Friday Post

Friday 28th November 2025

Our School Value: Trust

Key Verse: *You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.* **Isaiah 26.3**

Dear families,

We hope that everyone has enjoyed the final week of November; I can't quite believe that we are nearing the final month of the year and exciting Christmas festivities ahead.

We are busy in school preparing for our Christmas events and wanted to thank our wonderful staff and PTA for all of their time and care in supporting us to make Christmas 2025 magical for everyone at St. Leonard's. Please do refer to the letters shared this week and dates on the Friday Post as there are a wealth of memorable events happening each week. This starts on Monday with our non-uniform day in exchange for chocolate donations. Remember to add oranges to your shopping lists as we will be making our Christingles next week. We can't wait to sing for families next Friday at our 'Tree' lighting ceremony followed by the tombola and PTA stalls/games.

I had the pleasure of meeting Alison Lloyd from the Mental Health Support Team. She will be joining us next week and after half term to explore our emotions as well as strategies to support self-regulation and mindfulness. We are really looking forward to the workshops. Alison will also be joining some of our Parents' Evenings so that you can speak to her about any concerns you may have for your child linked to themes such as sleep, anxiety, emotions, worry.

Echoing around the school this week have been the words, "Run, Run as fast as you can…You can't catch me I'm the Gingerbread Man!' It has been lovely to see Hedgehog Class enjoying all of the inspiring learning linked to this theme. The children's gingerbread biscuits smelt delicious too. The concentration and hard work in Owls and Foxes classes has been truly amazing this week! We want to thank the children for their determination whilst completing our termly assessments. We are so proud of how the children are remembering and applying their learning.

With Christmas on the horizon, please let class teachers know if your child/children are finding things overwhelming so that we can support. The excitement of Christmas and slight changes in routine at school/home can sometimes be a little too much – we are here to help if this is the case.

Advent starts this Sunday 30th November; we will be lighting our own advent wreath in worship each week and exploring the theme together. I'm sure that the warmth and light of our advent candle will bring us calmness and joy during the busy week's ahead.

Wishing everyone a wonderful weekend,

Mrs Claire Keay and the whole team at St. Leonard's

Headteacher: Mrs C Keay
St Leonard's C.E First School & Nursery
School Lane, Dunston, ST18 9AG
Tel: 01785 712488
Email: office@st-leonards-Dunston.staffs.sch.uk

Staffordshire University Academies Trust

Christmas Tree Decoration Competition

Every year, our school Christmas Tree is beautifully decorated with **homemade, eco-friendly decorations** created by the children. It's always a highlight of the festive season!
This year, **every child will automatically be entered into the competition** — and it's completely **free to take part**.
Please make sure your child's decoration is handed into school **by Wednesday 3rd December**.
We can't wait to see the wonderful creations and enjoy another magical display.
Good luck to all our children!

Did you know that the PTFA have already supported school helping to reduce costs for all children at the recent trip to Wolseley Wildlife Centre and by subsiding the cost of the Pantomime next month. Without the support of the PTFA we would not be able to do these 'little extras'
In December they are trying to top up their funds so they can support school more but they need a little help!

Nativity Refreshments
Tuesday 16th December 9.30am & 1pm

We are looking for some willing volunteers to help serve refreshments before the Christmas Nativity on Tuesday 16th December. If you are able to help please contact the office. Thank you.

PTFA Film Night
Friday 12th December 2025

Volunteers are needed to lend a hand at the Children's film night. If you can help supervise the children and hand out snacks then please let Stacey or Laura know. Alternatively you can email the PTFA on: ptfa@st-leonards-Dunston.staffs.sch.uk.

Christingles – orange required

Please can ALL children bring an orange to school next week. On Friday 5th we will be gathering in our House Teams to make our Christingle ahead of our 'Christmas Light Switch-On'

Christmas Post

The St Leonard's Christmas post box will be in the entrance hall from 5th December. Please make sure the recipients name & class is on the envelope! Last post: Friday 19th December at 9am.

Stars of the week

Care, Love and Kindness Award

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

OWLS

Year 2 were bringing some festive spirit to Forest School this week. Natural materials were gathered to make a fantastic Rudolph and Christmas songs were sung around the camp fire.

