovely feedback and the children really enjoyed sharing their learning. We have a new visitor book in the entrance; please do feel free to write in here after visiting a workshop or for any other positive reflections. It is lovely to capture these over the school year and to share them with the children, staff and visitors.

One of our prime aims at St Leonard's is to ensure that every child becomes a confident reader who develops a love of reading for life. Please continue to hear your child read at least 4 times a week. It is lovely to see children colouring in their reading rockets as they finish their reading books; I know the children are aiming to receive their first prize for reading 20 books to you. We hope the children are enjoying our 'Book Snuggle' boxes. Please do send us some photos of your 'Book Snuggle' times at home; there will be Headteacher awards for photos and journal entries.

This half term, I have been accompanying teachers on visits to other SUAT schools to explore our new writing approach and provision in Early Years. This provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the strengths at our school and to consider further refinements to our practice and pedagogy. It is really exciting to be working closely with colleagues from our Trust.

Thank you to the children who joined our 'Wonders of our World' club on Wednesday and Thursday. We enjoyed listening to the sounds of nature, finding objects which inspire us. We also generated vocabulary and poems linked to the nature which we discovered. We all had a creative and inspiring time together. If children would like to join the club, they will need wellies in school (Wednesday - Years 2 and 3; Thursday - Years 1 and 4). Next week, we will also be starting a new weekly 'outdoor learning session' with Hedgehog class where we will focus on art, creativity and oracy. This will take place each Thursday afternoon.

In Worship, we have been continuing to reflect on our school value - thankfulness. You may want to join us in looking at the stars each night during the month of October. We have been encouraging children to find their favourite star each night and to say 'thank you' for the special things in our lives and our world. I think we are going to be dazzled by the wealth of thanks which we have in our hearts. Children will be coming home with a star template tonight, to add their ideas to over the weekend. There are 3 leaf tokens for each completed star of thanks. We will share some examples at our end of term 'Champion of Thankfulness' Celebration in Church next Thursday; we look forward to welcoming families to our celebration.

Wishing everyone much care, love and kindness during the weekend ahead.

Happy star gazing,  
Claire Keay

Headteacher: Mrs C Keay  
St Leonard's First School & Nursery,  
School Lane, Dunston, ST18 9AG  
Tel: 01785 712488

 **Staffordshire  
University  
Academies  
Trust**

# Stars of the Week



## Care, Love and Kindness Award



*Let all that you do, be done in love' 1 Corinthians 16:14*

# Postcard from the Headteacher



## Big Question:

If stars could speak to us, what might they say?

**Jarrod** "listen well"

**Freddie** "If it's the first time of speaking they could say hello, stars might speak to each other"

**Olivia** "They might remind and warn us to be safe"

**Alfie:** "They might encourage us to make the world a better place for example plant trees"

**Ted** "Hello, or whatever they want"

**Elsie G** "I think stars would tell us to be kind to our earth"



# Attendance figures

School Attendance 13th - 17th October 2025

Hedgehogs 99%

Owls 99%

Foxes 94%

Whole School 98%

The National target for attendance, as set out in guidance from the DFE is 95%

Please note fixed penalty notice referrals **will** be made to the Local Authority for term time holidays.

