Nurture the Spirit – Grow the Mind – Love your Neighbour

# January Newsletter

Dear Families of Catsfield CE Primary School,

Welcome back to a new term and I hope you all enjoyed the break and the festive celebrations. Happy New Year to you all and I look forward to all that 2026 has to offer and the continuing growth and development of the school.

It has been lovely to see the children come back looking happy and rested after the break and ready for another term's learning. All classes have lots of exciting learning opportunities planned with Lions and Tigers exploring polar regions, Panthers learning about the Anglo-Saxons and Leopards exploring the continent of North America. Please see the 'Classes' area of the school website to find out more about what the children will be learning after next Friday.

The children had a lovely end to 2025 in school. There was the Christmas lunch, presentations and helping to put together our end of term service. The Early Years and Key Stage 1 Nativity was lovely to watch (and I hope you enjoyed it too) and Key Stage 2 led the Church Service brilliantly. We also held our second School Values Day which had a focus on community.

With this month's newsletter, I have given it a safeguarding theme as post-Christmas is often a good time to revisit this topic, especially on the back of any possible new technology in the home. I am a huge advocate for the benefits modern technology can bring and with the speed of development only ever increasing, we need to ensure we are staying on top of using it correctly.

If you have any questions on this, please do get in touch.

As we move through 2026, I look forward to continuing to work with you as working together, we truly can achieve the best for every child.

With very best wishes,

John Barnes
Headteacher

## School Vision and Values Update

The focus for this term is **Perseverance.** Developing perseverance and resilience in children is something we have seen a real need to develop and this term provides a wonderful vehicle to do so. The value has been introduced to the children as:

'Keeping on going when you want to give up'
'Keeping on doing something despite the difficulties'
'Learning from our failures'

Towards the end of term, we will hold a Values Day to really explore this in greater depth.

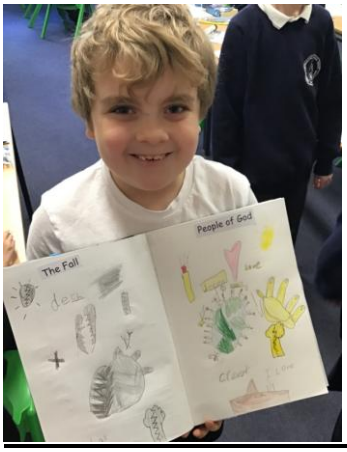
Our final tally for December and the winner of the Autumn Terms Values Cup:

Air: 1,082 Water: 1,523 Earth: 829 Fire: 824

## Attendance

With us being well into 'cold and flu' season, we are mindful to be doing what we can to help minimise spread of viruses. Many of the lessons learned through COVID-19 around hand hygiene and ventilation have very much been in effect in the school. Should you have worries around illness, please visit https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/ to help you with any decision making.

## Photos from the End of Term



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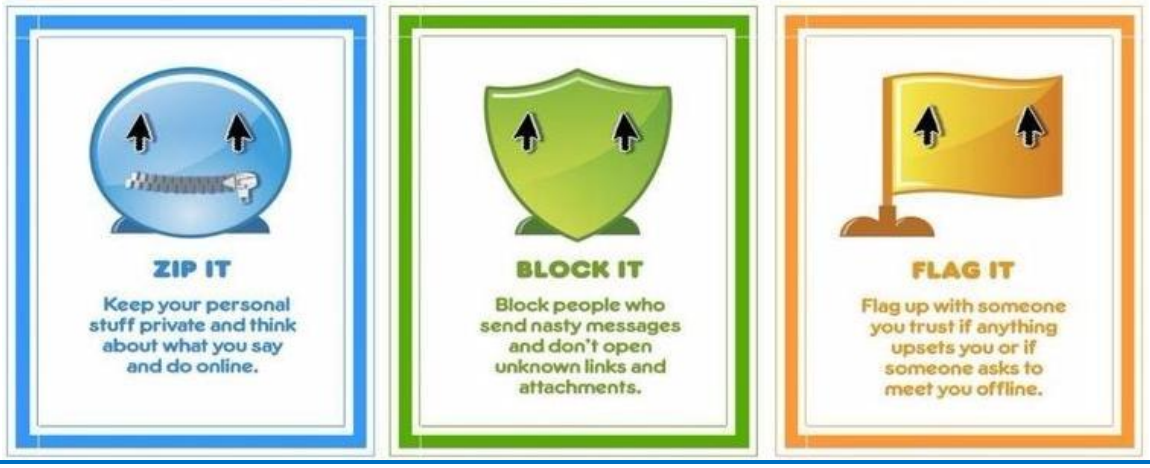
**Online Safety**

Below is an approach we are teaching the children about in school as an easy way to remember key steps to keeping yourself safe online: Zip it. Block it. Flag it.

In addition, there are two posters with tips on how to use any new technology safely.



