

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

15TH DECEMBER 2023



They say time flies and I cannot believe we have reached the end of another year! The Autumn term has, as always, been a busy one and the last few weeks have certainly been that. We have had plays and performances galore, Christmas Bazaars, and we mustn't forget the visits from Santa himself.

It has been so wonderful to see old and new faces at these events and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those of you who came along to support us. Without you these events would not be the success they were. I would also like to thank the students themselves for taking part and also to the staff for their organisational work.

I have loved seeing the students making such great progress this term. I was absolutely blown away by some of our Key Stage 4 students recently, who delivered an amazing adaptation of Charles Dickens Scrooge. It has been great to see and hear new students settling into school routines and making such great progress, particularly with their communication. We have had students attending sports events, work experience opportunities and so many students across the federation making amazing progress with their reading. I have also been so proud of some of our Key Stage 2 students at ETS who have actually written and produced their own books – authors and illustrators in the making! I know that there are even more students joining the writing group next term so I look forward to reading even more stories in the Spring term!

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to those of you who took the time to send in your messages to staff recently. They were so well received and really did give staff a huge boost of Christmas cheer. As always, we are all so grateful to our families for all your continued support.

And finally, I would like to wish you all a very Merry and peaceful Christmas and a joyful New Year. However you spend the break, I hope you enjoy spending time with family and friends.

I look forward to welcoming the students back to school on the 3rd January. See you next year!

CONTENTS INCLUDE ...

Family coffee Mornings - Dates for Upper school classes are listed on the next page.

Message from Steven Finnemore, Chair of Governors.

Term Dates are available on our website, link in the newsletter.

The Big Ambition - Survey date has been extended to January 2024.

NHS Torbay Hospital - If you would like to complete a survey about your visits to Torbay Hospital, please contact the Nursing Team at BB in the new year.

Fundraising - Thank you for supporting our fundraising efforts this term. Totals raised are listed.

Orthotics is no longer being offered as a service at BB. Please contact the Orthotic Centres at Torquay or Plymouth (tel numbers in the newsletter).

New Assistant Head - Tom Cook is joining us next term.

Born at the Right time - A support service for families. Their website link is in the newsletter.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

WHAT'S COMING UP

Term Ends - Friday 15th December

Pupils return -
Wednesday 3rd January

LS1 @ Pizzalogica -
Wednesday 10th January

Parents' Evening (except Ladybirds) - Tuesday 16th January and
Wednesday 17th January

LS2 @ Pizzalogica -
Wednesday 17th January

Ladybirds Parents' Evening - Thursday 18th January

LS3 @ Pizzalogica -
Wednesday 24th January

BB PTFA AGM at 10 am -
Thursday 25th January

S1 @ Pizzalogica -
Wednesday 31st January



EVENT FOR FAMILIES!!!

It is our absolute pleasure to invite parents, carers and grandparents to class-based family events.

Across the school year, we will be inviting families to join either their Class Teacher or a key member of staff to a Class Coffee Morning at Pizzalogica at Meadowbrook. Classes will be invited on an individual basis, so families can meet, get to know each other and have a chat.

The list of dates for each class is overleaf. If you didn't know, Pizzalogica is located in Meadowbrook which is the large building within the school car park. As part of their work experience, we are hoping for our older students to prep and serve the drinks so bring your pennies along! The Class Coffee Morning will run from 10.30 am. We hope you can join us at Meadowbrook!

DATES FOR CLASS COFFEE MORNINGS

AT MEADOWBROOK

FROM 10.30 AM

LS1 - Wednesday 10th January

LS2 - Wednesday 17th January

LS3 - Wednesday 24th January

S1 - Wednesday 31st January

S2 - Wednesday 7th February

S3 - Wednesday 21st February

S4 - Wednesday 28th February

Sixth Form 1 - Wednesday 6th March

Sixth Form 2 - Wednesday 13th March

MESSAGE FROM STEVEN FINNEMORE, CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Autumn Term 2023 Update

As the year draws to an end (and in preparation for writing this newsletter), I've been thinking about a number of things, where's the year gone being the main one. It doesn't seem like a year ago that I became the chair and we were preparing for 2023, but I'm not sure we could have expected to have such a busy time, especially having to attend 2 Ofsted visits with in the space of a few weeks. The 2 Good ratings were as expected by governors and are testament to the Senior Leaders and staff that we were so well prepared.

