



WEEK BEGINNING 16TH DECEMBER

Events this week:

Tuesday 17 th December	KS1 Nativity (9.15am)
Wednesday 18 th December	Christmas Jumper Day Christmas lunch KS1 Nativity (5.30pm)

Looking forwards: (dates/times may be subject to change)

Thursday 19 th December	Christmas service in Church
Friday 20 th December	END OF TERM (1.30pm finish time)
Tuesday 7 th January 2025	RETURN TO SCHOOL
Wednesday 8 th January	Year 5 Swimming lessons begin

Don't forget you can see key events on the school website Calendar page

<https://www.stmichaelsesthampstead.com/diary/grid/2024/10/>



Family portraits drawn by the children to sell at the Christmas market will be available to purchase from the school office until the end of the term.

These are priced at £1.00 each.

Message from Mrs Johnson:

Dear families of St Michael's,

The Christmas celebrations are well and truly underway in school. The tree is up, the children have been to the pantomime, our Nativity performances have begun, and the office Elf is surprising us all each morning!

With only a few days to go until the end of term there is still a lot to pack in including our end of term church service on Thursday. The children have been creating some beautiful artwork to accompany the carols we will be singing, and the sound of their voices has been filling the school this week. There is something magical about the sound of children singing Christmas Carols together which feels very special and festive.

On Friday we tallied up the number of house points for each house and were amazed to find that over 3500 points have been awarded this term. As I said to the children, that is more than 3500 times that someone in our school has done something amazing, going above and beyond either in their behaviour or their learning. That is a lot of great things to be celebrated – well done all!

Wherever and however you are celebrating the holiday season I wish you all a safe, peaceful and happy Christmas. See you all in the New Year!

Best wishes
Caroline Johnson

Snacks

As the weather has turned colder, children with packed lunches are being required to eat these in the hall alongside their classmates having a cooked school dinner. As a result, some children in KS2 are having to wait longer to eat at lunchtime (only about 15 mins) and are telling us they feel really hungry. Please can you ensure that your child has a filling, nutritious snack at breaktime, enough to see them through between 10:30am and 1:00pm.

And just a reminder that we ask you to provide a healthy snack and lunch, crisps and chocolate do not keep them full for long. If you would like any help or suggestions for healthy snacks please see the links below:

[Lunch and snack ideas for back to school - BBC Food](#)
[Healthier snacks - Food facts - Healthier Families - NHS](#)

Safeguarding

Whilst we do not wish to be alarmist about internet usage, I think it is important that, as parents you are aware how damaging unlimited and unsupervised access can be. In many cases, parents think that they have used all the relevant safeguards, but these are not foolproof.

Please see the link below which is to a documentary about what children are able to access via phones and internet. This is not just about secondary aged children but includes 8 and 9 year olds.

The content may be triggering for some as it contains information about suicide and self-harm so, please be aware and safeguard yourself if necessary. Also, **this is not suitable viewing for children.**

[Colchester students give up smartphones for 21 days in experiment - BBC News](#)



Head Teacher Award Winners

- Acorns - Lois, for a great start to our Nativity each time
- Year 1 - Tiago, for concentration and focus during phonics sessions
- Year 2 - Ziggy, for aiming high in English and producing fantastic written work
- Year 3 - Harry, for aiming high in his learning especially when writing his adventure story
- Year 4 - Ludie, for aiming high in her learning and for her contributions to class discussions
- Year 5 - Emelia, for showing great enthusiasm and aspiration in her English work this week
- Year 6 - Lily-Rose, for aiming high and ready to apply to feedback given

After school clubs

Please note that our extra curriculum clubs are now finished for the term, please keep an eye out in January for the new clubs which will be on offer.

Karate club will run Monday

Booking for Karate club on a Monday evening has re-opened. It runs every Monday until 4:30.

Parents can enrol by clicking the link below. If you would like more information please contact me on 07760882203 or bck@blockandcounterkarate.co.uk

<https://club.spond.com/landing/courses/blockandcounterk/B329756FA2CE4D508938C52F58BE7C6E>

Support for Parents

Bracknell support group, Tea with The Autism Support Group (TAG) on the first Tuesday of each month 7.00-8:30pm at The Parks Community Centre.

Parenting Special Children: Community Parent/Carer Support Group: Bracknell

<https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/>

GEMS: *Providing Autism & ADHD Support services in East Berkshire.*

They offer support in talking to your child about autism and ADHD; transition, assessment and local support services etc. They also provide workshops for parent, carers and children:

A sample of workshops offered: <https://www.gems4health.com/workshops/>

- Empowering calm
- Managing Anxiety
- Adolescence
- ADHD Teens
- Sensory Processing
- Autism Course (3 weeks)
- Sleep – Autism & ADHD
- Girls & Autism

Parenting Special Children: *"Supporting families every step of the way.*

<https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/>

A sample of workshops offered:

- Dads and Male Carers Support Group
- Teens and ADHD
- Social Confidence Course for Children and Young People: School Years 4-8

The Autism Group:

<https://www.theautismgroup.org.uk/>

"The Autism Group, a Maidenhead based charity committed to supporting and enhancing the lives of young autistic people, their parents and carers."

Parent support: <https://www.theautismgroup.org.uk/parent-support/>

Workshops (subject to change): <https://www.theautismgroup.org.uk/workshops/>

- Girls and Autism
- Managing Anxiety
- Adolescence
- Empowering calm

The Autism Group:

"Book in to one of our 90 minute virtual "TAG talks" aimed at giving parents a little insight into how autism might affect their young person – and some simple strategies to help support their needs. Sessions focus on specific topics. Time is allowed for an interactive Q & A session at the end.

To book contact GEMS ADHD and Autism Services East Berkshire on 01753 373 224 / 0800 999 1342"

National Autistic Society <https://www.autism.org.uk/>
<https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/understanding-autism/about-autism/what-is-autism>

NHS Berkshire Healthcare Children, Young People and Families services:
<https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/early-language-development-workshops/>

Early language development workshops:

- Communication Foundations
- Communication Building Blocks
- Scaffolding Communication
- Helping Children with Unclear Speech
- Autism and Communication

NHS Berkshire Healthcare Children, Young People and Families services:
"The aim is to help you understand the sensory needs that a child or young person may be experiencing. It offers strategies, practical advice and tips on how you can enable a child or young person to manage their sensory needs on a daily basis."

Sensory Processing Workshops:
<https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/our-services/children-and-young-peoples-integrated-therapies/sensory-processing-online-workshops/>

Eric: The Children's Bowel & Bladder Charity
<https://eric.org.uk/>

Information and advice relating to children's bowel and bladder support, potty training, toilet anxiety.

Activities/Club for Children and Young People

Bear Cubs: Social activities for 5 to 10 years olds, with or waiting for an autism/ADHD diagnosis.
<https://www.gems4health.com/social-groups/>

The Autism Group: Clubs for 9+ years <https://www.theautismgroup.org.uk/clubs/>

Thames Valley Adventure Playground: *"Supporting children & adults with special needs and their families."*
<https://www.tvap.co.uk/the-playground/>

Parenting Special Children: <https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/>

Short breaks for children with disabilities

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/children-and-family-services/children-and-young-people-disabilities/short-breaks-children-disabilities>

For information about short break activities, contact the Short Breaks Co-ordinator by:

email: short.breaks@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

phone: 01344 352733

We also send regular email updates – if you would like to be added to our list, email short.breaks@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

"Short breaks give:

- *children and young people with a disability enjoyable experiences away from their primary carers – this contributes to their personal and social development and reduces social isolation*
- *parents, carers and families a necessary and valuable break from caring responsibilities*

These breaks can include day, evening, overnight and weekend activities. They can take place in the child's own home, the home of an approved carer, a residential or community setting.

They can last a few hours to a few days, and occasionally longer, depending on the type of provision and the needs of the child and their families."

Christmas Services

Sunday, 15th December
3pm - Christingle Service

Sunday, 22nd December
6pm - Nine Lessons and Carols

Tuesday, 24th December
3:00pm - Crib Service
7:00pm - 'Light up a Life'
11:30pm - Midnight Service

Wednesday, 25th December
8am - Christmas Day Service
10:00am - Christmas Day Service

 **Easthampstead**
Parish Church



Bracknell Christmas Toy Bank

If Christmas brings financial hardship and worry, and a little extra support could be helpful for your family, the Toy Bank is here for you.

We invite you to come along and choose from a selection of kindly donated toys for FREE.

The Toy Bank is an inclusive space for anyone in the community who needs help to make Christmas extra special this year. Come and visit us:

Saturday 14th December, 12pm-4pm
Involve Community Services, RG12 1AE
(opposite Bracknell library)

If you have any queries, please email bracknelltoybank@gmail.com

Have your say on the proposed school attendance strategy.



Parents/carers, schools, children and young people are invited to complete an online survey about school attendance.

The strategy proposes priority areas, including:

- ensuring clear roles and responsibilities for all partners
- consistency with shared approach and training
- supporting the most vulnerable
- meeting the needs of the local community

Complete the survey by **17 January** using the QR code or attend one of the online sessions on:

10 January from 10am to 11am
15 January from 12 noon to 1pm



To book a session contact:
Education.Welfare-Services@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk





We have just released another 2 new dates for our workshops.

ADHD Teens

Hosted by Parenting Special Children: Exploring the challenges and concerns, strengths and opportunities. Supporting our teenagers through change and managing risks. Identity, Self-Esteem, Independence and Responsibility. Staying Connected - Communication and Relationships.

ADHD SUPPORT

Parents & carers of secondary school aged children. Suitable for parents & carers who have previously attended ADHD courses.

Online: Thursday 27th March 2025 - 7pm - 9pm

Booking link : <https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/teens-and-adhd-berkshire-east-mar-2025/>

Sleep - Autism & ADHD

Hosted by Parenting Special Children: The workshop will cover: Children's sleep cycles and sleep needs, The reasons behind night settling and night waking, Strategies to feel less stressed when sleep training, new parenting strategies for settling your child to sleep, and staying asleep.





AUTISM and or ADHD

For Parents & carers of pre school, primary & secondary school aged children.

Online: Wednesday 5th February 2025 - 7 - 9pm

Booking link : <https://parentingspecialchildren.co.uk/events/sleep-autism-adhd-berkshire-east-feb-2025/>

Please note that these workshops are hosted by Parenting Special Children but funded by GEMS, you will need to create an account with Parenting Special Children using the links provided.



Bear cubs

Ages 5 to 10

First and third Monday of the month - 4pm to 5pm

6th January 2025 - Make a bookmark and read a story! - Online
20th January - Talent Show- Bracknell
3rd February - Big on Bouncing - Slough- Small Fee Applicable
17th February - Disney Quiz - Online
3rd March - Sensory Bus - Windsor
17th March - Park Play - Maidenhead

**Please note activities may be subject to change*

Registration:
Gems.4Health@nhs.net
0800 999 1342

Criteria:
Children with or likely to have ADHD and/or autism and living in East Berkshire

For more information: Call 0800 999 1342 or visit www.Gems4Health.com