

St John's Friday Newsletter

Friday 12th December 2025

Message from the Head

Merry Christmas to you all! Thank you for your support with the Christmas Fair - it was lovely to see so many people there. A special mention has to go to the School Council for raising £97.30 for the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Likewise, the 'Pangolin Society' raised £106.36 for their adopted pangolin. Both groups of children were so well-organised, preparing things to sell. They are very keen to make a difference to protect these creatures.

I am delighted to share with you the report from our recent SIAMS Inspection (School Inspection for Anglican and Methodist Schools). I would like to thank all the children, staff, governors, parents and our wider school community for their hard work and continued support. We have a wonderful school 'where pupils and adults flourish academically, personally and spiritually.' (See report at the end of this newsletter).

The KS1 and Y3/4 children have performed brilliantly in their Christmas productions and they have certainly got us in the festive spirit. We look forward to all the parties next week, the Christmas Service at church and the Y5/6 Christmas production. Just a reminder that we return to school on Monday 5th January.

Have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Mrs Findlay



St Johns CE (VA) J&I School
Belgravia Rd
Wakefield
WF1 3JP
Tel: 01924 369136
Headteacher: Mrs H Findlay
www.wakefieldstjohnscofeschool.co.uk

Dates for your diary (all dates for the academic year are on the school app/website)

15th December	Y2 Christmas Journey at Wakefield Cathedral (am only) YR, Y1, Y2 Christmas Party (pm)
16th December	Y3, Y4 Christmas Party (pm)
18th December	Christmas Service at St John's Church – 10:00am Y5, Y6 Christmas Party (pm)
19th December	Y5/Y6 Christmas Production – 10:00am End of term
5th January (8:40am)	School re-opens



St John's All Stars

If you require childcare before or after school, we have St John's All Stars which opens from 7:30am and then again from 3:20pm-6:00pm Monday to Thursday and 3:20pm-4:30pm on a Friday. Children can enjoy sausage sandwich Friday on Friday mornings! Look at the school website under Parent Information or contact wraparound@st-johns.wakefield.sch.uk for further details.

Please note All Stars always runs between these times, even when we have other events happening in school

Growing together, becoming all that we are created to be



Christmas Bauble Competition - We had some fantastic decorated baubles. It was very difficult selecting the winners but the designs below were chosen. Congratulations to Ida (YR), Abigail (Y1), Emma (Y2), Dorian (Y3), Bahar (Y4), Aima (Y5) and Fred (Y6)



Christmas Jumper Day - Christmas Jumper day took place today, it was lovely to see so many different Christmas jumpers, the children looked great.

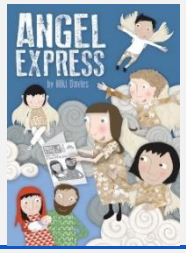


Christmas Lunch - Christmas lunch was served on Wednesday. Thank you very much to Denise and team, those who took up Christmas dinner thoroughly enjoyed.



Christmas Productions - We have seen two fantastic Christmas productions, EYFS/KS1 "It's a Baby" and Y3/Y4 "Angel Express". Thank you to all the children and staff, you were amazing! We are looking forward to seeing the Y5/Y6 Production of "The Inn-Spectors" next week.



