

HILTINGBURY HIGHLIGHTS

Issue 12
13th December 2024



Headteacher's message

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us for our carol concert and who contributed to our charity fundraising event. It was wonderful to see so many of you coming together in the spirit of community and celebration. Our school choir spread the Christmas cheer beautifully, and their performance was a true reflection of their hard work, enthusiasm, and talent. A special thank you to Miss Chambers and Mrs Nurdin for leading the performance and to the Thornden Community Windband for performing again this year.

I am pleased to share that the total raise for Wessex Cancer Support is £661! Which is a reminder of the incredible support and unity within our school community. Thank you all for making time in your busy schedules to share in this festive occasion.

Our choir has been spreading joy far and wide this season, performing not only at our carol event but also at Southampton Windband Christmas Concert. The band leader praised them as "great ambassadors for your school". What an achievement!

Congratulations to our girls' football team, who secured a well-deserved 1-0 win over Otterbourne this week. Their teamwork and determination were truly inspiring—well done, team!

We had our annual Elfridges event on Monday led by our HSPTA who again did an incredible job of setting up a wonderful shopping experience for our children. Thank you all so much - the gifts will bring lots of happiness to our families on Christmas day.

Yesterday, we had the pleasure of enjoying our Christmas lunch, and I would like to share a thank you to our amazing kitchen team for their incredible hard work. Preparing a festive meal for so many children in one sitting is no small feat—your dedication and efficiency were truly impressive. After this, your own family Christmas lunches are sure to feel like a breeze! Thank you also for everyone's donations to Baby Necessities - the charity are most grateful.

We are sad to share that Mrs Blondin will be leaving us at the end of the year. We thank her for her dedication and the support she has given to the children during her time here and we wish her all the best for the future.

As we approach the Christmas holidays, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new term, refreshed and ready for another exciting year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of our incredible school staff. Your hard work, passion, and commitment have made a significant difference in the lives of our school community, and your efforts are deeply appreciated. Thank you for all that you do!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Zoe Loesemore



Dates for your diary -

Please check the school website calendar for more events and information

NO clubs next week (other than Toast & Crackers) - Restart WC 13th January

Monday 16th December - Raffle ticket winners non-uniform day / Year 4 Parents invited -project outcome 2.25pm

Tuesday 17th December - Last day for the School Christmas post

Wednesday 18th December - Year 6 VE day party parents invited

Thursday 19th December - Winter House Sports day/ Sycamore class Listen to Me concert 2.25pm

Friday 20th December - HSPTA Santa Dash (must be pre-booked) & Last day of term-normal school finish time 3.20pm

Toast & Crackers - last day of term, early closing

After School club will be open from 3.20pm until 5.30pm on the last day of term with lots of lovely festive activities! See you there!

Monday 6th January - INSET day, school closed to pupils

Vacancy

We are currently recruiting for a lunchtime supervisor to join our team. For more information please follow this link.

<https://www.hiltingbury-jun.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Vacancies&pid=94&action=saved>



Weekly Year group highlights

Year 3

[Link to our Weekly Highlights & Gallery](#)

Year 4

[Link to our Weekly Highlights & Gallery](#)

Year 5

[Link to our Weekly Highlights & Gallery](#)

Year 6

[Link to our Weekly Highlights & Gallery](#)



Thank you!!



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season is fast approaching! While we hope you're excited to kick back, relax, and enjoy some well-earned rest with friends and family, it's still vitally important that we do all we can to safeguard the children and young people in our care over the festive period

However, it can be tricky to know what specific steps we can take to ensure our winter break is as calm and risk-free as possible. Check out the expert advice on keeping youngsters safe over the festive season.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SAFETY OVER THE FESTIVE SEASON

The holiday season, marked by Christmas and New Year, brings joy and togetherness but also presents unique safety challenges for children, families and educators. From busy holiday shopping, traveling and family gatherings to managing digital activity during school breaks, staying safe during this period requires heightened awareness. This guide offers practical tips to help families and educators maintain a more secure and fulfilling festive period.

1 MONITOR DIGITAL ACTIVITY

Children spend more time online during school holidays, increasing exposure to potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content and online predators. Balancing screen time, avoiding harmful websites and ensuring children engage positively online can be difficult without proper monitoring tools. Set clear boundaries, encourage open discussions about online safety and use parental controls to manage content exposure and screen time effectively. Regular check-ins and positive reinforcement around digital habits encourage safe online behaviour.

2 PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY PROTOCOLS

The incidence of house fires increases during Christmas due to greater use of candles, cookers and electrical decorations. Open flames, electrical overloads and the need for quick response plans can make fire safety challenging. Ensure smoke detectors are operational, keep fire extinguishers on hand and teach children how to respond in case of a fire emergency. Avoid leaving cooking unattended and use fire-safe candles to prevent mishaps.

3 CREATE TRAVEL SAFETY PLANS

More families tend to travel during the holidays, resulting in busier roads, increased traffic accidents and weather-related hazards. Weather conditions, road rage, fatigue and busy airports can all compromise travel safety. Pack emergency kits and adhere to seatbelt laws. Plan routes in advance and allow extra travel time to avoid rushing and mitigate risks on busy roads.

4 BEWARE OF ALLERGIES

Holiday meals often involve many foods that may contain allergens. Cross contamination, unclear labelling and lack of allergy-friendly options can lead to severe reactions. Communicate any allergy needs to hosts, provide safe food alternatives and carry necessary medications like antihistamines or EpiPens. Teaching children how to advocate for themselves and recognise dangerous foods also contributes to safer celebrations.

5 PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS

Cold weather and seasonal socialising can increase the spread of viruses like flu and COVID-19. Crowded gatherings, schools out of session and frequent travel can lead to higher infection risks. Emphasise hygiene, encourage vaccination, disinfect surfaces and isolate symptomatic individuals. Communication with children about proper hygiene practices is essential to reduce the spread of illness.

6 STAY VIGILANT ON THE ROAD

Increased holiday traffic heightens the risk of accidents for both drivers and pedestrians. Distracted driving, pedestrian safety and inclement weather can complicate road safety. Encourage pedestrian safety practices, avoid distracted driving and never drive under the influence.

7 MAINTAIN SAFE DECORATIONS

Festive decorations such as Christmas lights and candles can pose electrical, fire and choking hazards if mishandled. Frayed wires, toppling Christmas trees, small ornaments and open flames can be difficult to control, especially in busy households with children. Inspect and maintain decorations, secure Christmas trees, place fragile or small items out of reach and ensure candles are never left unattended. Testing smoke alarms and using flame-retardant decorations can significantly reduce risks.

8 SET BOUNDARIES FOR GIFTS

Some toys and gadgets can present choking, sharp-edge or safety risks, particularly for young children. Ensuring that gifts meet safety standards and are age appropriate can be complex with so many options available. Inspect all toys carefully and ensure any tech devices have parental controls. Setting expectations around safe gift use and discarding packaging that poses a risk also helps to prevent accidents.

9 ADDRESS STRESS & FATIGUE

Holiday pressures can lead to burnout, which affects both physical and mental health. Overpacked schedules and a lack of downtime can cause stress and fatigue, leading to accidents or poor decision making. Incorporate rest, maintain regular routines and seek support to reduce stress. Encourage activities that promote relaxation to create a healthier, happier holiday experience for everyone.

10 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

Alcohol is commonly present at holiday events, raising concerns about safety and supervision. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to accidents, impaired judgment and lack of supervision for children. Designate responsible adults, limit consumption and provide transportation alternatives for guests. Teaching moderation and modelling responsible behaviour in front of children ensures that celebrations remain positive and secure.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is a chartered health and safety consultant with 10 years of experience in promoting family and community safety. Specialising in risk assessment and preventative strategies, he has worked with educational institutions, public health agencies and community groups to deliver safety education and training.



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Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/safety-over-the-festive-season>