## Impact of lateness over a school year:

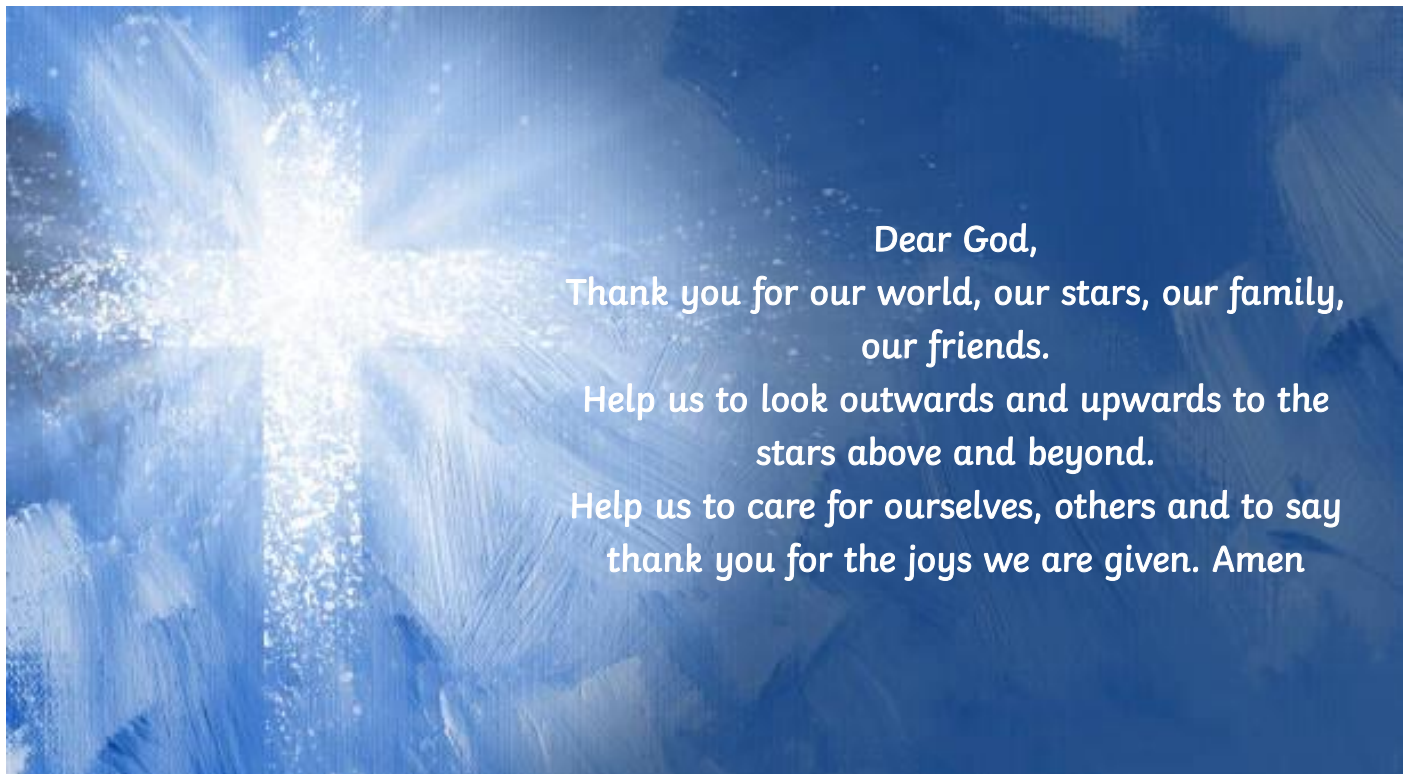


5 minutes late every day = 3 days absent

15 minutes late every day = 10 days absent

30 minutes late every day = 19 days absent

Pupils arriving late miss valuable teaching and learning time and it can contribute to them becoming anxious when they enter the classroom late.





Next week we are learning:

**'Autumn Days'**

[Autumn Days When the Grass is Jewelled \(singing and lyrics\) \(StF 121 / BBC Come and Praise 4\)](#)

Click the link above to find the lyrics & music

## Weekly House Point Tally

Oak		105
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Holly		88
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Sycamore		78
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### Easy fundraising

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stleonardsdunston>

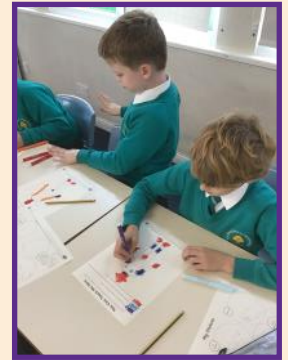


Support our school at no added cost to yourself! By registering with Easy Fundraising every time you order on line you could gain commission for school. There are lots of companies registered including Amazon, Currys, Booking.com to name a few. Rest assured nobody at school sees what you are purchasing. - please support your school community!

