

# The Phoenix Flier

The Yarm Preparatory School Newsletter

Issue 795—Friday 13th December 2024

## A message from Mr Sawyer

As I write this final newsletter of the term, I can still hear the lively Year 3 singing from their fantastic production earlier this week, resonating in my mind. I can also clearly picture the joy and pride on their faces as they sang with such conviction and enthusiasm. One of the many privileges of being part of our school is witnessing the growth of each pupil, both in confidence and character, as they progress through their journey here. Year 3 demonstrated this beautifully in their celebration of what has been a wonderful first term in the Prep School.

Reflecting on the term, there have been countless achievements, progress, and standout moments for all of our pupils. Successes have been realised in so many areas—whether in the classroom, on the sports fields, on stage, in musical performances, or through the development of important qualities like responsibility, confidence, and respect for others. Our pupils are truly a credit to the School. It's important to recognise that their accomplishments have been guided and nurtured by a dedicated team of teachers and support staff, to whom I extend my heartfelt thanks for their hard work and commitment this term.

I would also like to take a moment to thank my wife, Sarah, and our children for their unwavering support; their love and care have been my constant source of strength.

Wishing all our families and community members a safe and enjoyable holiday season. Best wishes for the festive period, and I look forward to welcoming you back in 2025. I'm excited for all that the Spring Term will bring!

*Bill Sawyer*

### Head's Challenge:

I lead a team through the silent night. My crown branches wide, though a tree I am not.  
What am I?

### Photo of the Week:

Year 3 helped bring a really busy term to an end with their wonderful nativity this week. Pictures and report inside!