At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one topic of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# The 12 Online Safety Tips of Christmas

# FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

Christmas is almost upon us once again, and soon some lucky children will be excitedly tearing the wrapping off a new mobile phone, tablet or games console. For some of them, it will be the first time they've owned a device that connects them to the online world. Even for older children, a new device means new corners of the digital landscape to explore – and, unfortunately, new risks to be aware of.

We've put together our top tips so that you can guide your young ones in enjoying their new digital gifts safely and responsibly throughout the year to come.
Merry Christmas!

## 1. ALWAYS SET A PASSWORD

If your child's new device has a password protection feature, use it! It'll help to keep their private information safe and will deny others access to their device without permission. Your children's passwords should be something memorable to them – but something which other people can't guess (it's also a good idea for parents to write it down in case it gets forgotten!).

## 2. SET UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS'

This really is an essential when your child gets a new device, so they're protected from the outset. Most phones, tablets and consoles allow you to customise their settings to determine which games your child can play, how they can communicate (and who with), what content they can access and so on. It will give you peace of mind that they can't inadvertently do something they shouldn't.

## 3. PAY ATTENTION TO AGE RATINGS

18+

One of the first things children want to do with any new device is play games and explore apps. Before they download anything or install a new console game, check its age rating. Many popular games and apps have content that's not suitable for younger ages. The safest long-term solution is to adjust the device's settings so they can only download and use games and apps appropriate for their age.

## 4. KEEP NUMBERS AND DEVICES PRIVATE

Make sure your child understands that they should never share their phone number with someone they don't know or accept a friend request from them. They should also appreciate that it's a good idea to mainly keep their device out of sight, never lend it to a stranger, and never put it down somewhere that other people could steal it or take it to use without asking.

## 5. HAVE 'THE MONEY CONVERSATION'

Before your children start using their new device in earnest, talk to them about in-app purchases and other ways that money might be spent through their device. Once they understand, you might want to agree on a spending limit and reassure them that they can come to you if they're uncertain, or if they have made a purchase by accident.

## 6. DISCOURAGE DEVICE DEPENDENCY

Of course, children who've just got a new device will naturally want to spend as much time on it as possible. But whether they're zapping bad guys, watching videos or connecting with friends, it's easy for them to get attached very quickly. Gently remind them that having family time, going outdoors and getting some exercise are still fun, too. And the device will be there when they get back.

## 7. EXPLAIN SECURE WIFI NETWORKS

Your home WiFi is protected by a password that only your family knows, whereas public networks (like those found in coffee shops, for example) can be accessed by anyone. It's important that your child grasps this difference because, if they're using a portable device on an unsecured network, then a hacker could access their personal information without them even knowing.

## 8. LIMIT SCREEN TIME

Using a device for too long, especially just before bed, can interfere with a child's sleep quality and reduce their concentration and overall enthusiasm. It might be helpful to agree on certain times of day when they don't use their device. Most devices' settings let you specify a screen-time limit, helping your child to stay fresh and focused in order to perform well at school.

## 9. ONLY PAIR WITH KNOWN BLUETOOTH DEVICES

Your child may want to connect to another device via Bluetooth, so they can listen to music wirelessly or share pictures and videos with nearby friends. But if they use Bluetooth to link with a device that they don't know, they're at risk of a stranger being able to see their personal information or having someone transmit a virus onto their device.

## 10. TURN LOCATION SETTINGS OFF

It's safest to disable the device's location services (if it's a portable device) so your child doesn't inadvertently make other people aware of where they are. You can usually do this via the device's privacy control settings. Turning location settings off not only means your child's whereabouts can't be tracked by others, it also significantly extends battery life.

## 11. STAY AWARE OF THE SURROUNDINGS

It's quite common to see adults not looking where they're going while engrossed in their phone. Children are even more easily distracted. In some cases, children have been hit by cars or cyclists because they were staring at their device and lost track of where they were. Remind your child that screens and walking don't mix. If they need to use their device, they should stop in a safe place first.

## 12. BE THERE IF THEY NEED TO TALK

Even when you've made a device as secure as you can, there's still a possibility of your child seeing something that bothers them, or someone they don't know attempting to contact them. If this happens, listen to their concerns, empathise and reassure them. Once they've explained what happened, you can decide if you should take further action like blocking or reporting another user.

National Online Safety®
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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 16.12.2020

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# 12 Smartphone Online Safety Tips

## FOR CHILDREN WITH NEW DEVICES

The Christmas season has finally arrived and soon many of you will be opening your presents in the hope that Santa has listened to your request for the latest mobile phone or smart device. Owning a mobile phone can be fun, but it's important to use it safely and responsibly. By following our safety tips below, you can make sure that you set up your phone securely, keep your personal information private and enjoy using your phone in the healthiest way possible.

### 1 ALWAYS SECURE YOUR PHONE WITH A PASSWORD

This will help to keep your private information safe and won't allow others to access your phone without your permission. Make sure your password is memorable and personal to you but something which other people can't guess, and always share it with your parents just in case you forget it.