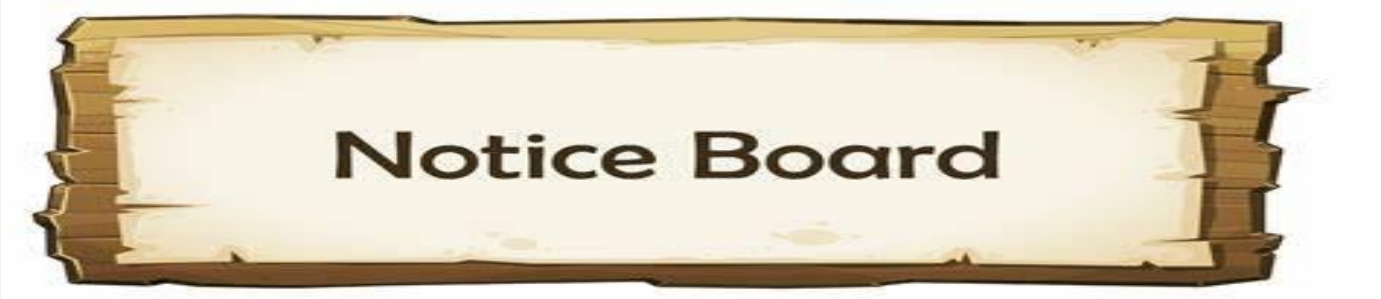




Christmas Fair - The Christmas fair was enjoyed by everyone and was a great success. We raised an incredible £1647.96. Many thanks to those who gave up their time to help out and also to everyone who donated items for the prize draw and various stalls. Jack in Y3 won the Squishy Gingerbread Man in the "Guess the name" competition whose name was Icy-Bell.

Christmas Prize Draw winners

	Prize	Name
1st	M&S Hamper	Etienne - Year 1
2nd	Graham Eyes Meat Hamper	Miss Hale
3rd	Life Coaching, session voucher	Zach – Year R
4th	Children's Goodie Hamper	Mrs Findlay
5th	Haribo Hamper	Georgia - Year 5
6th	Fenty Make-Up Beauty Bundle	Eleanor – Year R
7th	Scott Banks £30 Hair Voucher	Penny – Year 4
8th	Family ticket for Reel Cinema	Flo – Year 5
9th	Royal Spice 2 x buffet meals	Diane Findlay
10th	Pamper Hamper	Ellis – Year 4
11th	Home and Beauty Hamper	Mrs Mitchell
12th	Family ticket for Leeds Knights Ice Hockey (Elland Road)	David Findlay
13th	£15 Entertainer Voucher	Willow – Year R
14th	Wakefield Indoor Karting	Holly Findlay
15th	Haus Voucher for Plant and Free Coffee & Cake	Caleb – Year R
16th	£15 M&S Voucher	Willow – Year R
17th	Chocolate, Biscuits and Sweets Hamper	Noah – Year 1
18th	Shortbread & Wine	David Aitchison
19th	Children's Book Collection	Margaret Wright
20th	Bayliss & Harding Toiletries and Hand Duo	Huzaifah – Year 4
21st	Wine & Chocolates	Arthur – Year 5
22nd	Wine & Biscuits	Arthur – Year 5



KS2 teacher led after school clubs -

The sign-up letter for KS2 after school clubs for next half term will be added to the school website at the end of the day Wednesday 17th December**.** You will find this under the 'Parent' tab 'Letters'. Clubs begin again week commencing Monday 12th January until week commencing Monday 9th February (5 weeks). If your child would like to sign up for any of the clubs listed, please log onto Arbor by 2:00pm on Friday 9th January 2026 and select the club and give consent. Please note there are limited places available so book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. **Do not select multiple clubs on the same day, check with your child which club they wish to take part in prior to reserving a place, selecting multiple clubs takes a space from another child.** If Arbor allows you to give consent then your child has a place - the school office will **not** send out confirmation.



Walking Bus -

School gets very congested at the start and end of the day. We have a walking bus service where children can be dropped off at Capri at the Vine at 8:30am and collected at 3:40pm. The children will walk to and from school accompanied by our walking bus leaders, Mrs Price and Mrs Medina. **This is a free service but children must be registered with the school office to use this.**



MP Sports -

The after school club continues until Monday 15th December for KS1 and Wednesday 17th December for KS2. Children are to be collected from the main office area now it is dark. KS1 children need to be collected by an adult after the club and KS2 children can be collected by an adult or a child of 16 or over. You can sign up for next half term from Monday 5th January. An app message will be sent out when this is available.



INSET Day -

School will be closed on Friday 23rd January for an INSET Day.