**Tes Schools Awards 2024**

**Winner**

Independent  
Prep School  
of the Year



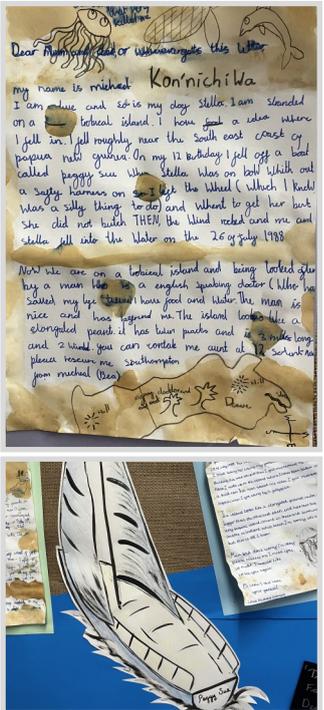
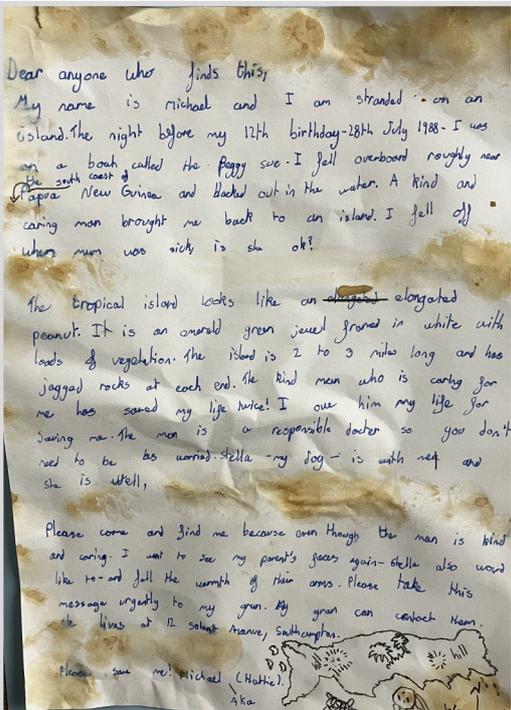
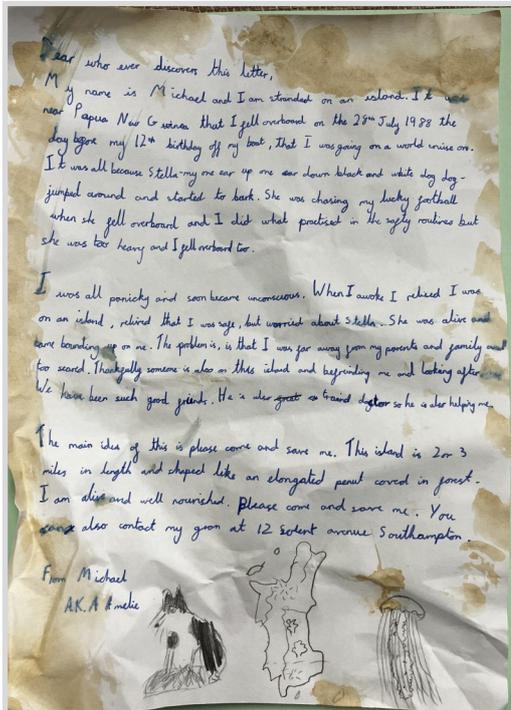
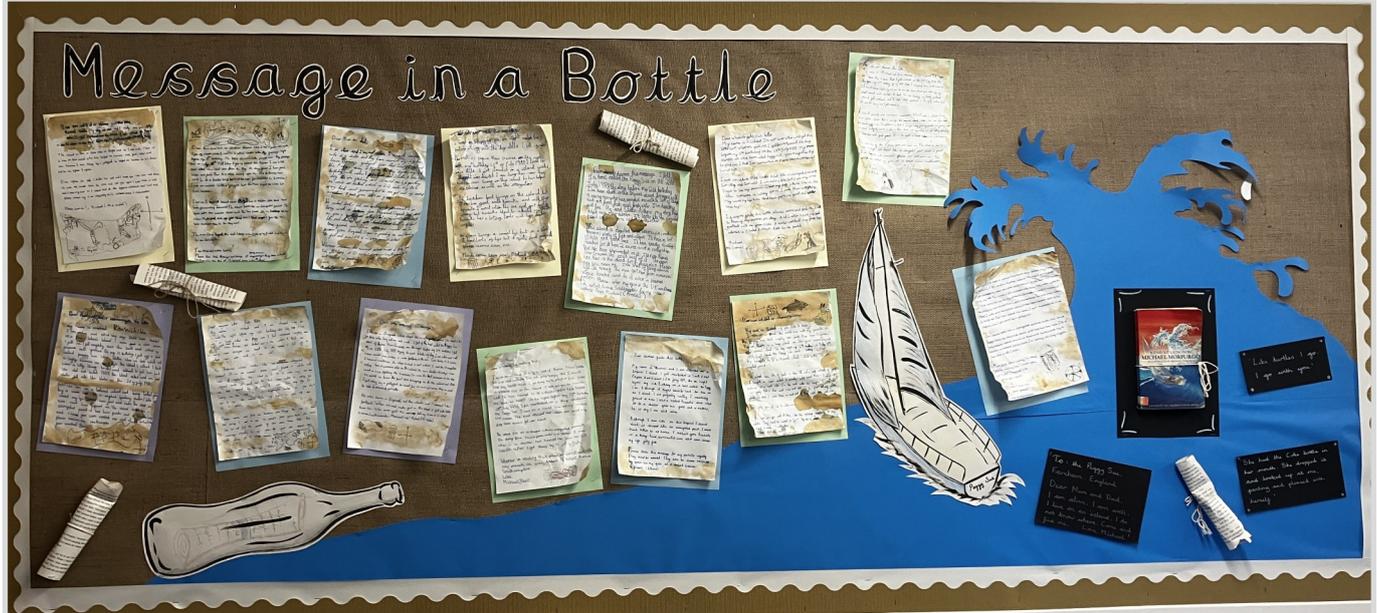
# Year 5's Kensuke's Kingdom Work

This term, Year 5's have been thoroughly enjoying reading and doing English related activities based on their class reader, Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo.

Michael, who is one of the main characters in the book, is castaway on a tropical island. Recently, 5G put themselves into Michael's shoes and wrote a 'Message in a Bottle' in the hope that they would be rescued from the island.

Here is the classroom display of their work.

Mr Grundmann



## Holiday School Dates

**Christmas 2024:** - 16th—20th December 2024

**Easter 2025:** - 7th—11th April 2025

**Summer 2025:** - 14th July—1st August 2025

Please contact Mr Simpson ([holidayschool@yarmschool.org](mailto:holidayschool@yarmschool.org)) should you require any further information regarding our Holiday Schools.

## Year 3 in The Magical Christmas Jigsaw

On Tuesday, the Year 3 children performed 'The Magical Christmas Jigsaw' to three packed audiences. This lovely musical tells the traditional nativity story through the actions of five children and a Toy Seller who also happens to be a very special angel. This was the first time that the Year 3 children have performed in the Hazel Andrews building and it was well worth the wait with superb lighting, wonderful scenery and clarity of sound. Congratulations to all of the Year 3 children who acted well, sang beautifully and thoroughly enjoyed their performances. Special thanks to Mr Evans for his support with the stage, Mrs Donoghue, Miss Dixon and Mrs Hart for their costume and props design and Chris for help with the lights and music. Most importantly, let us all remember the message from the production, 'In the busy jigsaw of our lives, let us never forget the true meaning of Christmas.'