FOREST SCHOOL

Headteacher Award

Christmas Jumper swop-shop

If you have any Christmas Jumpers that your child may have grown out of, please consider donating to other parents – simply put them on the uniform rail in the entrance hall for others to make use of.

CURRENT NURSERY PARENTS - Reception 2026

If your child's fifth birthday is between 1 September 2026 and 31st August 2027 then you will need to apply online for a place in our Reception class, no later than 15th January 2026. Applications should be made directly through 'Staffordshire's On-line Application System' at: Citizen Portal - Sign in

Please note: children who currently attend our school nursery will still need to apply for a reception place.

If you know of anyone who is looking for a reception place, then please ask them to give the office a call and book and appointment to look around our school with Mrs Keay.

Christ, come into our world;
Light up our lives with your warmth;
Let us rejoice always with the joy of your birth and celebrate the hope that each Advent brings.
Amen

The Very Grumpy Sheep Nativity

Hedgehogs and Owls – don't forget to send your costumes into school NAMED please.
If you are struggling to get a costume please let Miss Laing or the school office know.
Thank you

Friday 19th December 2025

School closes at 1.30pm on Friday 19th December. All children must be collected - there is no Ark available.

Big Question

When the weather turns cold & icy – how might nature / wildlife adapt?

Georgie *"Animals like to be warm, they find a place to be warm"*
Freya *"If animals don't have fur they'll be cold, they might go in a nest"*
Alfie *"I think animals with fur are warm, those who don't have fur hibernate like hedgehogs"*
Ralph *"If animals have fur they are fine, if they don't have enough fur they go underground to keep warm"*
George B *"Some don't have enough fur some are alright, like Robins"*

This week we learnt

'Away in a Manger'

Away in a manger - BBC Teach

Next week we are learning:

'It was on a Starry Night'

It was on a Starry Night

Click the link above to find the lyrics & music

Weekly House Point Tally

Oak	141
Holly	93
Sycamore	128

Our Safeguarding Team

Mrs Keay 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.

Achievements from outside school

Football

Horse Riding

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

Volunteers needed - please speak to Stacey, Laura or the school office. Thank you!!

St Leonard's C.E First School
1862
Dunston

Christmas

LIGHT SWITCH ON

EVERYONE WELCOME

HOT DRINKS, STALLS, GAMES
AND
MUSIC FROM THE SCHOOL CHOIR.

5TH DECEMBER
2:45PM

Attendance figures

VIP Education

Holiday forms must be handed into the office – these are available in the entrance hall.

Unless in exceptional circumstances, holidays will be counted as unauthorised absence.

24th – 28th November 2025

Hedgehogs	86%
Owls	94%
Foxes	95%
Whole School	92%

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

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 learning time and it can contribute to them becoming anxious when they enter the classroom late.

PE STARS OF THE WEEK

Wednesday 17th December 2025

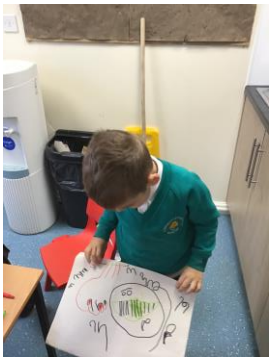
Don't forget to book your child's special Christmas meal via your SchoolGrid account.

Don't forget to book your school meals in advance via your school grid account before 8am.

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

HEDGEHOGS

Hedgehogs have had a great week exploring the Gingerbread Man



Important Dates and INFORMATION

Monday 1st December	Chocolate donation in ex-change for wearing non-uniform
WC Monday 1st December	Bring an orange to school to make a Christingle
Wednesday 3rd December	Hand in your child's decoration for the Christmas tree
Wednesday 3rd December	Year 3 – Forest School
Friday 5th December @ 2.45pm	Christmas Tree light switch on, Christingle & Carols @ 2:45pm
Wednesday 10th December	Year 4 – Forest School
Thursday 11th December	Rec-to Yr4 Flu immunisations – more info to follow
Friday 12th December	Save the Children wear your Christmas Jumpers
Friday 12th December	PTFA Film Night – more info to follow
Tuesday 16th December	Whole school Nativity Play – 9.30am & 2pm
Wednesday 17th December	Christmas Dinner Day – wear your Christmas Jumpers
Friday 27th February @ 2.50pm	Parents 'Read with Me' in classrooms @ 2.50pm
Friday 1st May @ 2.50pm	Parents 'Read with Me' in classrooms @ 2.50pm
Thursday 18th June	Sports Day
Thursday 25th June	Reserve Sports Day

