



Newsletter

19th December 2025

This week in school...

Thank you to all the parents and family members who joined us in the Church this week for our school Nativity. What an amazing job the children did !

We wish all our children, parents/carers, and families a very happy and peaceful Christmas and a joyful New Year.



Attendance

This week's attendance is

Whole School: 82.8 %

Robins: 72.6 %

Skylarks: 81.8 %

Owls: 85.7 %

Starlings: 86.4 %

Kites: 84.6 %

Celebrated in assembly this week

Paula K Sienna G Harley J

Isla H Olivia W Dougie P Freddie F



Upcoming Events

JANUARY

Monday 5th
PD Day

Tuesday 6th
First day of Spring Term

Thursday 8th
Swimming - Starlings & Kites

Friday 9th
Food bank competition closing date

Wednesday 14th
KS1 Target Festival - Community College

Thursday 15th
Swimming - Starlings & Kites

Friday 16th
Whole School Art Day

Term Dates

Autumn

PD Days: Mon 1st & Tues 2nd
September 2025

Starts: 03.09.25
Half Term: 27.10.25 - 31.10.25
Ends: 19.12.25

Spring

PD Days: Mon 5th January 2026

Starts 06.01.26
Half Term 16.02.26-20.02.26
Ends 27.03.26

Summer

Starts 13.04.26
Half Term 25.05.26-29.05.26
Ends 17.07.26

School Admissions for September 2026

For Shropshire primary school reception places starting in September 2026, the closing date for applications is January 15th 2026. Please find link below:

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/apply-to-start-or-transfer-school/>

Swimming Dates - Starlings & Kites

8th January
15th January
22nd January
29th January
5th February
12th February

Please make sure that your child has their costume and towel with them each Thursday until February half term.





CHRISTMAS 2025



MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY
NEW YEAR



Online Safety Newsletter

January 2026

Instagram Teen Accounts - update

You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account. Instagram is used to post photos and videos as well as send direct messages, make voice/video calls, and send disappearing messages.

Teen accounts are automatically set up for users aged 13 – 17. Instagram have announced that teens will now see content similar to content that they would see in a PG-13 movie.

Instagram have also updated their policies around content to include "hiding or not recommending posts with strong language, certain risky stunts, and additional content that could encourage potentially harmful behaviors"

Finally, for parents who would like to apply more stringent settings, Instagram are also introducing a new, stricter setting called 'Limited Content.' This setting will mean your child is not able to see, leave, or receive comments under posts as well.

You can read about the updates here:
<https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagram-teen-content-safety-pg-13>



Playing games online

Does your child play games online? We have outlined some risks that you should consider:



Chatting to strangers / risk of inappropriate language

Some games will allow communication via text chat, direct messages or chatting. Some games do offer the ability to switch communication off and/or the option to restrict bad language, so make sure settings appropriate to your child are applied. If your child is playing online with strangers, then you need to be aware that there is a risk of grooming. Some games do allow you to restrict communication to 'friends only,' however you would need to monitor that their online friends are real life friends. It can be difficult to moderate online chat so ensure your child knows how to block and report other players.

Cyberbullying

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they would not if they were face to face. Talk to your child about how they speak to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect. Other forms of cyberbullying whilst playing games could be excluding others, criticising the ability of other players and ganging up on others.

In app purchases

Many games include the option to purchase additional items/ subscriptions so ensure you do not have payment cards saved or set up restrictions/ a password to approve purchases.

What can I do?

Set up parental controls - as well as setting up appropriate parental controls through the game's settings, ensure you have set them up on the console/device your child is playing on.

Check age ratings - before buying the game, check that your child is old enough to play it. All games will either have a PEGI rating or be rated by the App Store/Google Play.