Mrs Jones

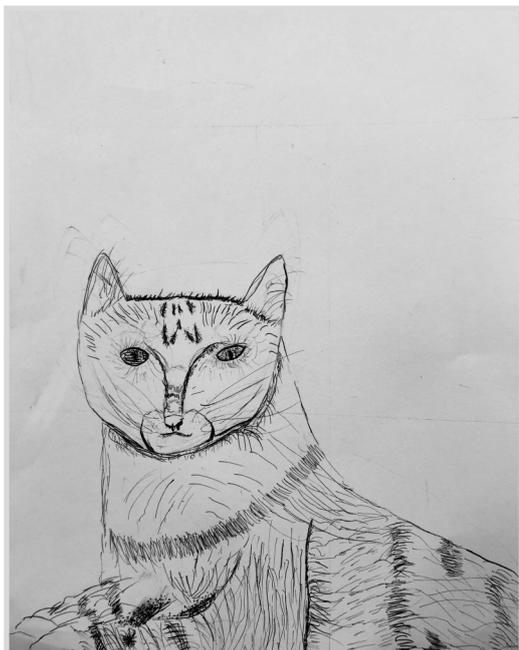
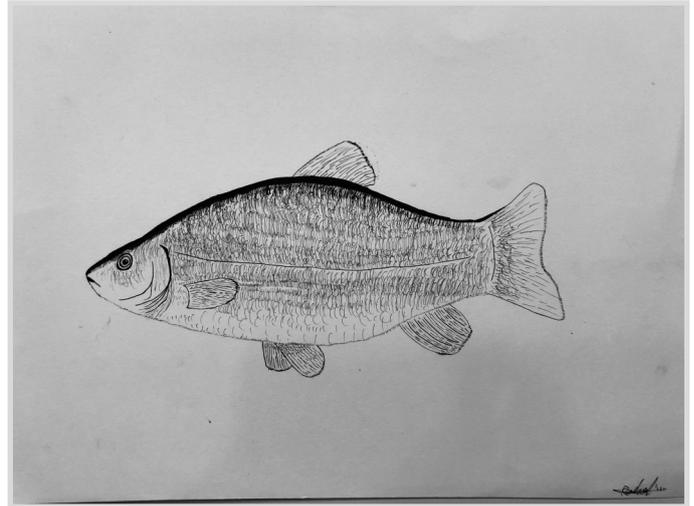
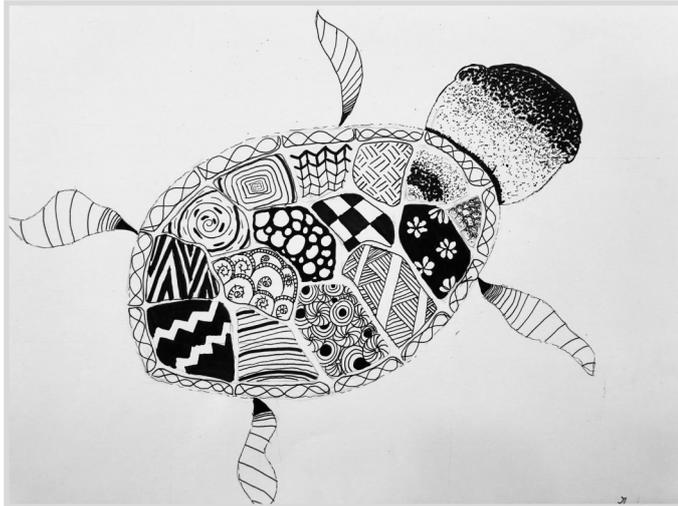




# Drawing from the Heart

During this term, the budding artists involved in our Drawing from the Heart activity have explored a variety of ways to make marks with art pens. Some children approached their detailed work by utilising pattern to emphasise form. Others chose to portray the character of their subject through energetic flurries of the pen. All the work involved detailed observation and has resulted in beautiful pieces of artwork. Well done everyone!