## PE STARS OF THE WEEK



*Learn to Love, Love to Learn*



"In Art, we're continuing with our sketching as we practise and improve our drawing skills!"



In Science, we became detectives, exploring the outdoor area to find out which objects were magnetic!



Hot seating!

Children stepped into the shoes of characters from The Lion & the Unicorn, answering questions as if they were part of the story.

Please click the link below for more information.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>



UK Health  
Security  
Agency



# Should I keep my child off school?

## Yes

### Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

## No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

### Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.



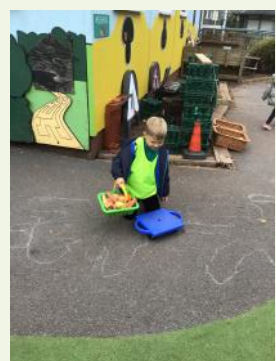
Owls have been continuing to find out about famous scientists and their discoveries and have learnt about Isaac Newton and what he found out about gravity. They enjoyed making paper spinners and attaching paper clips in various quantities to them. They really enjoyed watching them spin down to the ground and predicting which ones would reach the ground first.



# HEDGEHOGS



We have read the traditional tale, The Enormous Turnip. This really helped the Reception children learn to read the word 'pull'. We acted out the story and sang a song about it. We had lots of different vegetables to sell in our farm shop and practiced planting bulbs. To finish our topic on what is special about me, we looked at our own fingerprints and found out that we are all unique just with our hands and fingers.



# Achievements from outside school



Ballet



Cycling



Kickboxing



Football



Swimming



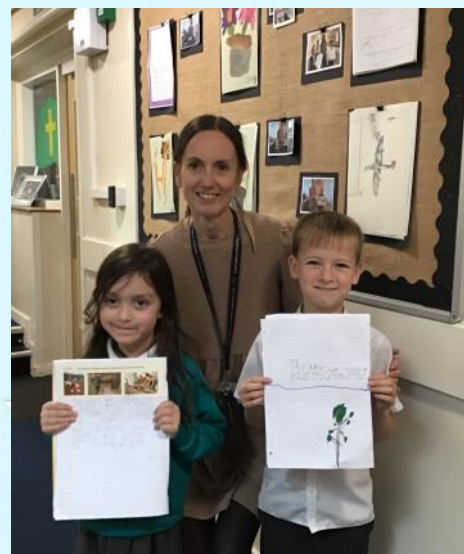
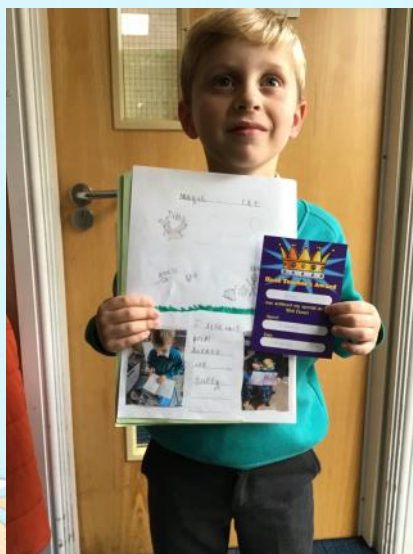
Swimming



Swimming

If your child has recently received an award they would like to share with us, eg swimming, football, dance, Beavers, Brownies etc please send them into school & we will share them during our Celebration Worship on Friday.

# Headteacher Award



## This Week's Art & Craft Adventure: Monoprinting Magic!

Our young artists had a blast exploring monoprinting, a fun and expressive technique. Using baking trays as printing plates, they layered vibrant paints, etched in unique designs, and pressed their creations onto paper and fabric. The result? Stunning, one-of-a-kind prints full of colour and personality!



## Church Service - Thursday 23rd October

All parent/carers are welcome to join us for our Service of Thankfulness at St Leonard's church on Thursday 23rd October at 9.10am approx. Refreshments will be being served by members of the church community.