Christmas Cards - Children can continue to bring their Christmas cards to school to give to their friends. These will be put into the post boxes in school and distributed to the classes each day. Please make sure names and classes are clearly written on the envelopes.



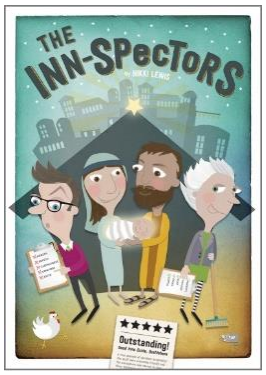
Christmas Parties - Children in EYFS and KS1 will be having their Christmas party on Monday 15th December, Y3/Y4 children have theirs on Tuesday 16th December and Y5/Y6 children have theirs on Thursday 18th December. You will have received a letter from class about bringing food for the party. Please note children can come to school dressed in their party clothes on their Christmas party day.



St John's Church Service - The Church service takes place on Thursday 18th December at 10:00am. All parents/carers welcome!

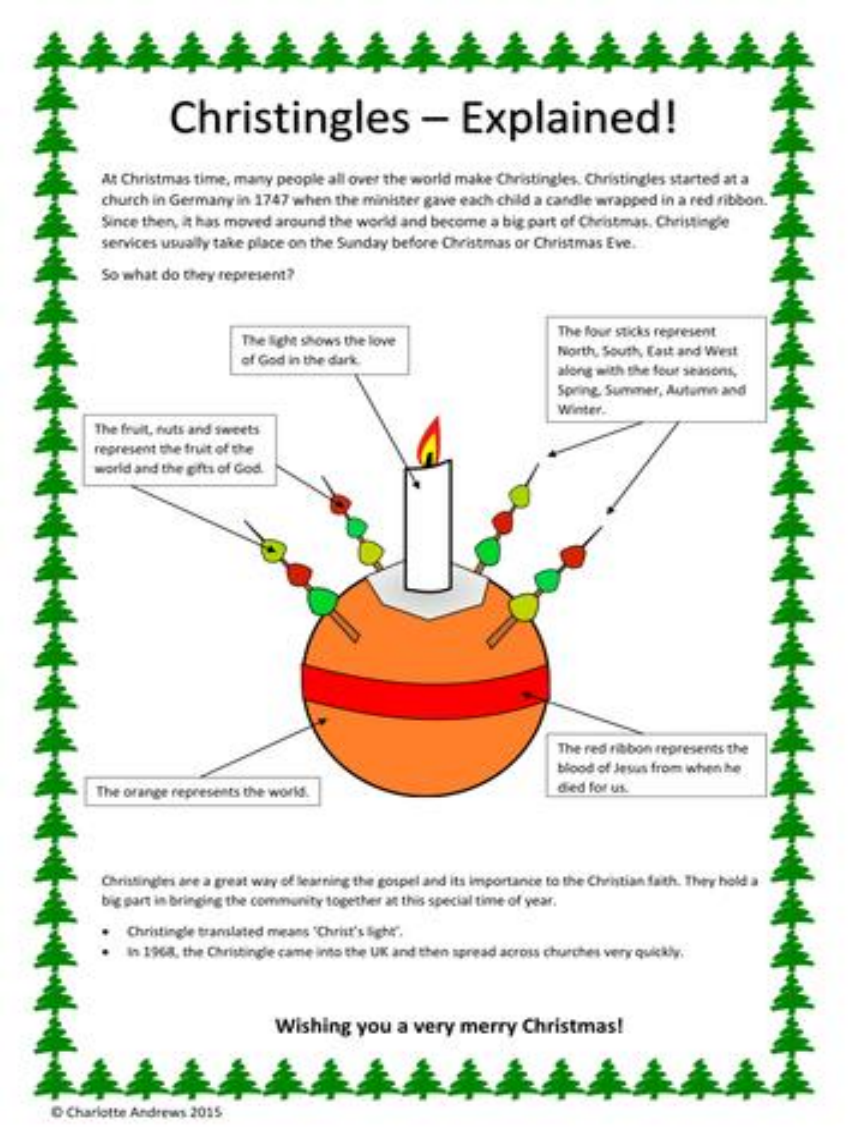


Christmas Productions -Year 5 and Year 6 production of The Inn-Spectors will take place on Friday 19th December at 10:00am.