Mrs Donoghue



## PreLoved Uniform

Nursery, Pre Prep, Prep & Senior Uniform

PE and Games

See Listings on **Classlist** or  
Email Us

[YPSSC@Yarmschool.org](mailto:YPSSC@Yarmschool.org)

Donations of good condition, clean uniform and PE & Games items accepted all year. Kindly bag them and label them with 'YPSSC PreLoved Donations' and drop them at either Pre Prep, Prep or Senior School Reception.

## PE & Games News

It has been as always a busy term of hockey for the girls. We have played 6 different schools in our regular fixtures including Red House, Durham, Queen Mary's, Cundall, Pocklington and Barnard Castle!



In addition to this we have met St Peter's, Ashville, RGS Newcastle and Dame Allan's at festivals and tournaments. We have managed to put out 3 teams at U11 level, 2 at U10 and then selected all girls in Year 4 for their festival earlier in the term. The Year 3s enjoyed travelling to both Cundall and Queen Mary's for fabulous hockey workshops beginning their sporting journey for the School. All girls have contributed to the House hockey shield and it was great that we could also include Year 3s in this event.



The emphasis at the Prep School is enjoyment along with making sure the children have equal opportunity to play and this will remain our driving force moving forward. There will always be opportunities for the stronger players to take part in Regional events to see where they stand in the North East, but it is equally important for all children to feel proud when they put on their kit and step up to represent the School.

Sport gives the chance for the pupils to develop and grow, learning how to deal with any disappointment along with success with humility and quiet ambition.

Well done to all of the girls and boys this term for taking on this challenge and making the school proud of their efforts.



*Mrs Redhead-Sweeney*

## School and Club Sports

It is great to see so many of our pupils attending local clubs and we highly recommend joining one to aid learning further.

### Hockey

**Stockton Hockey Club** - Junior training takes place Monday nights on the Yarm Sc senior astro 5.30pm-6.30pm <https://www.stocktonhockeyclub.co.uk/teams/team/11741808>

**Stokesley Girls Hockey** —This takes place on Wednesdays 5.30pm-6.30pm on the Yarm Sc senior astro 5.30pm-6.30pm <https://www.stokesleyhockeyclub.com/>

**Norton Hockey Club**—Junior training starts again on Sunday 24th Sept at Norton astro. 10.30am-12pm. <https://www.nortonhockeyclub.co.uk/>

### Tennis and Squash

**Yarm Squash Club and Yarm Tennis Club**—<https://yarmsquashclub.co.uk/>, <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/yarmtennisclub>

### Netball

[The link here](#) gives you clubs in the North East, contacts, training venues and exact timings for each age group.

**Grangetown** coach Michelle runs a U8/9 training session for Yarm pupils on Thursdays 3.55pm-4.55pm at school, as well as a host of age group teams. For further info email: [grangetownnc@hotmail.com](mailto:grangetownnc@hotmail.com)

**Headlanders Netball Club** in Darlington where Mrs Jolly coaches. Contact [dheadlanders@outlook.com](mailto:dheadlanders@outlook.com) for further details re. Wednesday night training. [https://www.facebook.com/DarlingtonHeadlanders/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/DarlingtonHeadlanders/?locale=en_GB)

### Rugby

**Stockton Rugby Club** who train at Stockton CC - <https://stocktonrugby.co.uk/minis/under-11/>

# Autumn 2024—Colours and Prizes

**Rugby colours** – Thomas Maxey, Jack Askew, James Booth, Stan Dugdale, Angus Ferguson, Charlie McGlade, Logan Michie, Roland Morris, Jack Morgan, Jenson Chen, Dax Cullingford, Rory Brearey.

**Hockey Colours** – Olivia Tiew, Rosa Williams, Bella Mitchell, Daisy Callaghan, Manha Abdullah, Holly Birkin, Isla Ryan, Annalise Dixon, Evelyn Carter, Imogen Clark.

**Chess Colours** - Henry Stanley, Manha Abdullah, Fathe Chahal.

**Art Colours** – Manha Abdullah, Imogen Clark, Olivia Clark, Martha Leary, Zara Mansoor, Jack Morgan, Roland Morris, Emily Quayle, Alice Whaite.

**Music Colours** - Manha Abdullah, Annalise Dixon, Jack Morgan, Rosa Williams.

**Christmas Art Competition - Year 3** - Arya Jafari; **Year 4** - Faye Ashwell & Ray Morris; **Year 5** - Dara Jafari; **Year 6** - Manha Abdullah & Thomas Maxey.