*Don't forget to book your school meals via your School Grid account*

<https://app.schoolgrid.co.uk/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2F>

### No nuts please

Please note due to children in school with allergies please do not send any products containing nuts into school for break or lunch times. Thank you for your co-operation.



New dishes for 2025	WEEK 1			WEEK 2			WEEK 3		
	Weeks starting: 1st Sept, 22nd Sept, 13th Oct, 3rd Nov, 24th Nov, 15th Dec			Weeks starting: 8th Sept, 29th Sept, 20th Oct, 10th Nov, 1st Dec			Weeks starting: 15th Sept, 6th Oct, 27th Oct, 17th Nov, 8th Dec		
<b>Mega Monday</b>	Margherita Pizza & Garlic Slice (V) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Soft Roll with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)	Margherita or Vegetable Supreme Pizza (V) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Baguette with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)	Margherita or Sweetcorn Pizza with Pasta Salad (V) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Sandwich with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)						
<b>Tasty Tuesday</b>	Green Beans, Sweetcorn Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Vanilla Ice Cream (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Baked Potato Wedges, Sweetcorn, Green Beans Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Ice Cream & Fruit (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Green Beans, Sweetcorn Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Crispy Cake (VG) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt						
<b>Roast Wednesday</b>	Crispy Chicken Dippers & Tomato Based Sauce Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Soft Roll with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Steamed Rice, Sweetcorn, Broccoli Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  ★ Marble Sponge & Custard (V) ★ Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Mild Fajita Chicken, with Nachos & Steamed Rice Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Baguette with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Cabbage, Carrots Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Fruit Crunch & Custard (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Macaroni Cheese (V) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Sandwich with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Cauliflower, Peas Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Apple Cake & Custard (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt						
<b>Try It Thursday</b>	Roast Chicken (GF) or Plant Based Sausages (VG) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Soft Roll with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas, Gravy Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Raspberry Jelly & Peaches (VG) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Sausage Stuffed Yorkshire Pudding Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Baguette with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Mashed Potatoes, Carrots, Peas, Gravy Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Lemon Drizzle Cake (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Roast Chicken (GF) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Sandwich with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  New Potatoes, Carrots, Savoy Cabbage, Gravy Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Strawberry Mousse (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt						
<b>Fishy Friday</b>	★ Homemade Beef & Vegetable Pie ★ Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Soft Roll with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Mashed Potatoes, Savoy Cabbage, Carrots Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Winter Fruit Crumble & Custard (V) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Cheddar & Chicken Pasta Bake Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Baguette with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Broccoli, Sweetcorn Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  ★ Jam Sponge & Custard (V) ★ Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	The Dolce All Day Breakfast Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Sandwich with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Hash Brown, Baked Beans, Peas Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Fresh Fruit Salad (VG) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt						
	Breaded Fish Fingers or Vegetable Grill (VG) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Soft Roll with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Chips (VG) (GF), Peas Baked Beans (VG) (GF), Ketchup (VG) (GF) Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Lemon Cookie (VG) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Breaded Fish Fingers or Salmon & Sweet Potato Fishcake Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Baguette with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Chips (VG) (GF), Peas Baked Beans (VG) (GF), Ketchup (VG) (GF) Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  Chocolate Cookie (VG) Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt	Breaded Fish Fingers or Fishless Fingers (VG) Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF) Sandwich with a Choice of Fillings (V) (VG)  Chips (VG) (GF), Peas Baked Beans (VG) (GF), Ketchup (VG) (GF) Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Fresh Sliced Bread  ★ Hot Chocolate Fudge Pudding (V) ★ Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt						

### Our Safeguarding Team

Mrs Key is our Designated Safeguarding Lead

Miss Laing is our Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Should you hear or see something that concerns you, please contact the office to speak to either of them.



# DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday 22nd October	Forest School - Year 4
Wednesday 22nd October	Parents evening - sign up sheets are in the entrance hall
Thursday 23rd October	Church Celebration @ 9:10am - all parents welcome to join us refreshments available
Thursday 23rd October	Parents evening - sign up sheets are in the entrance hall
Friday 24th October	Inset Day - school closed to pupils
Monday 27th October	Half Term
Monday 3rd November	Year 3 & Year 4 - 'Mathematics with Me' and meet Mrs Keay
Tuesday 4th November	Year 4 Learn with Me Multiplication workshop & meet Mrs Keay
Friday 7th November	Wear Odd Socks for Anti-Bullying Day
Monday 10th November	Whole school trip to Wolseley Wildlife
Thursday 13th November	Wear yellow/spots with your PE Kit for Children in Need
Friday 14th November	Year 2 'Writing with Me' and meet Mrs Keay
Friday 28th November	Read with Me in classrooms @ 2.50pm
Monday 1st December	Chocolate donation in ex-change for non-uniform
Friday 5th December	Christmas Tree light switch on & Carols @ 2:45pm
Friday 12th December	Save the Children wear your Christmas Jumpers
Wednesday 17th December	Christmas Dinner Day!
Friday 27th February	Read with Me in classrooms @ 2.50pm
Friday 1st May	Read with Me in classrooms @ 2.50pm
Thursday 18th June 2026	Sports Day
Thursday 25th June 2026	Reserve Sports Day

Please see the dates above for Forest School sessions.



Children should arrive at school in clothing suitable for getting muddy on their Forest school day. Please also send your child with a sun hat/ waterproof clothing depending on the weather, **a coat & wellies are a MUST!** Please make sure all items are named.

Don't forget to keep up to date by following us on ..



facebook  
Please search for

St Leonards First School  
& Nursery



Our School website

<https://www.st-leonards-dunston.staffs.sch.uk/>

# Holiday Crash Courses available!



## Learn to Swim in Staffordshire this October Half Term!

Dear Parents,

Check out our Private Lessons this October Half Term!

Book directly with your local leisure centre.

### **Stafford Leisure Centre – call to book on 01785 619500**

3 Day 121 Crash Courses (Monday, Wednesday & Thursday)

9am, 9:30am, 10am or 10:30am

£60.12 for the 3 days

1 off 121 Lesson

Monday 27 October

9am, 9:30am, 10am or 10:30am

£20.04 per session

### **Stone Leisure Centre – call to book on 01785 334855**

Crash Course Private Lessons

Monday 27 – Friday 31 October

1:30pm, 2pm or 2:30pm

£100.20 for 5 lessons

Best regards,

**Megan Brier**

Area Swim Manager - Derbyshire Dales, Stafford & Stone

[megan.brier@freedom-leisure.co.uk](mailto:megan.brier@freedom-leisure.co.uk) | [www.freedom-leisure.co.uk](http://www.freedom-leisure.co.uk)



# HAPPY HALLOWEEN

KIDS PARTY

**FRIDAY 31ST OCTOBER**

**1PM - 3PM**

It's Halloween Time  
We're Having a Bash  
Wear Your Best Costume  
To Our Fun Monster Mash

-  Food: A collection of Spooktacular kids foods for you to enjoy.
-  Entertainment: Dance to your favourite tunes and bring the party vibes.
-  Frightful Decorations: Hauntingly good decor for a spooky celebration.
-  Photobooth: Enjoy capturing memories with our creepy props.



**£5**

PER TICKET

ADULTS  
FREE

Dunston Business village  
Penkridge  
Stafford rd  
ST18 9FJ

**PRIZE FOR BEST  
DRESSED!**


01785 450555


# October Half Term

**The Wolseley Centre**  
Wolseley Bridge, Stafford,  
ST17 0WT



**Staffordshire**  
Wildlife Trust

 @swtactivities

 @StaffsWildlife

 @staffswt

## Wildlings- Discover, explore, and play outdoors!

**Halloween Wildlings** Monday 27 October, 10.30am – 12pm

**Afternoon Wildlings** Tuesday 28 October, 1.30pm – 3pm

£6.50 per child. £3.50 per additional siblings. Suitable for ages 6 months – 5 years.