FOREST SCHOOL

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.

facebook

Please search for

St Leonards First School & Nursery

www://

Our School website

Home - St Leonards COFE First School

Copies of letters sent home this week

The Very Grumpy Sheep - Whole School Production
Tuesday 16th December at 9.30am & 2pm

Dear Families

This year the whole school performance will be held on Tuesday 16th December at 9.30am and 2pm. Both performances will be in the village hall. The children have been rehearsing very hard already and are excited for you to see their nativity.

Due to capacity we are asking you to book your seats in advance. There will be two seats per family across both performances eg you could have 1 seat at each show or 2 seats at one of the shows. There is a suggested donation of £2.50 a seat. This helps to cover the cost of the village hall. Children under the age of 3 will not require a seat as they will be expected to sit on a parents' knee. If there are any extra seats we will offer these out, but we can not guarantee that there will be any.

Please note: there are no actual tickets, admission to performances will be via you returning the slip below and we will have a register. This is to ensure we maintain fair access and fire safety requirements.

So, we can monitor numbers please complete the slip below and return by Wednesday 10th December and payment will be added on to ParentPay.

Kind regards
Mrs C Keay
Headteacher

.....

The Very Grumpy Sheep – Whole school production

Child's Name(s): ..... Class(es): .....

I would like seats for (maximum of 2 across both performances)
Tuesday 16th December at 9.30am Number of seats: .....
Tuesday 16th December at 2pm Number of seats: .....

Please let us know if you would like any extra seats and at which performance:

.....
.....

Signed (parent/carer) ..... Date: .....

Monday 1st December – Non uniform

Children can wear Non-uniform/Christmas jumpers in exchange for donations for a Chocolate Tombola.

W/C 1/12/2025 - Orange required

Please can ALL children bring an orange to school next week to make our Christingle ahead of our 'Christmas Light Switch-On' on Friday 5th December.

W/C 1/12/2025 – Christmas tree decoration

Every year, our school Christmas Tree is beautifully decorated with **homemade, eco-friendly decorations** created by the children. It's always a highlight of the festive season!

This year, **every child will automatically be entered into the competition** — and it's completely **free to take part**.

Please make sure your child's decoration is handed into school **by Wednesday 3rd December**.

We can't wait to see the wonderful creations and enjoy another magical display.
Good luck to all our children!

Friday 5th December – 2.40pm

We are all very much looking forward to our annual Christmas Light Switch-On! This is taking place on Friday 5th December.

To support safeguarding and safety with candles, we have created a plan for the event so that we know where all the children are during the performances.

- There will be a stage area where the children will stand and perform.
- Our main gates open at 2.40pm and the performance will start promptly at 2.45pm.
- We ask that all adults stand in the spectator area which will be clearly marked with cones.
- After the songs and Christingle and tree lighting, the children will go back to class to get their coats and bags.
- We ask that you stay in the spectator area whilst we move back to class.
- When the children are back in class, you are welcome to view the PTA stalls and then wait by classrooms for normal end of the day collection procedures.
- Due to safeguarding, gates will remain closed until the children are dismissed from class.

The PTA will be serving some refreshments and a chocolate tombola so please do remember to bring some loose change. We can't wait to see everyone next week at the event.

There is no Choir Club (you have not been charged) however Ark care is available if required until 5pm, please book with the office. After the switch-on, our PTA have organised a range of stalls for you to enjoy. The school car-park can be used if there are spaces to help ease congestion in the village, and there are lots of spaces in front of the church on the main road. We can't wait to gather together as a community.

PTFA Film Night – Friday 12th December 2025
Muppets Christmas Carol – Rated U

Children are invited to a film night on Friday 12th December from 3:10pm. The cost will be £5 per child and will include popcorn and a drink. This is a fundraising event to raise funds for the children's Christmas present this year. The event will be run by PTFA and school staff, however, if you are available to help on the evening please let us know.