**OVERALL House Rugby** – 1st - Stephenson; 2nd - Arkwright, 3rd - Brunel, 4th - Telford

**OVERALL House Hockey** – 1st - Arkwright; 2nd - Stephenson, 3rd - Brunel, 4th - Telford.

**OVERALL House Football (Autumn)** – 1st - Stephenson; 2nd - Telford, 3rd - Brunel, 4th - Arkwright.

**OVERALL House GK Quiz** – 1st—Arkwright; 2nd—Stephenson, 3rd—Brunel, 4th—Telford.

**OVERALL House Cross country** - 1st - Stephenson, 2nd - Arkwright, 3rd - Brunel, 4th - Telford.

**House Points** - 1st - Telford (64.2 average); 2nd - Brunel (64.0), 3rd - Arkwright (63.0), 4th - Stephenson (58.8).

**OVERALL HOUSE LEADERBOARD:**

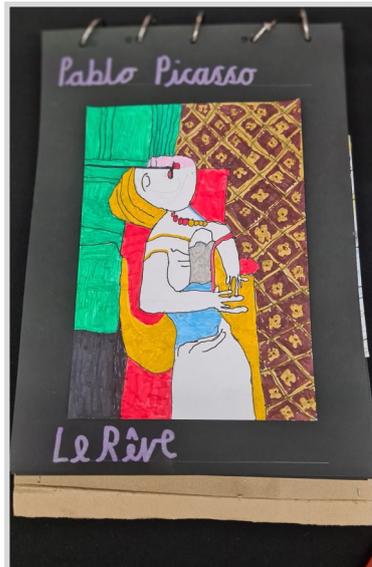
4th—Brunel—800 points

3rd—Telford—825 points

2nd—Arkwright—1075 points

1st—STEPHENSON—1200 points

*Pictured are some of the winners of our Christmas Art Competition.*



## CEOP



The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) aims to keep children and young people safe from sexual abuse and grooming online.

Parents, carers and children can report a concern about child sexual abuse or online exploitation to the CEOP Safety Centre.

**ANY CHILD IN IMMEDIATE DANGER SHOULD ALWAYS CALL 999 FIRST.**

You can contact CEOP by clicking on the logo on this page. This links to the CEOP website where you can report any concerns you may have. Alternatively, click [www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/](http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/).

*Mr Stone*

## CAUSE Foundation—Thanks!

Thank you SO MUCH for all of the donations and contributions towards our Christmas CAUSE Foundation collection. 18 families based in the Teesside area will be having a far brighter Christmas thanks to the vast array and quantity of donations made by you all. There was no room in the cars of Mr Frank, Mrs Redhead-Sweeney and Mr Stone on Friday morning as we dropped off the bags at various local schools for the families!

*Mr Stone*



## Uniform Reminders

Yarm School prides itself on the happy and harmonious sense of community that exists within the school and in which pupils wear a uniform with pride and a sense of ease because the same overall standards and expectations apply to all pupils and students. It is our belief that upholding a strict uniform policy supports our ethos of respect for all, regardless of background or personal beliefs and promotes cohesion within the school community.

We celebrate the diversity of the school community but also value the fact that by wearing a set school uniform for academic and extracurricular activities, all pupils are encouraged to participate fully and freely from the external pressures that society and culture at large can place on young people with regard to their appearance and image.

We politely request that all parents and pupils are aware of these and follow the uniform requirements set out by the school. This includes the wearing of school quilted winter coats only, correct footwear (smart, black school shoes—not trainer-type shoes) and no jewellery. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Prep Management Team.

Hair should be kept clear of the face, clean and tidy, neatly cut or shaped and of natural colour. Extreme styles, very short hair or streaked hair / obvious highlights or hair products (wax, gel etc.) are not acceptable. Long hair should be tied back with a suitable small fastener, school scrunchie or hair band. Hair bands (school style) may also be appropriate for shorter hair.

*Mr Stone*

## Festival of Carols—Thanks!

Another thank you to you all for your donations towards our retiring collection following the Festival of Carols last Wednesday, which saw £502.58 each donated to Yarm Parish Church and The Mustard Seed Project.

*Mr Stone*

## Outstanding Music Success!

Kaiden Guan, aged just 10, has achieved his ABRSM Grade 8 piano exam with distinction! He began piano lessons with Mrs Barbara Bury just over 4 years ago during Covid, so initially the lessons were online, which was quite challenging for a 6 year old, but he always listened intently and worked with a maturity way beyond his years. Barbara says that his musicality and work ethic are remarkable and that it is a pleasure to teach such a talented young musician who also brings his own ideas and views to each lesson, making it a real

collaboration each week. He is always so happy and charming with a great personality, which comes across in his performances.