Chat to your child regularly about the risks above so that they are aware of what can happen online and remind them to always talk to you or a trusted adult if they have any concerns

Further information

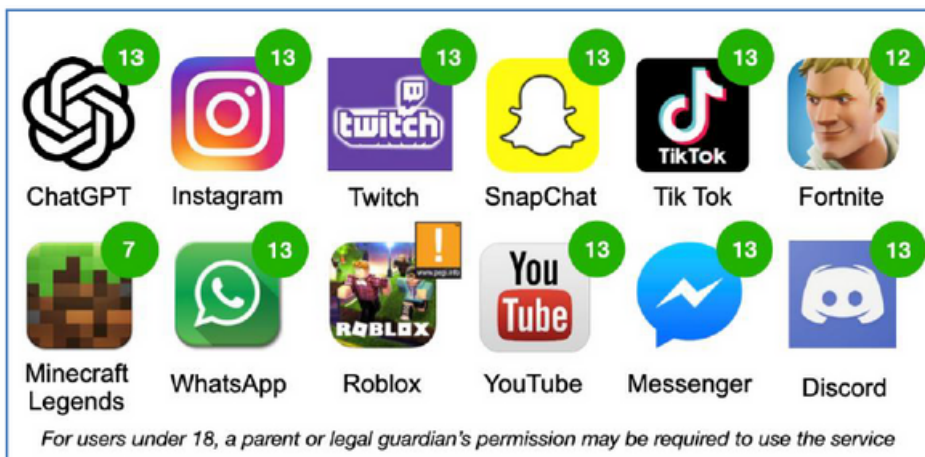
CEOP provides further guidance and support regarding this topic:
<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/articles/gaming/>

Age Ratings

Age ratings exist to help protect your child by showing whether content is suitable for your child's age. Whether your child is viewing films, accessing apps, playing games online or using social media— make sure you check the age rating first to see if your child is old enough.

Popular apps and their age ratings

Here are the age ratings of some of the more popular apps that young people are currently accessing.



What else should I review?

It is important to note that whilst age ratings do allow you to see if something may be appropriate for your child, **it is also vital to review the content yourself**. This will allow you to make an informed decision as to whether it is suitable for your child to access and if it is necessary to apply further parental controls. For example, does it include the ability to communicate with others and are in game/app purchases available?

What else can I do?

Explain the importance of age ratings to your child and how they protect them.

Go online together to see what your child is accessing.

Set up parental controls on your broadband, devices and on any individual apps that your child is using. This will reduce the chances of them accessing or viewing anything unsuitable.

Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and remind your child that if anything is worrying them then they should talk to you or another trusted adult.

Further information

You can find out more here:

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/age-ratings>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date released 01.11.25. The inclusion of any links does not imply any affiliation with or

Help to keep children safe online with Techosaurus

The NSPCC have created Techosaurus, a friendly dinosaur to assist you in having chats with your child about online safety. It is aimed at younger children and includes a book and activity pack (both chargeable). You can find out more here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/techosaurus/>

Online Roasting

Have you heard of this term? It has been around a while now, but Online Roasting refers to a form of cyberbullying. Roasting typically involves making fun and insulting somebody, sometimes with their consent and other times not.

What can I do?

- Talk to your child about what online roasting is, ask them if they have ever experienced it and what they think about it.

- If this has negatively impacted your child then save any evidence and involve the school (if appropriate). Childline also offer further advice and support in relation to cyberbullying.

Further information Find out more here:

<https://www.bark.us/blog/online-roasting-signs-cyberbullying/>

What to do, when

CEOP Education have published this poster directing you to the relevant information around six different situations, such as what to do to protect your child from online blackmail. You can access it here:

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/globalassets/professional/resources/wtdw-round-up.pdf>



Dear Parents/Carers,

12.12.2025

At Bishop's Castle Primary School, we are about to start a programme to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved outside play.

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme is the result of over 20 years of testing and development in over 800 schools and has been used in Spain, Canada, France and New Zealand. The programme has also been adapted and used in schools in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Austria under the Play Friendly Schools project.

OPAL is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play. As 20% of their time in school is playtime, we want to make sure that this amount of time (equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school) is as good as possible.

There are many proven benefits for schools that carry out the OPAL Primary Programme. They usually include: more enjoyment of school, less teaching time lost to disputes between children, fewer accidents and greatly improved behaviour.

There are certain things children **must** have, in order to be able to play.

These include:

- Having clothes that they can play in.
- Having things to play with.
- Having a certain amount of freedom.

As the school improves play opportunities for your children, we will be making changes about how the children use the school grounds. They will use more of the grounds, for more of the year. Your children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences the school is fostering are essential for children's physical and mental wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.





In order for us to start our OPAL journey, after Christmas, we will be using the playground and field for all playtimes. Therefore, we will be adding a pair of wellies and a waterproof coat onto our school uniform list.

If you can, please send a pair of named wellies, into school for your children to use at playtimes. These will be stored in class welly sheds, for easy access. If you are unable to do this, please contact the school office and we will be happy to support you with this.

We would also be grateful if you could support us as we begin to collect resources for our OPAL playtimes. Attached is a list of resources we are after. If you are able to help us in sourcing any of these items, please bring them to the school office.

The school will be supported by OPAL for 18 months and there will be an opportunity to come and talk to the OPAL mentor at your child's school. If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please have a look at the OPAL website (www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk), where you will find lots of useful information and several videos about the programme.

In the coming 18 months you will be invited to events where you can come and see for yourselves what is happening and have the opportunity to join in too.

We are really excited about this project and hope that you will support us in our efforts to improve playtimes for all children.

Best wishes

Mrs Blignaut

Acting Head of School



(List A) Fabricated loose parts

Fabricated	Sources
Astro turf off-cuts	Landscapers
Boards, old cabinet doors, panels	Parents, trades people
Bread, milk, bottle and grocery crates	Traders
Briefcases	Parents, charity shops
Buggies, pushchairs	Parents
Cable drums	Trades people
Cardboard boxes	Trades, deliveries, parents
Carpet samples	Carpet shops
Carpet squares	Carpet shops
Cuddly toys	Charity shops
Fabrics – all shapes and sizes	Parents, jumble sales, charity shops, fabric shops, markets
Foam pipe covers and noodles	Plumbers, pound shops
Guttering	Trades people, suppliers
Hoses	DIY stores, parents,
Keyboards	Computer companies, parents
Metal pots, pans, trays etc, especially catering sizes	Caterers, parents, Gumtree
Nets: fishing, cargo, football	Scrap stores, internet, football clubs
Office removal crates	Tea Crates Ltd, office movers
Old clothes, jackets, overalls, hats, bags	Parents, jumble sales, charity shops
Old household appliances, hoovers, fax machines, microwaves etc	Parents
One-ton dumpy bags	Builders
Pallets	Builders and builders' merchants, stores, parents
Phones	Phone companies, parents
Piping, gas, water and drainage	Trades people
Planks – decking, scaffolders (need sanding) (1m-2m)	DIY, builders' merchants, carpenters, builders
Plastic chairs with no legs	Schools and offices
Plastic road barriers	Highway firms, Border Barriers Ltd
Plastic trugs and bins	DIY stores and online
Ropes	Ships chandlers, online
Small children's bike wheels, wheels	Parents, DIY stores, online

(List A) Fabricated loose parts

Fabricated	Sources
Small wheely bins	Online
Sofa and chair cushions	Parents
Steering wheels	Scrap dealers
Suitcases – all sizes	Parents, charity shops
Tarps	DIY and building merchants
Traffic Cones	Online, highway companies
Tubes of all kinds	Parents, trades
Tyres; car, go-kart, motorbike, cycle	Garages, Qwick Fit, etc
Waterproof cot mattresses	Parents
Wooden block and off-cuts	Carpenters, builders

(List B) Natural loose parts

Natural	Source
Branches and stick	Parents, local woodland, tree surgeons
Fruit	Fruit trees
Grass	Plants
Leaves	Plants
Logs	Firewood companies, local authority, tree surgeons
Mud	Nature, landscape suppliers, builders' merchants
Pea gravel	Builders' merchants, landscape suppliers
Peat	Garden centres
Pinecones	Woods and forests
Play bark/woodchip	Landscape suppliers, play companies
Sand (washed dredged not 'sharp')	Builders' merchants, landscape suppliers
Sea pebbles	Landscape suppliers
Shells	Seaside
Varied aggregates, slate, flint, clay	Landscape suppliers, specialist aggregates
Water	Sky (not the company!) or tap
Wood off-cuts	Carpenters, builders, woodworkers

Thank You Card Design Competition

Calling all young artists!

We're excited to invite local children to participate in our 'Thank You Card Design Competition', for Bishop's Castle Food Bank.

The winner will receive a £40 prize, and the runner up £20, and their artwork will be featured on the cards we send to our donors to thank them for their generous support.

Competition Guidelines

Eligibility: Open to children from Bishop's Castle Primary School.

Theme: Bishop's Castle Food Bank

Artwork Requirements:

- Design your artwork within the space provided on the entry form.
- Use vibrant colours and creativity.
- Ensure the design is original and designed by the individual child.

Submission Details

- Deadline: 9th. January 2026
- Where to Submit: All submissions will be collected from the primary school.
- Contact Information: For questions, please contact:
andystelman@icloud.com

Design Space

Please draw your design within the box on the entry form.

We can't wait to see your amazing designs and share them with our donors. Thank you for helping us express our gratitude in such a beautiful way!

GOING WILD IN BC



INVITES YOU TO OUR
WINTER COMMUNITY EVENT

SUNDAY 4TH JANUARY

10-3PM AT BC PLAYING FIELDS

**HANDS-ON NATURE SKILLS FOR ALL AGES
SHAVING HORSE DEMO, FAMILY FRIENDLY CRAFTS AND MORE!**

**WILLOW
ACTIVITIES**



COPPICING



BIOCHAR



**FIRE COOKED
WARM FOOD**

**HOT DRINKS
PROVIDED**

FREE DROP-IN EVENT!



Get in touch:
contact Dan on 07493 702 246
E: goingwild@lightfootenterprises.org
f @goingwildinbc



JOIN US FOR A

Christmas

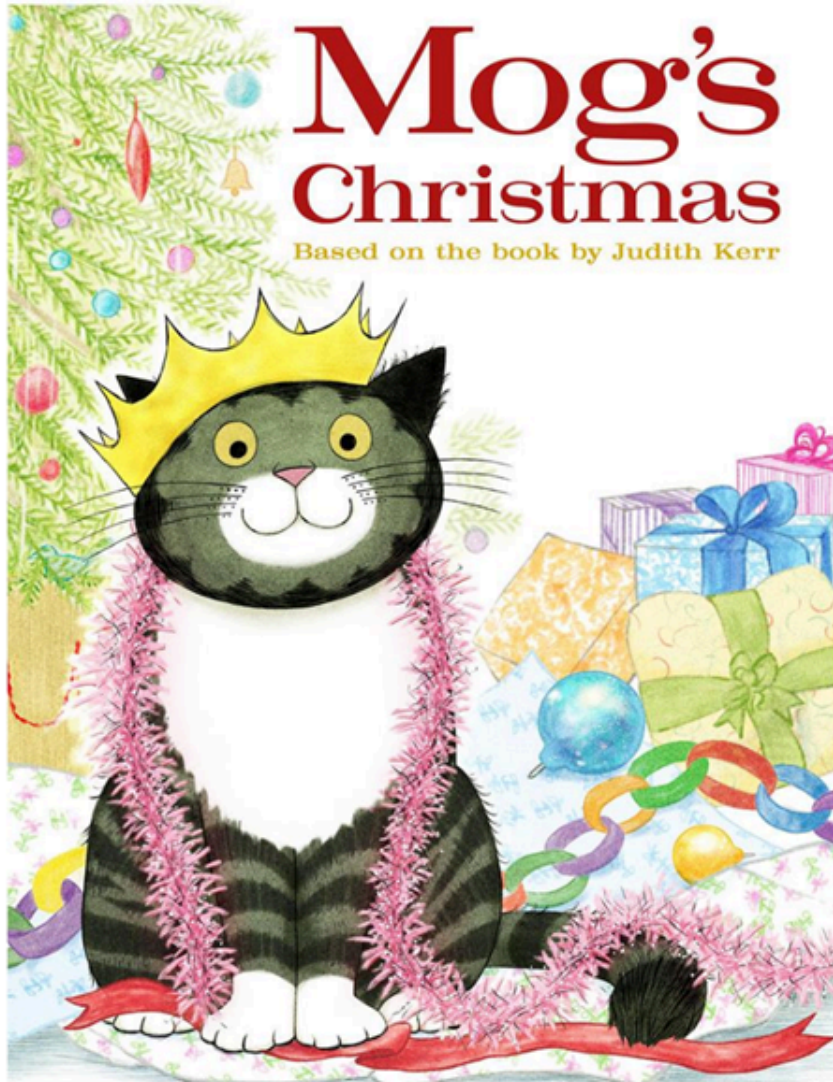
STORY
& CRAFT
SESSION

BISHOP'S CASTLE LIBRARY

TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER

10.30AM

FREE TO ATTEND



**Animated film followed by a festive making session
Monday 22nd December 10.30-12.30**

Guidance and all materials with plenty of freedom to create.

Under 8's must be accompanied by a willing helper

Accompanying adults please book a free place

(so we can make sure there's enough seating for the film)

Children £3.50 or 2 FOR £6.00

www.sparctheatre.co.uk

Sparc Theatre, Brampton Rd, Bishop's Castle SY9 5AY 01588 638038





**Shropshire
Supporting
Families**
through Early Help



EARLY HELP DROP IN

Bishops Castle Food Bank

Jan Thursday 8th 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Feb Tuesday 3rd 9:30 am - 10:30

March Tuesday 3rd 9:30 am - 10:30

April Thursday 2nd 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Thursdays are 2.30-3.30pm

Tuesday are 9.30-10.30am

Church Lane, Bishops Castle, SY9 5AF

All families within the local area welcome

Free information, support
& advice around:

Family Life

Housing & Finance

Special Education Needs and/or

Disabilities (SEND)

Parenting Support

Training & Employment

Domestic Abuse Support

And much more...

Refreshments will be provided
by the food bank



shropshire.gov.uk/early-help



Shropshire
Council

Does your child struggle with their sleep?

Free Sleep Tight Groups

Join us on one of our virtual or face-to-face groups and:

- Find out why sleep is important for our health and emotional wellbeing
- Get support to help improve sleep and bedtime routines
- Meet other parents/carers to share and discuss experiences

**Sleep Tight Group Monday 12th January 2026 from 1.00pm to 3.00pm Virtually
Via MS Teams**

**Sleep Tight Group Thursday 15th January 2026 from 9.30am to 11.30am
Highley Primary School**

**Sleep Tight SEND Group Monday 23rd February 2026 from 1.00pm to 3.00pm Virtually
Via MS Teams**

**Sleep Tight Group Tuesday 24th February 2026 from 9.30am to 11.30am
Crowmoor Primary School**

The groups run for 5 weeks excluding the school holidays SEND groups are for parents/carers of Children who might have special educational needs and disabilities, no formal diagnosis is needed to attend the groups

To book a place email Parenting.team@shropshire.gov.uk or call 01743 250950

Find out
more here



Shropshire
Council

Shropshire Parenting Help and Support Line

01743 250950

Mon - Thurs, 9.30am - 4.30pm
Fri, 9.30am - 3.30pm

No judgment, just support. For **all** Shropshire families, including those whose children have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)



Understanding your child

From toddler to teen

- Would you like to know more about your child's development?
- Do you need help and support to understand your child's behaviour?
- Would you like a chance to meet with other parents and carers with children of a similar age?

Join us for one of our free virtual or face to face groups, our next groups start:

Understanding Your Child Group 12th January 2026 from 9.30am to 11.30am St Giles Primary, Shrewsbury

Understanding Your Child Group 13th January 2026 from 6.00pm to 7.30pm Little Explorers, Ditton Priors

Understanding Your Child SEND Group 14th January 2026 from 10.00am to 12.00pm Severdale Academy

Understanding Your Child Group 14th January 2026 from 1.00pm to 3.00pm Virtually via MS Teams

Understanding Your Child Group 14th January 2026 from 1.00pm to 3.00pm St Lawrence Primary, Church Stretton

Understanding Your Child SEND Group 15th January 2026 from 9.00am to 11.00am Clee Hill Community Academy

Understanding Your Child SEND Group 15th January 2026 from 1.00pm to 3.00pm Virtually via MS Teams

Understanding Your Child Group 16th January 2026 from 1pm to 3pm Highley Primary School

All our groups run for 10 weeks from the start date excluding the School Holidays.

SEND groups are for parents/carers of Children who might have special educational needs and disabilities, no formal diagnosis is needed to attend the groups.

To book a place email
Parenting.team@shropshire.gov.uk
or call **01743 250950**

Find more free online courses at:
inourplace.co.uk/shropshire