Throughout the term, Governors have attended student council, whole school meetings and other events and we will continue to do this, along with a schedule of Monitoring Walks throughout the coming year. Each walk focuses on a key area of the curriculum and we are able to challenge and assess the impact of teaching. We are also able to meet with parents, staff and pupils and we welcome feedback.

We have appointed one new governor this term and we have another that will join us in the new Year. Karolina Galera joined us in September and will be on the CBT committee and will be helping with safeguarding. Please say hello to her or any governors you may see around school. You can't miss us, now we have striking new bright orange lanyards!

More info about the Governors can be found on our website; <http://learntolivefederation.co.uk/governors/>

All the governors hope you have a wonderful Christmas and a very happy new year.



Steven Finnemore,
Chair of Governors



Current Term Dates for this year and the next academic year can be found on our website [Bidwell Brook](#)

The Big Ambition - The Children's Commissioner for England, Dame Rachel de Souza, has launched The Big Ambition, a national survey of children and young people across England.

The Big Ambition aims to hear from children across England on what they think is important! In the lead up to the next General Election, the Children's Commissioner wants to take children's thoughts, opinions and ideas to decision-makers, to make sure that the Government hears young people's voices on what they think needs to be done to make children's lives better in England. The survey has been extended and is now open until Friday 19th January 2024..

Although the survey is not specifically aimed at children with SEND, it does include an option to indicate if you have special educational needs. It is very quick to complete, the questions are 'tick box' and pretty straightforward. The link is [here](#).



Torbay Hospital is conducting a survey and would like to know from families, your views of the service they receive.

If you would be happy completing a survey, please give Claire or Zoe, our School Nurses, a call in the new year. They will request a survey to be sent home to you. Their number is 01803 415011.



Fundraising - We have some totals to share with you:

The **Rags2Riches** clothes collection this term raised £86.80! We have another collection booked after the February half term holiday.

The **Macmillan** Coffee Morning at BB raised £63.67. Thanks so much!

Our contribution from Bidwell Brook to **Children In Need** was £114.70. These are all amazing amounts so thank you everyone.



Orthotics is no longer dealt with at Bidwell Brook.

If you have any enquiries regarding footwear, splints, helmets then please ring the Orthotic Centre at Castle Circus Torquay on 01803 217761 or Plymouth Orthotics on 01752 434229. If you have a child that you feel requires orthotics and haven't been seen before then a GP or Physio referral will need to be made first. Please do not hesitate to contact the Physio Team at Bidwell Brook if you have any questions.

Thank you.

New Assistant Head - Next term, we welcome Tom Cook to Bidwell Brook as our new Assistant Head, supporting Kate and Marie.



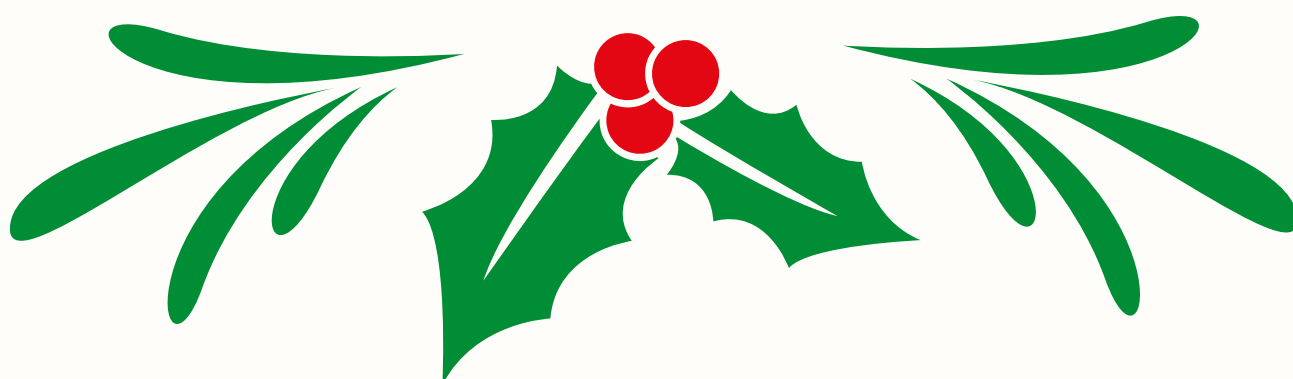
**You may find this
information useful:**



Born at the Right Time's vision is to create a world where families of people with complex disabilities are valued and supported to thrive in a community where they belong. We put the lived experience of families at the heart of our work and are passionate about improving lives through parent carer support, training practitioners and influencing policy makers and providers.