St John's PTA Make-Up Evening – On Thursday 22nd January, the PTA have organised a make-up tutorial event. Mrs Johnston will be sharing her expertise and leading a make-up tutorial so come along and support the event and pick up some tips! More details will follow in the New Year.









Christingles in aid of The Children's Society Charity - Christingles went home with EYFS/KS1 children this week. Unfortunately the church are short this year but they will accept donations in any container but please label "Christingle". Every year your Christingle helps children across the UK to transform their lives. Please fill the boxes with loose change and return to school or take to one of the St John's Church Christingle Services on 24th December at 3:30pm or 5:00pm or alternatively scan the QR code to make an online donation.



Dinner Debate:

Spirituality in School:

As a school, we have defined spirituality as: "Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves (Self) and how we treat others (Others). It is about awe and wonder (World), asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves (Meaning)."

Each newsletter will contain a 'Dinner Debate' for you to discuss as a family if you wish.
Linked to our value of 'Together', the Christian value of `` Peace' and our focus on spiritual development (Self, Others, World and Meaning)

When is it hard for you to wait? How can you practice patience like we do during Advent?

This question helps us to think about ourselves and being patient during an exciting time.

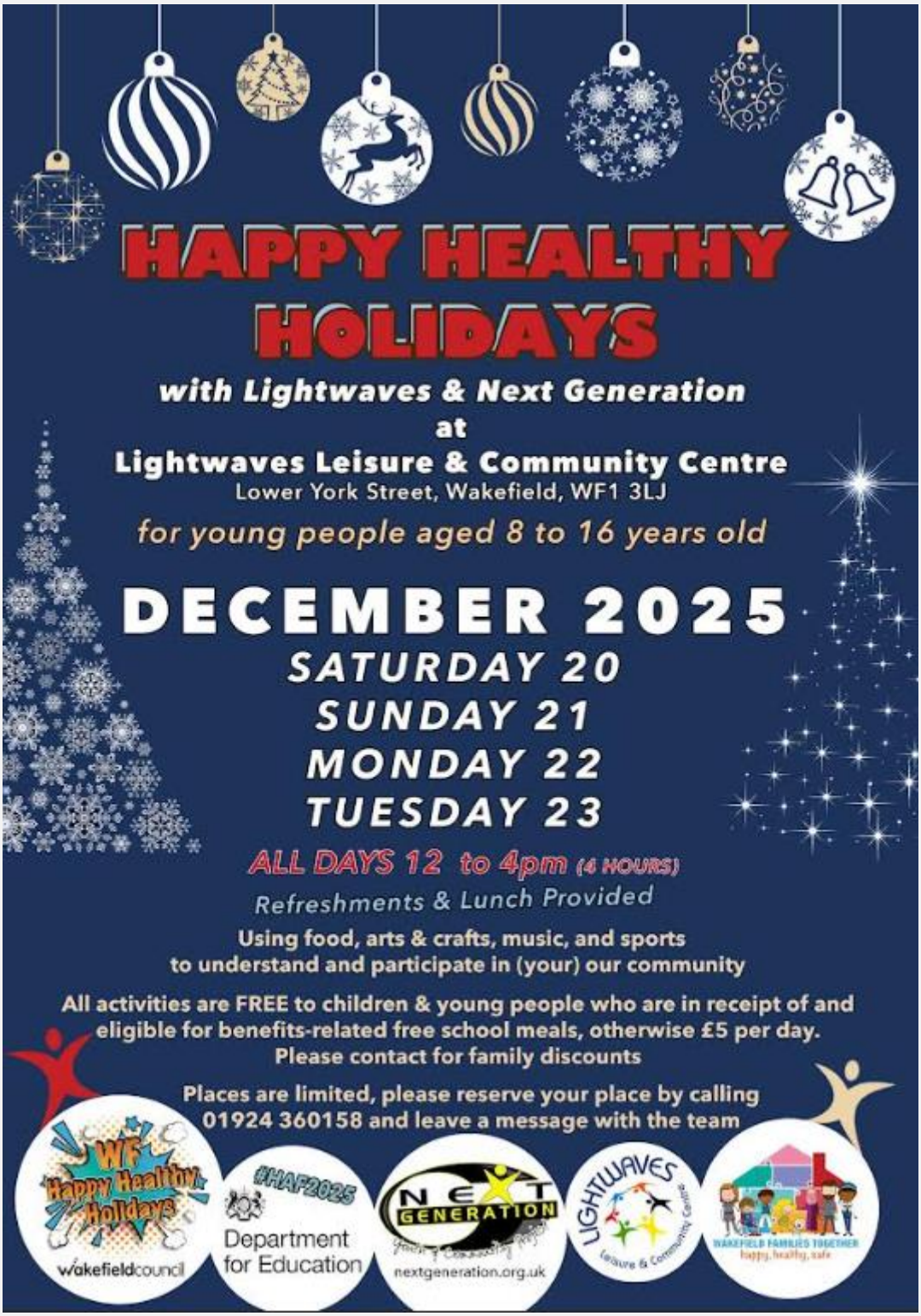
It helps us to reflect on the 'Self' aspect of spiritual development by encouraging us to use calming strategies to practice patience.