### 2 DISABLE LOCATION SETTINGS

This can usually be done from the device's privacy control settings. Disabling location settings means that your phone can't be tracked by others and strangers can't tell where you are when you're using it. It also helps to save battery.

### 3 ALWAYS USE A SECURE WIFI NETWORK

When you use your WIFI at home usually it is a secure network that only you and your family know the password to. Public networks, like those in coffee shops, can be accessed by anyone which means that people could potentially hack into your device and access your personal information without you realising.

### 4 ONLY PAIR WITH BLUETOOTH DEVICES YOU KNOW

A Bluetooth connection with another device means that you can send and receive data wirelessly. For example, you could listen to music wirelessly or receive pictures and videos from your friends. However, pairing your phone with a device you don't know means that you could be sharing personal information with a stranger or could leave your device open to receiving viruses.

### 5 ONLY USE APPS WHICH YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO USE

Before downloading any new apps, always check the age-rating of the app. If you need help, ask your parent or carer to make sure that the app is safe for you to use and never download anything which you are too young for as it may contain things that aren't safe for you to see.

### 6 BEWARE OF BECOMING ADDICTED TO YOUR PHONE

Your phone can be fun to use and it's easy to become too attached, whether it's keeping in touch with friends, discovering new features or downloading the latest apps. Remember its always good to talk in person, go out and have fun and get regular exercise. This will keep you fit and healthy and make you appreciate there's more to life than just your mobile phone.

### 7 LIMIT YOUR SCREEN TIME

Using your phone for too long, particularly in the evenings, can make you feel tired at school, affect your concentration and make you lose interest in other things in life. Only use your phone at certain times of the day and don't use it close to bedtime. You can set a 'screen time limit' via the settings on your phone. This will help you stay fit and healthy and means that you will still be able to focus and perform well at school.

### 8 THINK OF OTHERS WHEN TAKING PHOTOS

Don't take embarrassing photos of other people on your phone. If other people get access to the photo and share it with more people, it could make that person really upset and treated as a form of bullying. Always be mindful of the photos you take using your camera and who you share them with.

### 9 MAKE SURE YOUR PARENTS SET UP 'PARENTAL CONTROLS'

This means that you will be able to use your phone safely and securely and won't accidently do things you shouldn't do. The best time to do this is when you get a new phone or device so that you're protected from the very beginning.

### 10 ALWAYS TALK TO YOUR PARENTS IF YOU DON'T FEEL SAFE

Sometimes, even though your phone is really secure, you might see something you don't like, or someone might contact you who you don't know. If this happens, always tell your trusted adult like your parents, carers, other adult family members or a teacher, all of whom will be able to support you and advise you on what you should do next.

### 11 DON'T TEXT AND WALK

This might seem like a strange thing to say but it can be dangerous to stare at your mobile phone whilst walking outside alongside busy roads or bicycle paths. In some cases, children have been knocked over by cars or cyclists because they haven't been aware of their surroundings whilst texting or playing games on their mobile devices.

### 12 DON'T SHARE YOUR NUMBER OR YOUR DEVICE WITH PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW.

Never feel pressured into sharing your phone number with people you don't know and don't lend your phone to strangers or keep it where others could get hold of it. Look after your device and always keep it hidden from sight to avoid it being stolen or broken into.

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**Dates for Term 3**

**January**

15th: Y6 athletics with Mrs Swatton from Claverham
16th: Parents in Partnership meeting
30th: PTA Movie night

**February**

5th: Y3 athletics with Mrs Swatton from Claverham
6th: Perseverance values day
12th: Learning Ladder reward day
13th: Fun Day Friday

w/b 16th: Half Term

**Dates for Term 4**

**February**

23rd and 26th: Tigers Balance Bikeability
26th: Parent consultations
27th: Respect Values Day

**March**

2nd: Tigers Balance Bikeability
5th: World Book Day
10th: Panthers Learning Celebration
12th: Y5/6 Netball
13th: Enhanced Art Day
18th: Tigers and Lions Learning Celebration
19th: Y3/4 Benchball
20th: PTA Spring Disco
25th: Leopards Learning Celebration
26th: Easter hat and egg rolling
27th: Easter end of term service at St. Laurence 13:30 (14:45 end of day)

**Learning Celebration Dates**:
Summer
Tue 30 Jun: 14:30: Tigers
Tue 23rd June 09:00: Panthers
Thu 2nd Jul: 09:00: Lions
Tue 7th Jul: 9:00 Leopards

**Future INSET Days:**
Monday 20th – Wed 22nd July

**Other notable dates:**
KS2 SATs: Week beg. 11th May
Sports day: Friday 5th June 13:30
End of year leavers service: Fri 17th July at St. Laurence 13:30 (14:45 end of day)

**Safeguarding Information**

For your reference, please find some contact details below for people both in and out of school you can contact should you have any safeguarding concerns over any children in our school:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: John Barnes
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Lex Beckett, Cassie Skevington

East Sussex Single Point of Advice: **01323 464222**
NSPCC: 0808 500 8000