

NEWSLETTER

8th December 2023

A Message From Staff

It has been lovely to see sneak previews of nativity rehearsals and Christmas songs being practised across the school this week as we prepare for our Christmas carol concert. Singing together has so many benefits for our social and mental health and I always look forward to our assemblies when we can enjoy songs together. Rabbit and Otter class held their art workshops this week and we were blown away by the number of parents who joined us. Doing arts and crafts together with your child is such a precious time and is great for bonding with your child.

I was delighted to be able to present our journey to gold through Artsmark to the Arts Council and representatives from Anglian Learning this week, picking up on the importance of the Arts as beneficial for our health and wellbeing and building confidence and self-esteem. I was incredibly proud of our children and staff as I shared examples of art work, clips of singing and our amazing clay work to name just a few examples.

We enjoyed hearing from Badger class about their learning around their focus in our wellbeing curriculum this year: the characteristic of respectful. It was lovely to hear their poems, share their song and their focus story.

As we approach the busy festive season in school, please can I remind you of our Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day on Wednesday 20th December. Please order your lunch with Innovate in advance and note there will be no cold food option that day. Lastly I have attached a copy of how to PACE yourself over the season and support your child. Should you need any help or support, please do contact us

Mrs Weir



Coming up next week at Howard....

Monday 11th December– Pantomime in school

Tuesday 12th December and Thursday 14th December– Christmas concert

Tuesday 12th December after school– Christmas Fayre

Headteacher Awards

I am pleased to announced the following pupils have received a Headteacher Award. Congratulations!



Chrissie C



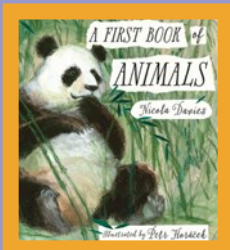
Lola-Mae F

Reggie H

Danylo P



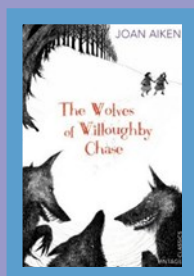
Looking for a good read?



A First Book of Animals
Nicola Davies



The Kick Off
Dan Freedman



The Wolves of Willoughby Chase
Joan Aiken

Star of the Week

Miss Benjamin for her dedication and responsiveness.

Attendance

This week 92.7% of our children attended school. It has been lovely to see you all.

Please note that we are unable to authorise term time holidays according to government guidelines and penalty fines may apply.

SEND News from Mrs Wakeman

With Christmas rapidly approaching I would like to share ideas to help children with neurodiversity cope at Christmas as it can be tricky time. This could be the case if your child is autistic or has ADHD or a sensory processing disorder. Also, if your child experiences anxiety or anxious feelings. They may find it hard to adjust to different light, colour, sound, smells, textures and tastes. It might be that their **senses become overwhelmed**. Changes in routine can also affect how they feel. See page 3 for more ideas on how to help.



How to Contact Us

If you need help with advice on how to get online, resources to help your child learn at home or any other support we are here to help. Please speak to a member of staff or phone the school office on 01284 766278.

Class teachers can be contacted via class emails e.g. badger@howardprimary.org for Badger class.



Dates for your diary

12th December– Christmas Carol concert and Nativity

12th December– Christmas Fayre

20th December Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day

21st December– Last day of term

Howard is fabulous!



Keep up to date with news about our learning in school, events and activities as they happen, and some useful links for activities to complete at home, by following us on our social media pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/HowardCAcademy>

The Power of PACE at Christmas Time

There are a lot of feelings flying around at Christmas time for children and adults alike. Finding the right balance for YOU is something to work towards. PACE can help. PACE - Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy



Playfulness isn't the same as playing but is enjoying time with someone else or yourself in an unconditional way.

This can look like a 5 minute sofa snuggle with someone, walking hand in hand, swapping cringey cracker joke or even taking yourself off for a cry on your own if that's where you're at and trying to leave behind any guilt about it.

It's about showing a real interest in someone, or yourself, and finding something you really enjoy about them - or you. Even if that's 2 minutes alone with yourself outside the front door!



Acceptance means sitting with strong emotions or perspective of another and knowing that you might not be able to take these away. There may be no words of advice to give, strategies to implement or thoughts to share, only comfort by offering your safe presence.

It is allowing uncomfortable sensations and emotions to be in your own body without judgement. Accepting their existence.

For an example of this and Empathy, watch the YouTube clip called 'Brené Brown on Empathy' or find inspiration from the song 'Hold Space' by Ward Thomas.



Curiosity isn't about asking "why?" even when this is exactly what we want to know! It's about wondering what is going on inside for someone or ourself.

It's about taking the risk of being wrong "Can I share my ideas with you... I wonder if... I might be wrong, so tell me if I am, but here are my thoughts..."

A way of letting someone know that your mind is on their mind and genuinely interested in anything at all that's going on in there without judgement.

It is practising this same non-judgemental curiosity within ourselves.



Empathy can take a lot of energy at Christmas.

Sitting with the disappointment of a child who hasn't got the gift they hoped for "I can see the sadness in your eyes that it's not what you wanted" or accepting our own disappointment that the time hasn't felt very festive "I am where I am and things are how they are and I'm going to do my best to feel okay with that".

A top tip is try to move away from reassurance or denial of feelings - others or your own. Naming what is happening for ourselves or another helps us in our offering of empathy.

To PACE oneself: "To do something at a speed that is steady and that allows one to continue without becoming too tired."

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How can I help my child with special educational needs cope over Christmas? - Support for Parents from Action For Children.

These are some ideas to help:

- Make a list of things that your child finds hard.
- Record all the different things in the school calendar so that your child is prepared.
- Involve them in the decisions about lights, tree etc
- Prepare them for the gifts they may receive.
- Have a safe place at home that they can go to.
- Talk to them about changes in routine.
- Plan for visitors so they don't become overwhelmed.
- Be conscious of different sounds and smells.