## Wildfamilies- Outdoor fun for the family

**Autumn Explorers**

Monday 27 October, 11am – 12.30pm

**Wild Survival \***

Tuesday 28 October, 10am – 12pm

**Dark Skies \***

Tuesday 28 October, 6pm – 7.30pm

**Lantern Workshop**

Friday 31 October, 10am – 12pm



£7.50 per child and £4.50 for additional siblings. Suitable for all ages.

\*This is an Aiming High integrated session - visit the Staffordshire Connects website for more information and to book a free SEND space.

## Wildfamilies Spooktacular- crafts, activities, and outdoor fun!

Wednesday 29 October, 1 – 4pm

£10 per child and £7 adult. Suitable for all ages.

## Wildlife Watch Group- Environmental Action Club

**20 year celebration**

Saturday 1 November, 10am – 12pm



£1 per child. Activities aimed at a broad range of ages, most appropriate for 5-13.

\*This is an Aiming High integrated session - visit the Staffordshire Connects website for more information and to book a free SEND space.



## Tree of Life Wreath Workshop

Friday 31 October, 1.30pm – 4pm

Weave a natural wreath and decorate it with a macramé tree of life. £10, for ages 10+.

**Booking essential:** [www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/events](http://www.staffs-wildlife.org.uk/events)

For more details, contact [getwild@staffs-wildlife.org.uk](mailto:getwild@staffs-wildlife.org.uk)



It's good  
to talk!

Digital Tools

Things To Do  
Activities  
Where To Go

Education

A+E Services

CALL  
999

Emergency  
Services

NEED MORE  
HELP?

Suicide  
Prevention

24/7  
Crisis  
Centre

North  
South  
'Single point of access' to:  
Emotional  
Health and  
Wellbeing  
Services

# Mental health support for children and young people

A guide for supporting children and young people living in Staffordshire.

Scan or click the link here,  
for more information  
on support. ▶



28TH - 30TH  
OCTOBER

# FRENCH AND SPANISH HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUB



ALL THE FUN of your usual holiday clubs but with the added bonus of learning a new language in an exciting way with all your new friends!



## TYPICAL DAY:

- 09:00 -10.00 - Active language
- 10.00 -10.30 - Craft/Food Task
- 10.30 -11.00 - Snack and play
- 11.00 -12.15 - Team Challenge
- 12.15 - 13.15 - Lunch Break
- 13.15 - 14.15 -Forest School
- 14.15 - 14.30 -Free Play
- 14.30 - 15.00 -Active Learning

ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY ACADEMY  
RESERVOIR ROAD  
HEDNESFORD  
WS12 1BE



BOOK NOW at  
[www.lingotot.com/centre/south-staffordshire](http://www.lingotot.com/centre/south-staffordshire)

Please contact Amy if you have any questions or queries at [southstaffordshire@lingotot.com](mailto:southstaffordshire@lingotot.com)

## WHY ARE WE DIFFERENT?

- Fully SEND inclusive
- Activities to suit everyone
- Ran by qualified teachers with a zest for fun




Staffordshire wildlife Trust provide free outdoor sessions to families registered with Aiming High all over the country.

# Aiming High Activities Oct & Nov

with Staffordshire  
Wildlife Trust



Staffordshire  
Wildlife Trust

 @swtactivities

 @StaffsWildlife

 @staffswt

Aiming  
High



## At The Wolseley Centre

Wildlife Watch- Autumn Seed Hunt  
Wildfamilies Halloween Wildplay  
Wildfamilies Wild Survival  
Dark Skies  
Snap, crackle & campfire Wildfamilies  
Wildlife Watch  
Weekend Wildplay

Saturday 4 October, 10am - 12pm  
Monday 27 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm  
Tuesday 28 October, 10am - 12pm  
Tuesday 28 October, 6pm - 7.30pm  
Wednesday 29 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm  
Saturday 1 November, 10am - 12pm  
Saturday 15 November, 11am-1pm