Kaiden has achieved distinctions in every grade since February 2021 when he took his Grade 1 exam, so this



is a remarkable feat in such a short time span. Kaiden prepared 6 challenging pieces for his Grade 8 exam and then chose his favourite 3 to play to the examiner. This required a lot of dedicated practice to ensure that each piece was technically assured to enable his musicality to shine through as well as capturing the stylistic characterisation of each composer. Kaiden will now start studying for his ARSM diploma, which is a 30 minute recital.

Kaiden has also just gained 3 first places and 2 second places at the prestigious Wharfedale piano festival where he played 8 different pieces against competitors aged up to 18 in some classes. He regularly performs at concerts both in and out of school and was a guest performer at Yarm School Choral Society's concert in Stockton Parish Church last year.

Mrs Bury

## Coming Up at the PAA

[Snow White Panto—Thursday 12th December until 24th December - Various times - Limited availability on some shows](#)

Tom Rolfe Productions are delighted to be back with a brand new production bursting with dazzling costumes, hilarious comedy, sensational singing, beautiful scenery and the coolest Magnificent Seven ever!



[Santa and the Race to Save Christmas—Saturday 14th December, 9.30am and Sunday 15th December, 10am](#)

**Fantastic short performance for those little ones.**

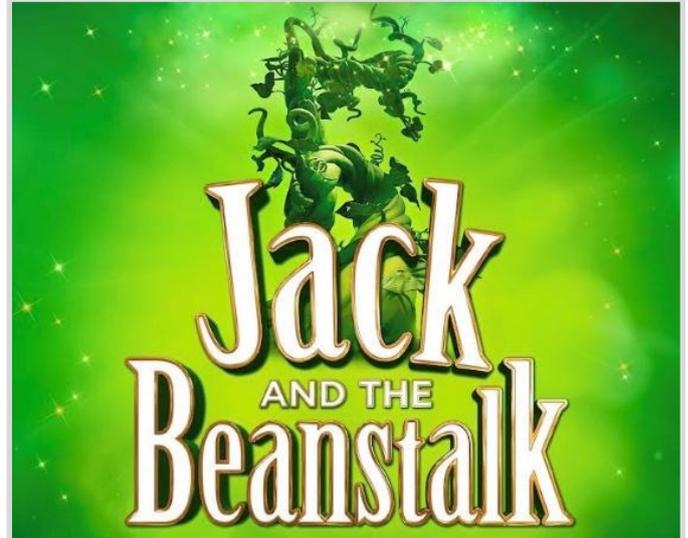
All is going well in Santa's workshop as Mrs Claus and the elves

busily prepare for the big night. The presents are wrapped and the reindeers have completed their training then suddenly disaster strikes!

Will Santa and the gang manage to find a solution in



order for the sleigh to set off in time for Christmas eve?



**We are delighted to announce that our Panto for 2025 is Jack and the Beanstalk.** Tickets on sale Thursday 12th December. Early bird tickets are available on all seats until Wednesday 23rd April 2025!

## Reindeer Run

There's still time to sponsor the children for taking part in our Reindeer Run on the last day of term. [We welcome donations via a Just Giving page which can be found here.](#) Please give generously! We thank you for all of your support.



Mr Stone

## Start of Term

Please note that the Spring term commences on **Monday 6th January 2025.**

Nursery will finish at 3pm each day of the first week back, with the rest of Pre-Prep and Prep finishing at the normal times of 3.30pm and 3.45pm respectively. After School Care is available as normal and can be [booked by clicking on this link.](#)

Clubs and activities commence for the term on **Monday 13th January 2025.**

Mr Stone

## Tooled Up Education

2024 is drawing to a close and it's been an incredible year for our Tooled Up community! Together with your amazing input and feedback, our online library has reached the milestone of over 1,000 resources.

For this final weekly newsletter of 2024 we're sharing the most popular resources of the year. What did our members find most inspiring and helpful?

Our most popular Tips to Try: [Smart Reviser](#) is a downloadable guide to effective revision strategies. It's full of tips to help teens use their revision time for the best possible results.

Our most popular Article: [Quick Guide to Anxiety](#) - like all our Quick Guides, this features a topic overview together with links to all the resources in our library that can help you. This guide on Anxiety is our most popular of the year.

Our most popular Activity: [Wobble Ladder](#) is a Tooled Up favourite! Use it to track small steps and rewards that can help children and young people work towards overcoming their challenges.