If your child is in Nursery and attends all day on a Friday, then they are welcome to join in.

Choir Club **will** be running for those that have already paid for it, if your child would prefer to watch the film then please just pay £1.20.

There will be no Ark available on this evening but care will be given until the usual 5pm within the £5 cost.

Pick up will be promptly at 5pm.

Please enclose your payment of £5, exact change required, in an envelope with your child's name on the outside marked 'FILM NIGHT' OR you can pay directly to the PTFA bank account using the following link: https://st-leonards-ptfa.sumupstore.com/.

Please return by Monday 8th December 2025.

Kind regards,
Mrs C Keay

PTFA Film night – Friday 12th December 2025

My child: ..... Class:.....

I am available to help supervise: YES / NO

The person responsible for collecting my child at 5pm is:

.....

Signed: .....

St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival
Saturday 6th December at 3pm

Dear Parents

We have been invited to perform at St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival on Saturday 6th December at 3pm.

We will be performing songs from our Christmas Nativity as well as Christmas themed poems, prayers and dance.

Important Information

- The event is open to children in Years 2,3 and 4.
- Children will need to be available from 2.30pm-3.30pm on Saturday 6th December.
- Children will need taking to and collecting from St Mary's Church, Stafford.
- Families are welcome to stay and watch the performance.

If your child would like to take part and you can commit to the date/timings above, please complete the form below and return to school by **Friday 28th November**. Once signed up, it is important that full commitment to the event is given so that we can impress the audience with our performance and ensure we have enough children to perform successfully.

We will share further details once we know that we have enough children to take part.

Warmest thanks,

Mrs C Keay
Headteacher

✂ ……

St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival - Saturday 6th December, 3pm

Name of child …… Year Group ……..……..

- My child/children can take part in the performance on Saturday 6th December.
- I understand that by returning this form, my child is committed to taking part to ensure numbers are in place for the performance.

Signed (parent/carer) ……Date: ……

Reply Slip - Please return by **Friday 28th November at the latest**

Driver Server

NEEDED FOR ST LEONARDS & ALL SAINTS

An opportunity has arisen for a friendly, enthusiastic individual to join our rapidly growing and forward thinking company in St. Leonards, Dunston & All Saints Bednall schools.
Your role will be assisting the cook in the smooth delivery of Dolce services to the school, transporting meals and serving the pupils.
Own transport is essential.

If you're looking for a role which fits around your family life and enjoy working with children please email your CV to Debbie.Knowles**@dolce.co.uk**

Driver / Server
£12.41per hour (plus mileage allowance)
Term time only - 10 hours per week

dolce schools catering

Please note: Miss Tina is not leaving us!

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Christmas Card Competition

Enter by 30 November

FOR 4-11 YEAR OLDS

Individual first place prize

£20 voucher

£10 voucher for second and third place.

£100 voucher for school of the winning entry

See terms and conditions for details

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Terms and conditions

- The Schools Research Network is running a Christmas Card competition from 1 November 2025 to 30 November 2025
- We are happy to accept cards from any faith or religion celebrating a holiday during the winter period
- The winner will be announced by 5 December 2025
- Winning entries will be awarded two prizes. One £20 voucher awarded to the individual winner, one £10 voucher awarded to second and third place winners and one £100 voucher awarded to the school that the winning entry attends
- The winning design will be used as the official 2026 Christmas Card for the Schools Research Network and will be sent to our partners and other schools who are part of the Network
- Entries must be submitted to email address rwh-tr.schools.research-network@nhs.net
- Entries must be submitted by an adult (e.g. parent/guardian or teacher) on behalf of a child
- Cards can be submitted as an image of a digitally created card or as a photo taken of a physical card
- When submitting an entry please include the name of the child and the school that they attend along with the school's postcode. Submission of entries implies consent to distribution of the image physically and digitally
- Please retain a copy of the submitted entry in case we need a higher resolution image for the purposes of creating and distributing the cards

Department for Education

Staffordshire County Council

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD

HAF fun this winter

Holiday Activities and Food funded for children and young people aged 5-16 who get free school meals*. Paid places also available.

SCAN ME!

staffordshire.gov.uk/holidayactivities