## At Ladderedge Country Park, Leek



Autumn Adventures Wildfamilies  
Weekend Wildplay

Tuesday 28 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm  
Sunday 9 November, 10.30am - 12.30pm

## At Biddulph Grange Country Park, Biddulph

Halloween Wildfamilies

Tuesday 28 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm

## At Fountains School, Burton-upon-Trent

Wildfamilies

Wednesday 29 October, 11am - 1pm

## At Dosthill Park, Tamworth

Halloween Wildfamilies

Thursday 30 October, 10.30am - 12.30pm

 Booking essential via: [eequ.org](http://eequ.org)

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## DEALING WITH TRAUMATIC & CHALLENGING EVENTS

Children and young people may face a wide range of traumatic or challenging events – from bereavement and illness to bullying, family breakdowns, or witnessing violence. These experiences can affect their mental health, behaviour, relationships, and academic progress. With the right support from trusted adults, children can begin to feel safe, rebuild resilience, and develop healthy coping strategies. This guide offers practical and empathetic ways to provide support and promote positive outcomes.

### 1 A PREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENT

Children who have experienced trauma often feel unsafe or uncertain. Creating routines, setting clear expectations, and maintaining consistency can help restore a sense of security. This structure offers reassurance and helps children feel more in control of their surroundings.

### 2 USE LANGUAGE THAT MATCHES THEIR AGE

Speak clearly and sensitively, choosing words that are appropriate for the child's age. Avoid overwhelming them with too much information at once. Offer gentle, honest explanations and focus on reassurance, especially when talking about difficult or sensitive subjects.

### 3 TRAUMA AND THE BODY

Mention briefly that trauma can show up in physical ways, such as changes in sleep, appetite, concentration, or as physical aches and pains. Consider this before labelling behaviour as 'difficult' or 'lazy'. Some children may become withdrawn, while others may be more outwardly challenging. Highlight that there's no 'one way' children respond.

### 4 AVOID RETELLING OR RELIVING TRAUMA

Children sometimes get asked to explain or repeat their experience multiple times. Striking a balance of when to listen and when to gently redirect can help to avoid unnecessary re-traumatisation. Acknowledge, but don't probe for detail unless safeguarding procedures require it.

### 5 AVOID DISMISSING OR MINIMISING FEELINGS

Seemingly well-meaning comments like "It's not that bad" or "You're okay" may shut down children's emotional expression and are often not helpful. Instead, acknowledge what they're feeling, even if it seems small. Validating a child's emotions helps them feel seen and encourages open communication in future.

### 6 UNDERSTAND HOW THEY'RE FEELING

Many children don't have the words to express their emotions, especially during distress. Supporting them to name what they're feeling – such as angry, scared or sad – builds emotional literacy. Tools like emotion charts, drawing, or storytelling can help externalise feelings in a safe, manageable way.

### 7 BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN RESPONSES

Children pick up on adult emotions and reactions, often mirroring them. Staying calm, even in challenging situations, helps children feel more secure. Practising your own self-regulation is an important way to model healthy stress management and encourages children to do the same.

### 8 SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

While many children benefit from everyday emotional support, some will need more specialised help. If symptoms persist, worsen, or disrupt their daily life, consult with school safeguarding leads, a GP, or a mental health professional. Early intervention can prevent long-term difficulties and support healthy recovery.

### 9 MAINTAIN CONNECTION

Isolation can worsen the impact of trauma. Encourage involvement in group activities, praise their efforts, and ensure they feel like a valued part of the school or family community. Meaningful connection with trusted adults and peers builds resilience and a sense of belonging.

### 10 BE PATIENT – HEALING TAKES TIME

There's no quick fix for emotional recovery. Children may have good days and setbacks, and progress may not always be visible or linear. Your ongoing support, patience, and presence can help them move forward at their own pace, knowing they are not alone.

### Meet Our Expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school by integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture, and systems. She has been a member of the advisory group for the Department for Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



The National College