Our most popular Webinar: [Parenting a Daughter in 2024](#) - Dr Kathy Weston's presentation on the challenges of raising a girl in today's world draws on the latest research around mental health, smartphones, body image and more.

Our most popular Podcast: [Sleep Difficulties in Primary-Aged Children](#) - psychologist Dr Rachel Hiller joined Tooled Up for this podcast full of strategies for better sleep in 5-12 year olds.

We'd love to wish all our members – teachers, leaders, parents and their children a wonderful break.

Thank you for all your questions and feedback during the year, and we look forward to supporting you in 2025.

The Tooled Up library is already packed with almost 350 evidence-based resources, including interviews with over 80 leading experts from around the world. But, it's your library and we want to know how else we can help you? What new resources would you like to see? Which ones do you love? What could we do better?

We always value your feedback and want to ensure that we are giving you the resources that you need. Email us at [research@tooledupeducation.com](mailto:research@tooledupeducation.com) to let us know how we are doing!

A quick reminder As a parent at a Tooled Up school, you have full unlimited access to the Tooled Up library. If you have not created your account yet, click [here to register for an account](#). It takes less than 2 minutes to enter your details and unique school PIN: YPS1103 and if you need assistance, we are always happy to help. If you already have an account and you have forgotten your password, then simply click on any of the resource links above, click "Lost your password" and follow the instructions.

*Dr Kathy Weston*



Wobble Ladder: Overcoming Anxiety



A Quick Guide to Anxiety

**TOOLED UP<sup>®</sup>**  
**BECAUSE EVIDENCE MATTERS**

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators CREATING FAMILY RULES FOR USING DEVICES

A set of family rules agreed on with children can promote the safe, responsible use of devices like tablets, smartphones, gaming consoles and computers. By developing rules around technology, it opens the conversation regarding boundaries and expectations, ensuring a healthy balance of screentime. This guide will help you to develop an age-appropriate family agreement to suit your household.

## 1 WORK TOGETHER

Collaborating with children when setting rules around the use of technology is a valuable task that can encourage them to take more ownership. It's important to make rules which reflect your family and are age appropriate. Think about what you all enjoy doing online and what apps, games or devices children use most frequently.

## 2 AGREE TIME LIMITS AND SUITABLE TIMES

Be realistic when setting screen time limits. These can vary depending on the child's age, whether it's a weekday or weekend, and what they're actually doing online. If they're conducting research for homework, that might require more time than if they were playing games. Consider when screen time begins: does it come after chores and homework? Agree times when technology and phones must be put away.

## 3 ENCOURAGE HONESTY

Family rules ensure that everyone can have fun with their devices and be safe while doing so. Nonetheless, children may make mistakes as they learn to navigate the online world. Emphasise that if they ever feel worried, unsafe or upset about something they've done, sent, said or received, they should tell you immediately so you can help them resolve the problem.

## 4 CHARGING AND OVERNIGHT STORAGE

To ensure children get the downtime they need overnight, it's important that devices – especially smartphones – are kept in a common space, where possible. This reduces the chance of pointless late-night scrolling or sleep being disturbed by calls, messages or notifications. There are charging boxes you can purchase, or all gadgets could be charged in the kitchen overnight to avoid distractions.

## 5 REVIEW RULES REGULARLY

Anything you agree on isn't set in stone. These rules will likely alter as children get older and the way they use technology changes. Take time to review these as a family; discuss what's working, and what isn't. Communication is key – so by doing this, you involve the child in their own online safety while promoting an open dialogue.

## 6 PROTECT PERSONAL INFO

Discuss and demonstrate the importance of protecting your personal information. Talk about what details you share online and who with. Use parental controls to block children from connecting with strangers, so that any information they do share is among their real friends. Ask a child's permission before posting any photos of them on social media, as this demonstrates positive online behaviour that they should learn and remember.

## 7 BE RESPECTFUL

Highlight the importance of showing respect to others when using technology. Encourage children to speak kindly to others online – such as on social media, when playing multiplayer games or in group chats (which can often lend themselves to teasing behaviour). Explain that if they aren't treating others considerately, they might be made to stay away from their devices for a while.

## 8 "NO TECH" ZONES

Designating spaces in the house where technology isn't allowed (for example: bedrooms, bathrooms and at the dinner table) lets you keep an eye on what children are viewing and who they're communicating with. It gives you some quality, screen-free time with them, too. It also helps reduce any impulses to potentially engage with inappropriate content, as they're unlikely to do so in a common space within the home.

## 9 AGREE ON CONSEQUENCES

As a family, discuss why the rules are important: to balance their screentime, to ensure everyone enjoys gaming or interacting online, and that they are safe when doing so. Therefore, if these rules are broken, there has to be a consequence. Discuss what would be fair for certain breaches of the rules, as this can prevent a disproportionate response in the future.

## 10 KNOW ALL PASSWORDS

To protect children from inappropriate content, parents should have access to all passwords. Parents should also make it clear that they will check children's devices, should they have any concerns about their use. Emphasise that this isn't due to a lack of trust but is an extra way of keeping them safe.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at BCyberAware. She has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. Claire has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: [nationalcollege.com/guides/tips-for-creating-family-rules-for-using-devices](http://nationalcollege.com/guides/tips-for-creating-family-rules-for-using-devices)

# Coming Up

[You can find the Yarm School calendar for the Spring Term by clicking here](#)

## DECEMBER 2024

**Mon 16** Christmas Holiday School (until 20th December)

## JANUARY 2025

**Mon 6** **SPRING TERM BEGINS**

Pupils return  
After School Care as normal

**Wed 8** Peer Mentor training (5pm finish)

**Mon 13** Spring Clubs and Activities begin

Sustainability Week

**Tue 14** Curiosity Emporium with Lord Wharton

**Fri 17** Y6 Senior School assessments morning

**Sat 18** Open Morning (9am-12noon)

**Mon 20** House Chess begins

**Tue 21** Primary Schools Singing Day (PAA)

**Wed 22** School Council

**Thu 23** U9 Football v Durham (home; 2pm start)

**Fri 24** IAPS Netball

(at Woodhouse Grove; 1pm start, 5pm return)

**Mon 27** Year 6 Drama Week begins

**Tue 28** U8 Netball Workshop with Cundall Manor

(away; 1.45pm start, 3.45pm return)

**Wed 29** Chinese New Year celebrations

Wear item of red—£1 donation to St Teresa’s Hospice

House Chess—Matchday 3

**Fri 31** Year 6 Drama Week Performance (4.15pm)

U10 Netball v Queen Mary’s (home, 2pm start)

U10 Football v Durham (home; 2pm start)

## FEBRUARY 2025

**Mon 3** Activities Carousel 3 begins (for Y4-6)

**Tue 4** National Schools Quiz Championships

Opening round; online; 10am-11am)

**Wed 5** Prep Duologues launched

**Thu 6** U9 Netball v Durham School

(away; 2pm start, 4.15pm return)

U9 Football Festival at NSB

(away; 1.30pm start, 4.30pm return)

**Fri 7** U10/11 Netball v Pocklington (home; 2pm start)

U10/11 Hockey v Pocklington

(away; 2pm start, 4.45pm return)

First Lego League (Sunderland; times TBC)

**Mon 10** Internet Safety Week

Internet Safety Workshop

(Partnerships event; 10am-2.30pm)

Y3 Stephenson/Telford swimming starts

YPSSC meeting (Library; 6pm)

**Tue 11** Dentistry assemblies

Y3 Silver Stories trip to Middleton Hall

(5pm return)

**Wed 12** Internet Safety event for parents

(Prep Hall; 4pm)

NEJS Football & Netball

**Thu 13** Year 3 trip to Arbeia Roman Fort

# Term Dates

## Spring Term 2025

Half term begins Thursday, 20th February 2025 (after school)

INSET Day Friday 21st February 2025

Pupils return Monday 3rd March 2025

Term ends Friday 4th April 2025 (after school)

## Summer Term, 2025

Pupils return Wednesday, 23rd April 2025

Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May 2025

Half term begins Thursday, 22nd May 2025 (after school)

Pupils return Monday, 2nd June 2025

Term ends Thursday, 3rd July 2025 (after Prize Giving)

# Celebration Assembly

	Values	Endeavour
3B	Annabel B.	Ava B.
3J	Dylan B.	Lucian S.
3P	Jack B.	Poppy C-W.
4F	Daniel S.	Annabelle L.
4J	Harrison V.	Hinako Y.
4SU	Harris K.	Elijah D.
5G	Beatrice T.	Freddie W.
5S	Zac S.	Ralph E.
5W	Monty B.	Edith G.
6H	Rory F.	Rory B.
6K	Roland M.	Fliss W.
6L	Emily B.	Ayaana K.