

# FAMILY NEWSLETTER

22ND JANUARY 2024



January is the month for fresh starts, goal setting etc. As the new year begins, leaders across the Federation are continuing to focus on the development of our curriculum to ensure that it is relevant to and for all our students.

Inset days and training opportunities for staff ensure that we are keeping up to date with best practice and continuing to refine and develop our own knowledge and skillsets so that we are offering the very best education to your children.

Over the past few weeks, it has been great to see our children and young people engaging in their learning. I currently have 3 books that have been written by students hanging on my noticeboard – we have some great authors and illustrators in the making!

Children and young people have continued to access a range of exciting opportunities including taking part in fun fest, enterprise, work experience opportunities and hobbies and interest clubs. I saw the most amazing Taiko session at one of our sites this week with some of our youngest children – lots of noise, lots of movement and a great time being had by all that were there!

We hope that you were able to take up the opportunity to meet either in person or virtually with your child's Class Teacher last week to discuss their individual targets and progress etc. These meetings also provide an opportunity for teachers and families to review Core Documents together to ensure they are up to date. Please do get in touch with your Class Teacher if you have not had an opportunity to do this. It is important that we have up to date information and to ensure that home and school are working together as collaboratively as possible.

As always, I would like to say thank you all for your continued support, I am really looking forward to seeing how all our pupils continue to progress over the forthcoming term.

**Nikki Burroughs**  
**Executive Head**

# CONTENTS INCLUDE ...

**Family Coffee Mornings** - Dates for Upper school classes are listed on the next page. Tom Cook, our new Assistant Headteacher will be joining every week - come and meet him!

**Sensory Toys** - There is a sensory toy and game lending service in the South West that families can use. Link to their website is in the newsletter.

**Coughs** - A cough is a common illness at this time of year, but there are things you can do to help your child feel more comfortable. There's a useful link to a site in the newsletter and information attached.

**Measles** - Our BB Nursing Team has advised the rate of measles cases in young children is rising across the UK. We have no confirmed cases of measles at BB, but please check the NHS website if you need advice.

**Devon SEND Transformation Plan** - New plan available to read on the DCC website.

**Devon Wallet** - The new virtual wallet platform is now available. See the link in the newsletter.

**Term Dates 2024-2025** - Available on our website and also attached.

**VTech Toot Toot Toys** - A request please for donations of these toys to school. Thank you!

**Christmas Bazaar** - Our total raised was £1,718.02 plus £124 commission on the beautiful artwork branded merchandise everyone ordered. Many thanks!

**PTFA AGM** - Our AGM is on Thursday 25th January at 10 am at school. We'd love to see you there. We're also looking for a new Treasurer if you are good with numbers??!!

**Rags2Riches** - Another collection is happening on Wednesday 21st February after the half term so if you have unwanted clothes etc from your Winter to early Spring wardrobe clear out, please send them our way!

# WHAT'S COMING UP

LS3 @ Pizzalogica -  
Wednesday 24th January

BB PTFA AGM at 10 am -  
Thursday 25th January

S1 @ Pizzalogica -  
Wednesday 31st January

Early Years & Key Stage 1  
Family Visit 1.45 pm -  
Monday 5th February

Safer Internet Day -  
Tuesday 6th February

S2 @ Pizzalogica -  
Wednesday 7th February

Half Term -  
w/c 12th February

Pupils return -  
Monday 19th February

S3 @ Pizzalogica -  
Wednesday 21st February

Rags2Riches Clothes  
Collection - Wednesday  
21st February



## **EVENT FOR FAMILIES!!!**

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

Across the school year, we have been inviting families to a Class Coffee Morning at Pizzalogica at Meadowbrook starting at 10.30 am.

Tom Cook, our new Assistant Headteacher is now joining these sessions every week to meet everyone and get to know you.

Pizzalogica is located in Meadowbrook which is the large building within the school car park. As part of their work experience, our older students have also been supporting these sessions by preparing and serving the drinks, so bring your pennies along!

### **DATES FOR CLASS COFFEE MORNINGS**

#### **AT MEADOWBROOK**

#### **FROM 10.30 AM**

**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**

**Sensory Toys** - Did you know there is an organisation called "The Lending Library" which lends out a variety of sensory toys and games to families in the South West? Click [here](#) to find out more.



**Coughs** - We are seeing a few pupil absences caused by coughs. As you know, coughs and colds are a common part of childhood, especially during the winter. Most of these infections are caused by viruses and children recover quickly with a bit of rest and paracetamol. If you would like some information about how to help a child with a cough, please follow this [link](#). Also attached is a leaflet giving useful information.

**Measles** - Our Nursing Team at BB has requested families are made aware of a rising number of measles cases in young children. We have no confirmed cases at BB, but in the UK, health professionals are reporting an increase. If you suspect your child has measles, which starts with cold-like symptoms and after a few days, develops into a rash, please check the [NHS website](#), seek advice from your Pharmacist or GP and inform the school. Thank you.



**Devon SEND Transformation Plan** - A new [Devon SEND Transformation Plan](#) has been published. It sets out the seven key strands of work which aim to address the significant challenges that Devon faces in relation to SEND and inclusion.



It also shows how the work to address the four areas of weakness highlighted in the Ofsted report (2022) is incorporated into the wider plans for transformation.

**The Devon Wallet** - is a [new virtual wallet platform](#) that will support the delivery of direct payments and personal budgets, starting with Short Break plans.



Devon families advised DCC they would like more visibility of the support available to them, and an easy-to-use online system with everything they need in one place. Families also said that choice and control remain important. DCC is expecting the Devon Wallet to provide this and is part of the move from the current system of prepaid cards to a virtual wallet platform.





The Term Dates for the next academic year, 2024-2025 can be found on our website [Bidwell Brook](#). A copy is also attached.

**It's a Request! - VTech Toot Toot Drivers** - One of our classes has asked if families have any Toot Toot toys at home their child no longer plays with. If so, please could the toys be kindly donated to school? Thank you very much.



**Christmas Bazaar** - Thank you to everyone who bought raffle tickets, donated to prizes and attended the Bazaar back in December to buy lovely gifts and items that classes made. The Bazaar raised a total of **£1,718.02! WOWZER!**

Our fantastic PTFA members organised the raffle tickets, raffle prizes, Wine & Water stall and Tomobola, most ably supported by Sarah K in the office. Superstars!! The school also raised £124 from the beautiful, artwork branded Christmas Gifts everyone ordered (the mugs, cards etc). Thank you!



**PTFA AGM** - This Thursday, 25th January at 10 am, we have the PTFA Annual General Meeting taking place in school in person. Once the AGM has finished, we will be chatting about our Easter and Summer Term plans and events we can help with and organise, to raise money for the school to directly benefit the children.

Every family across BB is most welcome to attend these meetings and you will be warmly welcomed. Committee PTFA meetings are mostly a relaxed affair and a chance for you to express ideas on how we can raise extra money but also help decide how the PTFA spends the money it has.

You will not need to commit to a role on the PTFA - Chair, Secretary or Treasurer (unless you have a burning desire to do so - see below!). You can attend and dip into meetings as often or as little as you like across the year. We'd really like to see some additional faces around the table, especially from Early Years and Key Stage 1/ Key Stage 2! Thanks.

**AGM**

Annual General Meeting

**Everyone is welcome.**  
Stay informed and get involved.

**Thursday 25th January**  
**@ 10 am**  
**@ Bidwell Brook School**

## **We're on the hunt for a new Treasurer**

At Bidwell Brook Special School in Dartington,  
our long-standing PTFA Treasurer is stepping  
down at our next AGM.

Please could you spare a few hours  
each month to take on this  
voluntary role to support our  
wonderful special needs school?



Please call us on  
01803 864120 to  
find out more





**Rags2Riches** - If you are having a Winter into early Spring clothing clear out during the February half term, please send your unwanted items into Bidwell Brook on Monday 19th or Tuesday 20th February, ready for collection on Wednesday 21st February.

Thank you!

BIDWELL BROOK SCHOOL

# Raise funds by collecting reusable clothes

**RAGS  
2  
RICHES**  
Schools Clubs Groups



**WE ACCEPT CLEAN,  
GOOD QUALITY, DRY,  
REUSABLE CLOTHING**

- ✓ Adults, Childrens & Babies Clothing
- ✓ Jewellery and Accessories
- ✓ Paired Shoes and Footwear
- ✓ Belts and Handbags

A full list of reusable items is listed on our website  
[www.rags2riches4schools.co.uk](http://www.rags2riches4schools.co.uk)

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT**

**POOR QUALITY ITEMS SUCH AS  
DIRTY, WET, RIPPED OR SOILED  
CLOTHES.  
PILLOWS, DUVETS, CURTAINS,  
BOOKS CDs OR ANY UNIFORM**

If you are unsure what to put in the bags  
**STOP AND THINK  
WOULD YOU WEAR IT?**

Please use the clothing bag provided.  
You can also use any additional bag if required.

Collection Date:  
**WEDNESDAY 21ST FEB**

Please remember - NO UNIFORM



**Safeguarding** - Across our Federation, we take safeguarding very seriously and have robust policies and procedures in place. If you ever have a safeguarding or wellbeing concern, please contact your **Designated Safeguarding Lead - Kate Bromage**.

## DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Kate Bromage



If Kate is unavailable to speak to or meet with, please contact one of our **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads**.

### DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEADS

Marie Barrett

Tom Cook

Danielle Prowse

Nikki Burroughs





# Caring for children with COUGHS

This leaflet contains information about how to look after a child who has a cough (not due to asthma).  
For more detail see [www.bristol.ac.uk/child-cough](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/child-cough)



## COUGH

Coughs can last for 3-4 weeks and make your child feel quite unwell but will still get better by themselves.

'Noisy chests' or 'chesty coughs' are quite common when young children catch a cold and are not necessarily a sign of a 'chest infection'.

Healthy children typically get a cough 7-10 times a year and this is not a sign that there is anything wrong with their immune system.

## DISTURBED SLEEP

Coughs will often wake your child in the night. When the child lies down, more of the mucus from the nose and throat runs downwards and your child coughs more to clear it.

Coughing is part of the body's defence system which helps keep the lungs clear and fight the illness. Unfortunately this can wake the child in the night but does not mean the illness is more severe.

**For children over 1 year**, a spoon of honey (perhaps in a warm drink) half an hour before bed may help them to wake less often.

**For children over 2 years**, vapour rubs (containing camphor, menthol and/or eucalyptus) may help children sleep better.



## FEVER/HIGH TEMPERATURE

**In children, a temperature of over 37.5°C is considered a fever.**

Fever is a normal response to illness and does not harm children. It may even help to fight illness.

Children with a high temperature may be more likely to have a more severe illness, although most do not. Occasionally a child may have a fit. This shouldn't cause harm and treating the fever doesn't prevent it.

It is safe to use child paracetamol and ibuprofen to manage children's fever (and pain) for as long as needed. Follow the dosage on the bottle.

## DRINKING/EATING LESS

Children often eat and drink less when they have normal childhood illnesses. Most children can go a few days without eating much and this will not affect their longer term growth and development.

**All children need to drink regularly to avoid becoming dehydrated, especially if they are vomiting.**

**To help prevent dehydration, encourage your child to have sips of water.**



# WHEN TO SEE THE DOCTOR

Arrange to see or speak to your doctor today if any of the following occur:

## RAPID OR DIFFICULT BREATHING (DEPENDING ON AGE):

AGE OF CHILD	BREATHING RATE
Babies under 6 months	over 60 breaths per minute
Babies 6–12 months	over 50 breaths per minute
Children over 1 year	over 40 breaths per minute
Any age	Being short of breath (as if your child has been running) or is 'working hard' to breathe when resting
Any age	Skin between and below the ribs gets sucked in each time your child takes a breath

## HIGH OR PERSISTENT FEVER (DEPENDING ON AGE OF CHILD):

AGE OF CHILD	TEMPERATURE
Babies under 3 months	38°C or more
Babies 3–6 months	39°C or more
Children over 6 months	over 37.5°C for more than 5 days
If your child has a fever fit, <b>call 999 or take them to A&amp;E.</b>	

## VOMITING (DEPENDING ON AGE):

AGE OF CHILD	SYMPTOMS
Babies under 3 months	Vomiting + fever of 38°C or above
Babies 3–6 months	Vomiting + fever of 39°C or above
Children over 6 months	Vomiting + fever + extremely drowsy or listless
Any age	Severe vomiting (child not able to hold down fluids for 8 hours or showing signs of dehydration)
Any age	Persistent vomiting (more than 2 days)

### SKIN PALER THAN USUAL

If your child appears much paler than usual; hands and feet are very cold while their body is warm. **If skin, lips or tongue appear blue, call 999.**

### PAIN

Pain in the chest (not when coughing) combined with fever and rapid breathing.

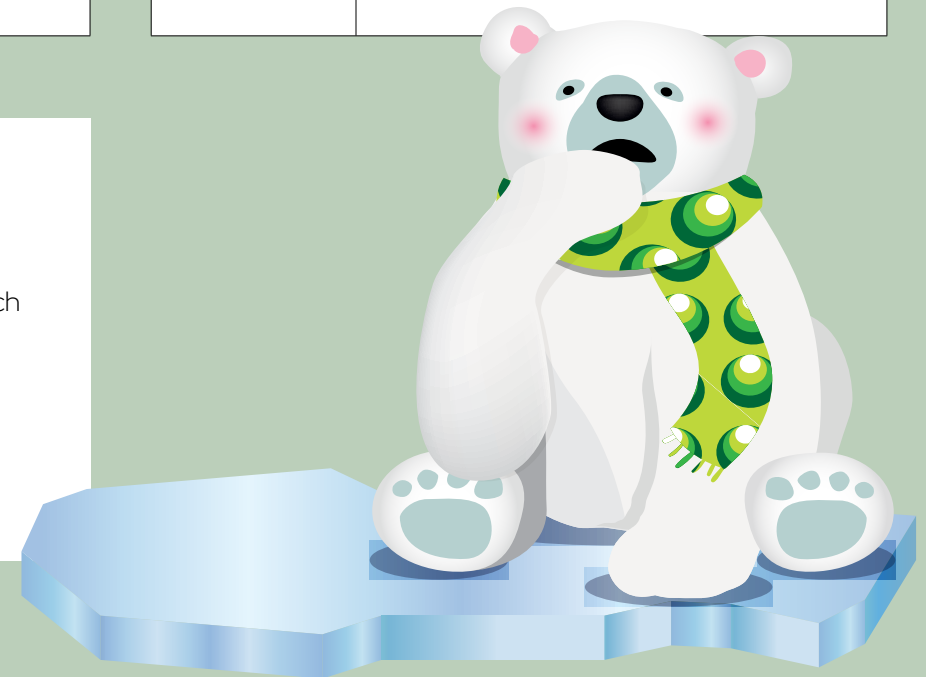
### HARD TO WAKE / UNRESPONSIVE

Cannot be woken or wakes only slightly and then immediately goes back to sleep.

If your child wakes only with lots of stimulation, or is much less responsive to social stimulation (smiles and talking) than usual.

### NOT FEEDING

**Babies under 1 year:** if your child stops feeding entirely.





## LEARN TO LIVE FEDERATION TERM DATES 2024-25

	Sep-2024					Oct-2024					Nov-2024				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tuesday	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thursday	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Friday	6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29
Saturday	7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	
	Dec-2024					Jan-2025					Feb-2025				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24
Tuesday	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Thursday	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Friday	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Saturday	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	1
Sunday	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	2
	Mar-2025					Apr-2025					May-2025				
Monday	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26
Tuesday	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27
Wednesday	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28
Thursday	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29
Friday	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30
Saturday	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31
Sunday	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25	
	Jun-2025					Jul-2025					Aug-2025				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tuesday	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thursday	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Friday	6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29
Saturday	7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	
Key (days):	pupils in school (190)		school holiday (school closed) (56)			bank holiday (8)			occasional day (closed) (2)			staff training days (5)			



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about EA SPORTS FC 24

After two decades of holding the official FIFA licence, EA Sports' phenomenally successful football video game series has embarked on a solo run at goal. This season's iteration marks the debut appearance of a new name and branding, but don't let those fool you – EA Sports FC 24 is still a very similar proposition to last year's FIFA 23. Popular features such as Ultimate Team remain a big focus, meaning that potentially costly in-game spending is still among the line-up of risks that parents and carers should be aware of.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### RECURRING RELEASES

EA Sports FC 24 effectively picks up the FIFA template – meaning that after a year, we can expect EA Sports FC 25 to hit the shelves. Updates between versions of the FIFA franchise tended to be minor, but young fans of the game are almost certain to want the new edition in around 12 months' time, so they can keep playing with updated team kits, players and squad lists.

### OFFENSIVE VOICE CHAT

FIFA 23 introduced cross-platform play, and EA Sports FC 24 goes a step further with Clubs, Seasons and Ultimate Team cooperative modes across PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X and S, and PC. That's exciting news for youngsters who love to play with friends online – but connecting a much wider audience does potentially open lines of communication between children and far older online gamers.

### IN-GAME PURCHASES

In FIFA, Ultimate Team proved to be a profitable innovation for developers Electronic Arts (EA), and is now found in many of their other titles. Players spend in-game currency to recruit better footballers for their team, but this process can take a frustratingly long time – so young fans may be tempted to skip the grind by paying real-world cash to unlock that coveted star midfielder.



### ULTIMATE TEAM SCAMMERS

Since the mode was introduced, Ultimate Team has been a target of scammers who attempt to coax players into buying or selling outside the terms of service from EA and console manufacturers. This shady practice can lead to accounts being banned and in-game items being lost. In some cases, young gamers have also been hoodwinked into handing over their payment details to the fraudsters.

### POTENTIAL FOR ADDICTION

Just like real-life football, EA Sports FC 24 offers a thrilling, dynamic blend of tactical awareness and skill that fans find absolutely engrossing. Among younger players in particular, this could lead to identifiers of a gaming disorder as they plead for "just one more game" before bedtime or spend practically all weekend playing more matches to earn additional Ultimate Team packs.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CONTROL SPENDING

If your child enjoys Ultimate Team mode, check that your payment details aren't linked to their account. Bundles of FC Points (the game's currency) start at just £1, so multiple payments can easily slip under the radar. You could consider setting your child an in-game allowance, perhaps through a prepaid card, which will help them to realise that online spending has a real-world effect.

### DEFEND AGAINST SCAMMERS

EA does contact players via email (although not to ask for usernames or passwords, so watch out for that scam tactic), but never through the game itself – so be wary of incoming messages and consider blocking and reporting suspected spam. Your child should avoid buying coins (the in-game currency) from external sites: it could end with them losing their money and being banned from the game.

### AVOID EXTRA TIME

Many parents of young football-oriented gamers worry about their child playing too much EA Sports FC. There's now also a companion mobile app, which can also often provide another indicator that a child is struggling to disengage from the game. You could initiate discussions around set hours of play – or take stronger action by utilising the parental controls on their console or phone.

### SHOW TOXIC CHAT THE RED CARD

Playing EA Sports FC 24 with friends is highly enjoyable, but if competitive types start to turn toxic online, it can ruin everyone's fun. You could occasionally listen in on the voice chat of your child's game for any warning signs that things may be about to boil over. This goes double when playing online with strangers: voice contact with unknown players can be turned off in the game's settings.

### CELEBRATE THE VARIETY

Ultimate Team may be the game's 'star player', but there's plenty more to do in EA Sports FC 24 – including modes which allow access to all of football's big names without needing to spend money on packs to unlock them. This new version of the game includes even more women's teams, marking another step forward in representation: an important subject to discuss and celebrate with children.

## Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Editor in Chief of gaming and esports site GGRecon and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, he's also a parent who understands the importance of online safety. Writing mainly about tech and fitness, his articles have been published on influential sites including IGN and TechRadar.



Source: <https://www.windowcentral.com/youngster-spends-over-8000-fifa-xbox-highlighting-predatory-game-design-ea> | <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/addictive-behaviours-gaming-disorder> | <https://www.eurogamer.net/18-european-countries-call-for-better-regulation-of-loot-boxes-following-new-report>



## Take part in research about minimally verbal / non-speaking children!



# UCL



### Parents and caregivers of minimally verbal / non-speaking children, we need YOU!

We are investigating why some neurodivergent\* children have difficulty developing spoken language, how this might impact their social, cognitive and emotional development.

We are seeking **parents of 4–12-year-olds who are minimally verbal / non-speaking** to take part in the study.

#### Who is involved in this project?

This study is part of a new research project funded by the Royal Society, led by Dr Jo Saul at University College London (UCL).

This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee, Project ID 20175/002.

#### Who are we looking for?

- **Parents / caregivers** of a neurodivergent\* child who is aged 4-12 years, and lives in the UK
- Your child should currently not use **spoken multi-word phrases** on a regular basis to communicate
- We have a screening questionnaire if you are unsure if your child meets this criterion

#### What does participation involve?

You will be asked to complete online questionnaires and help us obtain video footage of your child's communication skills. There will be one in-person assessment for your child with a researcher either at your home or your child's school.

#### How much time would it take?

There are **four** waves of data collection, spread over 3 years. We estimate that each wave may involve up to 2 hours of your time and approximately 40 minutes of your child's time. As a thank you we will give you a **£25 voucher at each time point**.

#### Where can I find more information?

If you would like to find out more about the study or have any questions, please contact Dr Jo Saul. E-mail: [jo.saul.14@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:jo.saul.14@ucl.ac.uk)

#### I am interested. Where can I sign up?

Please complete the online form here:

<https://tinyurl.com/SUform1>



\* Below are some examples of conditions we are studying

Down syndrome  
Williams syndrome  
Intellectual disability  
**autism**  
Fetal alcohol syndrome

Rett syndrome  
Fragile X syndrome

ISLaND

Investigating  
Spoken  
Language in  
Neuro-  
Developmental Conditions



THE  
ROYAL  
SOCIETY