Collective Worship:

This half term, we are thinking Advent. We will be discussing what this means for Christians and how they prepare for the birth of Jesus. We will be listening to the story of Christmas and retelling this through drama, music and readings.



Happy Healthy Holidays - Lightwaves and Next Generation are hosting 4 fun-filled days of activities in the run up to Christmas, 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd December, at Lightwaves Leisure & Community Centre. These are full days of activities for young people aged 8 to 16 years old with lunch and refreshments provided. These are FREE to children and young people who are in receipt of and eligible for benefits-related free school meals (please note this is NOT Universal Free Meals offered to EYFS/KS1 children). Everyone else is also welcome but the charge will be £5 per day which I am sure you will agree is very good value. Please see the flyer below for further details.



FREE Parenting Clinics

Anisa Lewis - Positive Parenting



November 2025
Helping kids to navigate friendships

December 2025
When your touched & talked out (Parent Wellbeing)

January 2026
Screens, scrolling and staying sane

February 2026
Raising Resilient Kids

Register Here

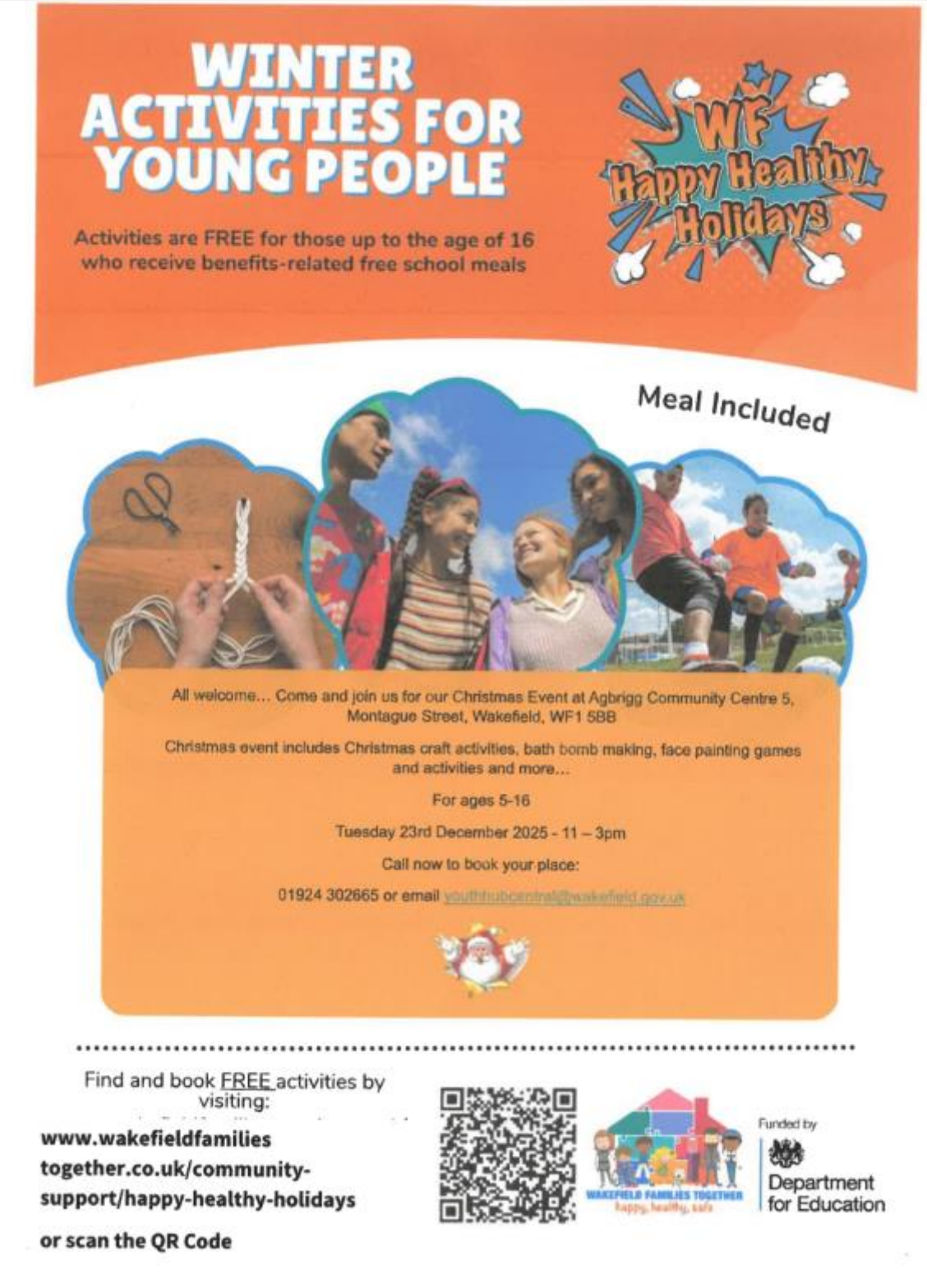
Online

https://anisalewis.as.me/theclinic

ANISA LEWIS
POSITIVE PARENTING

Growing together, becoming all that we are created to be

This is open to everyone too. However, those children who are in receipt of and eligible for benefits-related free school meals (please note this is NOT Universal Free Meals offered to EYFS/KS1 children) will receive a food hamper once signed up.



We thought that you might like to know about the "Fly with Santa" experience below. Here's what the planetarium people say:

It begins with an exciting trip into our huge inflatable planetarium dome, there's a rocket launch and a trip to the moon followed by a brief guide to the night sky that Santa uses to find his way around the Earth. Then get yourselves comfy for the animated feature film, 'What Santa Sees' in which he flies over our heads as he uses the stars to find his way around the world dropping off gifts as he goes.



There is plenty of parking at the #anglerscountrypark (WF4 2EE) and you'll find us in the visitor centre

To get to the eventbrite page where you'll find more details and tickets.

Follow the link https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-santa-sees-tickets-1715891831659

or Search "What Santa Sees Eventbrite"

or scan the QR code

FB: @polestarplanetarium

There are 5 sessions each day over the 2 weekends before Christmas to choose from - Sat 13, Sun 14 and Sat 20, Sun 21

Have a walk by the lake, watch the birds from a hide, visit the cafe and play area, see the show!