We have a number of free resources for the parent carers of children with complex needs on our [website](#).

*Merry
Christmas*



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SMART TVs

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

From Netflix to Disney+ to Prime Video, there is a plethora of streaming services available. While these services offer content catering for younger viewers, they also provide material for more mature audiences. If you don't have parental controls set up on your accounts, your child could find themselves being exposed to shows and movies with adult themes, strong language and violence.

INCREASED SCREEN TIME

The array of content available through smart TVs could lead to your child spending excessive amounts of time in front of the screen. Not only can prolonged screen time distract from important activities such as schoolwork or exercise, but experts have also warned that endless hours in front of the box can lead to health problems including obesity, poor sleeping patterns and depression.

REMOTE-CONTROL RETAIL

Like many online devices, smart TVs facilitate digital purchases: buying a new app or the latest season of a favourite show, for example. If your child has access to a bank card and isn't restricted by spending controls on the system, they could run up a sizeable bill through a smart TV fairly quickly – especially if they're not quite old enough to fully appreciate the value of money.

Smart TVs connect to the internet without the need for a set-top box or streaming device, letting users access a range of features through the TV set itself: from on-demand content apps like BBC iPlayer to streaming services such as Netflix, as well connecting to smartphones and other wireless devices. Most new televisions are internet enabled – so whether you're thinking of upgrading your home viewing system or buying an additional TV for your child's room, it's now even more important to consider the online safety aspects.

UNCONVINCING SECURITY

As Internet of Things (IoT) devices, smart TVs can be uniquely vulnerable to attack. Experts warn that internet-enabled TVs tend not to support high-level security software, so you won't always be able to download strong antivirus programmes like you would on a phone or computer. Being targeted by hackers could be deeply upsetting for your child, as well as putting their personal data at risk.

A SILENT SPY?

Some smart TVs already collect data on users' viewing habits and then display targeted advertising based on that personal information – while there have also been reports of internet-enabled TVs (and the apps installed on them) being used to 'eavesdrop' on owners. In models with a built-in microphone (for voice activation), third parties could potentially listen in on someone's home life.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

Many smart TVs can be used for web browsing, social media and live streaming – all of which could allow unknown users to contact your child (or vice versa). If your child engages with these functions of the TV, a stranger could potentially discover their contact information and potentially then use it to obtain even more sensitive personal details, such as your home address.

Advice for Parents & Carers

MAKE IT A FAMILY THING

Family TV time is a great way to model the responsible enjoyment of technology – showing your child how to use the smart TV safely for when they're old enough to watch it independently. You could also take this opportunity to establish some healthy TV boundaries, such as time limits on their daily viewing or how to make sure they're only watching content that's appropriate for their age.

SET UP PARENTAL CONTROLS

It's likely that your smart TV has built-in parental controls, which not only let you filter out age-inappropriate shows, movies and games but can also restrict in-app purchasing, so your child can't accidentally spend money through the device. When you've enabled these safeguards, have an open conversation with your child about the reasons, helping them to understand the potential risks.

CREATE CHILD PROFILES

Much like with smartphones and tablets, apps can be downloaded onto smart TVs: from free content platforms such as BBC iPlayer to paid-for services like Prime Video. Most of these apps allow you to create a separate account for your child which has different settings to your own – suggesting more child-friendly material and reducing the possibility of them viewing explicit content.

CONSIDER THE LOCATION

If you're concerned about the online safety hazards that a smart TV might pose to your child, you could consider where in your home you put the device. The safest option would be to place the smart TV in a shared family space – so that an adult is usually nearby and able to supervise while your child's watching it – rather than in the relative privacy of a bedroom.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



National
Online
Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday