



SEND Newsletter

November - December 2025



Welcome to our December SEND newsletter, which is full of festive news!

This newsletter aims to continue to keep you up to date as to how we are supporting your child/ren while raising parental awareness about SEND. I will sign post you to courses and local events as advertised through our local offer. localoffer@westnorthants.gov.uk

Blossom Occupational Therapy Service



This term, myself and Miss Barber attended a sensory processing course with Blossom Occupational Therapy Service. During the session, we discussed the sensory seeking behaviours and needs those children can be displaying throughout the school day and how the classroom environment can be adapted to ensure that all children have the appropriate sensory processing support. We will be cascading this information to all staff in the New Year.

During November, I shared the following school do-jo: *As the Christmas elves are getting ready to appear and the trees are starting to go up, Christmas seems to be coming! Although the children are getting excited, for lots of them this can be an overwhelming experience for a range of different reasons and are not always SEND related. To support families over the Christmas holidays, I would like to recommend the following 10 Christmas tips to support children over Christmas.*

	1. Maintain Routine Try to keep the child's daily routine as consistent as possible. This helps reduce anxiety and provides a sense of stability.		2. Prepare in Advance Discuss upcoming events and changes in routine ahead of time. Use visual schedules or social stories to explain what will happen.
	3. Create a Quiet Space Designate a calm area where the child can retreat if they feel overwhelmed. Equip it with comforting items like soft blankets, favourite toys, or noise-cancelling headphones.		4. Involve the Child in Planning Let the child help with holiday preparations and decision making. This can give them a sense of control and involvement.
	5. Simplify Decorations Keep holiday decorations simple to avoid overstimulation. Opt for sensory-friendly options that won't cause distress.		6. Sensory-Friendly Activities Plan sensory-friendly activities, such as crafts, baking, or watching a favourite movie. These can be calming and enjoyable.
	7. Set Realistic Expectations Be mindful of the child's limits and set realistic expectations for their participation in holiday activities.		8. Prepare for Visitors If there will be visitors, prepare the child by showing them photos and discussing who will be coming. Set boundaries with visitors to respect the child's needs.
	9. Practice Coping Strategies Teach and practice coping strategies, such as deep breathing, using a stress ball, or listening to calming music.		10. Keep Transitions Smooth Transitioning between activities can be challenging. Use clear and simple language as well as pictures to explain what's happening next.

Remember, every child is unique, so it's important to tailor these tips to fit their individual needs and preferences. Creating a supportive and understanding environment can make the holiday season more enjoyable for everyone involved. Enjoy the festive season! 🎄 ✨

Mindfulness activities can also support emotional regulation. Please use the links below for some ideas.

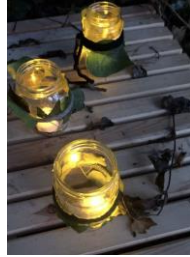
<https://childrensoccupationaltherapy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Self-Regulation-and-Impulse-Control.pdf>

<https://childrensoccupationaltherapy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/mindful-Scavenger-hunt-1.pdf>

<https://childrensoccupationaltherapy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Mindful-scavenger-hunt-2.pdf>

<https://childrensoccupationaltherapy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Mindful-scavenger-hunt-3.pdf>

Christmas Winter Lights



As part of this magical experience designed by Mrs Flude and the children during Forest School sessions, a SEND session was offered to our families to ensure all children were able to have the opportunity to experience this festive activity. Families that experienced this session have been kind enough to provide some feedback regarding this inclusive provision to share their parent voice.

The winter light trail was absolutely fantastic, as always. The time, creativity, and effort put in by everyone involved was clear to see, and it is something we genuinely look forward to each year. Having the option to attend at an earlier time to ensure a quieter, calmer environment was especially appreciated. Although we attended just after this quieter slot, the atmosphere was still relaxed and thoroughly enjoyable. Thank you to all staff for creating such a welcoming and magical experience for all families.

Jess

When it came to winter wonderland, we were able to enjoy it as a family in a way that wasn't too overwhelming. I don't think we could have joined in if not. Jenny even kindly took the time to talk our daughter through it step by step when she could see that she was worried. Thank you for all your hard work, it makes such a difference to families at a wonderful, yet overwhelming time of year.

Georgina and Alex

We really enjoyed attending the SEN session for the winter light session last week. My child really struggles with large crowds and noise so being able to attend earlier with a small group size was much better for us. She was able to take her time more and explore the session away from the crowds and noise that would she would have struggled with in a wider group. All the teachers were so kind in helping us find the elves particularly those that would have been harder for her to see due to her visual impairment.

Karen

We thoroughly enjoyed the SEND Winter Lights session. It was lovely for us to access the event in a calmer session. Our whole family thoroughly enjoyed it and made some lovely memories, especially as typical Christmas events are proving to be too overwhelming for my son this year.

Thank you so much for making the session so special, and for giving us such a warm welcome

Alice

Alternative Christmas Crafts

This year, children were offered an alternative activity if they felt they were unable to participate in the Christmas productions. Throughout the school a small number of children accessed the crafts and had a thoroughly enjoyable time. I have gathered parent and pupil voice to share and due to the positive feedback, we will continue to offer this provision at future Christmas productions.

The alternative Christmas activities I feel this worked better for my child. It empowered him to make his own choice to do what he felt comfortable with and took away the usual anxiety and sensory challenges he feels around the Christmas performances. I also felt happier knowing my child was happier.

Amanda

My child thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the alternative Christmas arts and crafts offered in place of the traditional Christmas performance. This thoughtful option removed a great deal of pressure for him, allowing him to feel happy and confident about coming into school. It was reassuring to know that he was so well supported, without the need for me to take time off work to attend a performance he would not have felt comfortable participating in. The inclusive approach made a real difference to his wellbeing and our family's experience. Thank you for this option.

Jess

The SEND provision over the festive period has been a life raft for our family. Our daughter has historically found this a difficult time, dealing with all the changes to routine and over stimulation. Being able to offer her an alternative to performing in the class performance has allowed us to relieve a huge anxiety for her and for her to enjoy the alternative activities offered.

Georgina and Alex

Pupil Voice

I liked doing the crafts and making stuff. I liked colouring in using the felt tip pens.

Otis

I liked the Christmas crafts because it made me feel happy. I made a Christmas tree with lots of glitter.

Millie

I really enjoyed it. I really enjoyed doing something different. I liked the group of children that I was with.

Charlie

Pupil Voice

As part of our whole school monitoring cycle, the SEND children completed a questionnaire. The information supplied has been analysed which reflects their thoughts and wellbeing when they are in school.

SEND: Pupil Voice Analysis

Number of children who completed the SEND pupil voice questionnaire: 51			
	Children	Children	Children
I feel happy in my class.	72%	18%	10%
I feel safe in my class.	65%	31%	4%
I like learning.	25%	43%	31%
The teachers help me to learn.	75%	25%	0%
I feel happy in the playground.	80%	12%	8%
I play with friends at school.	82%	14%	4%

Parent Workshop

Through our membership of the SEND Partnership, I would like to remind you that the next parent online course is in January. I will send the link for you to access the workshop once I receive it in the new year.

Mosaic Education
Psychology Service



Workshop: "Autism, a clinical understanding including gender differences."

Date: Tuesday 20th January 2026

Time: 7.00 – 9.00pm

Venue: Online via Zoom

Inclusion & Intervention Team (IIST)

The new IIST service has recently been launched by the Local Authority. This service has replaced SEND Specialist Services (SSS) and our link professional is Sophie Skates. This week she came into school to work alongside myself and several families to offer support and advice to support both home and school. Although it was a busy day, we all found the experience a valuable one which was really encouraging for a new service.

Stay Connected

Please use the link below to access the December Stay Connected newsletter that is provided through the West Northants Local offer. This enables families to access a wide range of free or affordable activities across the county. Within this edition, Christmas activities are advertised.



<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/XjtmGhfsKgBFTcOa?ref=Link&loc=play>



SEND Information for parents

If you would like to sign up for the West Northants newsletter, please use the link [newsletter](#)



West Northants Local Offer

✉ localoffer@westnorthants.gov.uk
www.westnorthants.gov.uk/local-offer

f [LocalOfferWN](#)
i [localofferwestnorthants](#)

As always, if you have any SEND questions or queries which your child's class teacher cannot help with, please email me between the hours of 8.30am – 5.30pm (Monday-Thursday) and 8.30am – 4.30pm (Friday) senco@whitehills.northants-ecl.gov.uk I will respond to emails within three working days.

I do hope many of you will access the 'SEND Drop-in sessions' which are available to book every Thursday afternoon, throughout the Spring Term. Mrs Currell (Family Support worker) and Mrs Connors (*Early Help and Well-being Support*) will also be available to offer support and advice. Appointments can be booked through the school office – 01604 843780.

We would like to wish you and your family a wonderful Christmas and we hope you all have a happy and healthy 2026!

With best wishes

Mrs Elaine Ayton
SENDCO