Growing together, becoming all that we are created to be

Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools

Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Report

St. John's Church of England (VA) Junior and Infant School

Vision

'Growing together, becoming all that we are created to be'. Our vision is rooted in the parable of 'The Mustard Seed' where children, staff and our school community can flourish and reach their individual potential.

'Though it is the smallest of all seeds, when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.' Matthew 13:32.

St John's Church of England VA Junior and Infant School is living up to its foundation as a Church school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. It has the following notable strengths.

Notable Strengths

- Strong and effective leadership ensures that the distinctively Christian vision is clearly communicated and understood. Consequently, pupils and adults are nurtured and known as unique individuals. The vision is evident in the care, dignity, and respect consistently demonstrated in relationships across the school.
- The school has a well-balanced and sequenced religious education (RE) curriculum. This enables pupils to have a secure understanding of a range of world religions and worldviews. They consider how this knowledge influences their own lives and are extremely respectful of others.
- Highly inclusive support for pupils is embedded across rich and well-structured learning opportunities. This provision is complemented by a varied extracurricular programme. Therefore, pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are enabled to thrive both academically and personally.
- Effective pastoral care systems prioritise wellbeing and resilience, creating a nurturing environment where staff and pupils feel valued and supported. This reflects the school's vision, enabling pupils to become 'all that we are created to be.' These are strong foundations that enable individuals to flourish.
- Collective worship is thoughtfully planned and inclusive, creating a welcoming atmosphere. Pupils and adults value the calm and uplifting opportunities for reflection and prayer. As a result, their spiritual growth and sense of community is enriched.

Development Points

- Develop an assessment system in RE that enables pupils themselves to understand how they can make progress.
- Expand pupils' understanding of Christianity as a global faith. This is to enable appreciation of its significance across cultures, and its influence on different communities around the world.

Inspection Findings

Vision and Leadership St John's Church of England Junior and Infant School thrives as a nurturing, vibrant community where pupils and adults flourish. Rooted in the Christian vision of the mustard seed, this ethos is lived out daily in learning and relationships. The Christian vision guides decisions made by leaders. The impact of this is evident in pupils' achievements and their joy in learning. Adults and pupils are recognised as unique individuals, with their gifts nurtured so they can contribute fully to school life. Therefore, pupils develop resilience and confidence, creating an environment where they feel safe, valued, and encouraged to grow. Staff model kindness and perseverance, demonstrating the belief that great outcomes often begin with small steps. This helps pupils stay motivated when challenges arise, reinforcing the idea that persistence leads to success. Professional growth is also prioritised, with training, curriculum development, and opportunities for fulfilment enabling staff to flourish. Governors are actively engaged in the life of the school, ensuring that policies and priorities remain rooted in its Christian foundation.
Vision and Curriculum A carefully planned curriculum balances learning with opportunities to think about life's bigger questions and purpose. This approach helps pupils grow not just in knowledge, but in understanding who they are and what matters to them. These planned opportunities are complemented by moments of spirituality that arise naturally during the school day. Reflection and discussion enable pupils to connect learning to faith and everyday life. Curiosity and personal growth are the outcome. A wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including music and sport further supports creativity and resilience. Wellbeing clubs, art sessions and diverse enrichment opportunities allow pupils to discover new talents and build confidence. As a result, there is a vibrant school culture that fosters inclusivity and personal growth. Leaders monitor impact through pupil voice, outcomes, and engagement, confirming that the Christian vision is lived out in practice.
Worship and Spirituality Collective worship is a cherished feature of school life. The worship committee take ownership of this special time with a strong sense of pride. A powerful symbol of belonging is seen in the jigsaw pieces that each class brings to worship. When assembled, the completed puzzle illustrates that individuals are valued and together they flourish. Worship is genuinely invitational, encouraging pupils and adults to participate freely without pressure. Biblical teaching and liturgical traditions are well integrated. These provide a strong moral and spiritual foundation, shaping values and guiding behaviour for both pupils and adults. For example, pupils have used the story of Saul to understand that making mistakes does not define them. Their ability to say sorry and seek forgiveness is a key factor in the peaceful relationships they have with each other. Spirituality is seen as a meaningful journey. Happy moments that bring people together are successfully combined with quiet times to think and reflect. Worship clearly shapes values, inspiring pupils to live out the Christian vision. One example is how they encourage and support one another, shown in their efforts to fund an outdoor 'buddy bench'. This is to give pupils a place to go and meet with others if they feel sad or need a friend. Strong partnerships with the parish church enrich worship. Clergy provide support that deepens the connection between school and faith community.
Vision, Justice and Responsibility Pupils demonstrate a strong commitment to balancing freedom and rights with care for others. This is evident in their enthusiasm for leadership roles such as wellbeing warriors, school council representatives, worship committee members, and head boy or head girl. These opportunities allow them to serve their community, speak up for fairness, and ensure voices are heard. During a dedicated week focused on sustainability, pupils take part in environmental projects such as litter picking. Their involvement in forest schools nurtures respect for the natural world and has led to them creating a 'wilding area.' This deepens their understanding of how their actions shape a more compassionate society. For example, some have gone further by researching and acting on issues like the decline of bees and pangolins. Additionally, many pupils show passion for recycling and tackling pollution. Such dedication links their beliefs to ethical choices and everyday actions that care for God's creation.

The National Society Church of England and Church in Wales for the Promotion of Education is a registered charity (313070) in England and Wales

Partnerships with churches and environmental supporters broaden horizons and strengthen community ties. As a result, pupils see themselves as agents of change, confident in using their voices and actions to make a difference.

Religious Education

RE is placed at the heart of learning, ensuring its provision is consistent and prioritised across the key stages. The subject is well resourced, with high-quality materials and access to specialist support. Professional development for staff is a clear priority, with training that equips staff to inspire curiosity and critical thinking. Leaders have developed a curriculum that is carefully sequenced and academically challenging. Pupils build knowledge progressively, making meaningful connections across themes. The curriculum offers rich opportunities for pupils to discover world faiths and worldviews. They explore their learning in a respectful and thoughtful way. However, insight into Christianity as a global faith, expressed and lived out across diverse cultures, remains limited.

RE is taught to a high standard. Lessons are well planned and delivered through creative approaches that engage pupils and deepen their understanding. Teachers show secure subject knowledge and use imaginative strategies to make learning both challenging and accessible. Pupils make good progress in lessons, and RE contributes positively to their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Staff use assessment systems effectively to inform teaching. This means that they adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs. However, pupils are not able to use assessment feedback to identify next steps in their own learning or to track their progress. This is an area for development, as pupil ownership of learning is key to long-term success.

Vision and Culture

The school's Christian vision drives a culture where inclusion and wellbeing are at the heart of decision-making. Leaders actively model Jesus' teaching to love and serve one another. This ensures that pupils and adults are treated with dignity and respect. The vision shapes policies and practice so that mental health and wellbeing are prioritised. For example, purpose-built spaces for prayer and reflection, support pupils to regulate emotions and return to learning with confidence and focus. This has led to improved engagement with lessons. Teaching mental health strategies through journaling and open dialogue, strengthens resilience and deepens spiritual understanding. This, along with targeted interventions and nurture groups, provide personalised support. Consequently, there is sustained achievement and increased confidence for pupils, including those who have SEND and those identified as vulnerable. Adults also benefit from wellbeing strategies that maintain stability and trust during challenging times. As a result, the school is a close-knit, Christ-centred community, where pupils flourish academically, personally, and spiritually.

Information			
Address	Belgravia Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF1 3JP		
Date	24 November 2025	URN	108255
Type of school	Voluntary aided	No. of pupils	206
Diocese	Leeds		
Headteacher	Helen Findlay		
Chair of Governors	Joan Mitchell		
Inspector	Kerrie Clowes		