



Newsletter

12th December 2025

This week in school...

The School Choir Visited Hereford Cathedral for The Advent Carol Service

On Tuesday, our choir took part in a very special carol service at the beautiful Hereford Cathedral with 450 children from 20 schools from all parts of the Diocese of Hereford. It was a magical festive afternoon and thank you to the parents who came to support us. A joyful experience for children and adults alike.

Attendance

This week's attendance is

Whole School: 93.8 %

Robins: 89.6 %

Skylarks: 93.8 %

Owls: 94.4 %

Starlings: 95.9 %

Kites: 94.4 %

Celebrated in assembly this week

Jack M

Leo H-R

Scarlett C

Aisling A

Alfie D

Ernie H



Upcoming Events

DECEMBER

Monday 15th

After school Choir Club

Wednesday 17th

Christmas Performance in Church

Friday 19th

Last day of term

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

Santa Skills



Robins were joined by Class 1 from St. Georges Primary and were challenged to be reindeer and collect presents, decorate a Christmas tree with hoops and become naughty elves. The children had a great time taking part in all of the activities.





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.

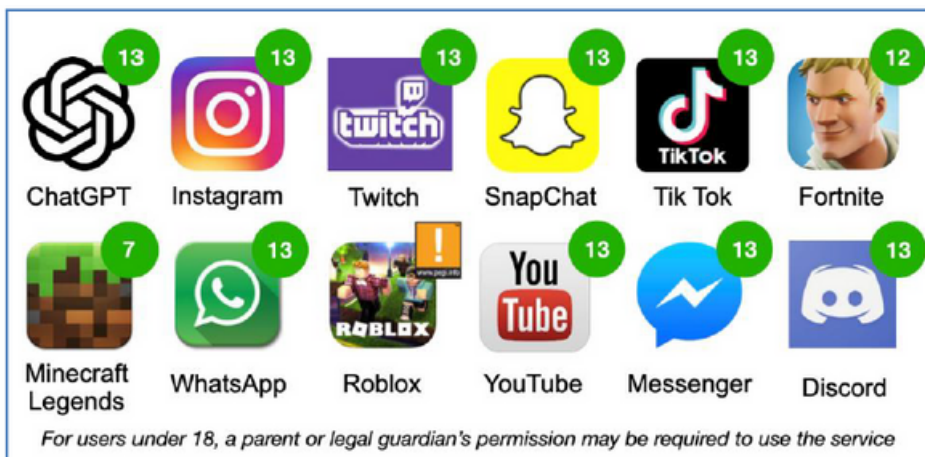
We can't wait to see your amazing designs and share them with our donors. Thank you for helping us express our gratitude in such a beautiful way!

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>

Rhea's Rustic Kitchen will be doing a
cake sale on
Friday 19th December from 3pm
Rhea is kindly gifting a percentage of
her sales to school

Love is...
EATING CAKE TOGETHER!

MONTHLY SCHOOL CAKE SALE

**A PERCENTAGE OF CAKE
SALES WILL BE GIFTED
DIRECTLY TO BISHOPS
CASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL.**



JOIN US FOR A

Christmas

STORY
& CRAFT
SESSION

BISHOP'S CASTLE LIBRARY

TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER

10.30AM

FREE TO ATTEND

MAMMOTH SANTA TRAIL



Kindly supported by



Book
your slot*
BETWEEN
10AM AND 3PM

£10
PER CHILD*

13
DEC, 2025

Book online

Follow the elves and snowballs through our exhibition as you answer questions and join in activities on your way around.

Say "hi" to the mammoth himself and finish the trail with a gift from Santa as you meet him in his grotto.

There will be festive refreshments available at the end of the trail with treats for the adults too!

***PRICE INCLUDES EXHIBITION ENTRANCE
ONE FREE ADULT PER PAYING CHILD
ADMISSION PRICE APPLIES TO ADDITIONAL ADULTS**

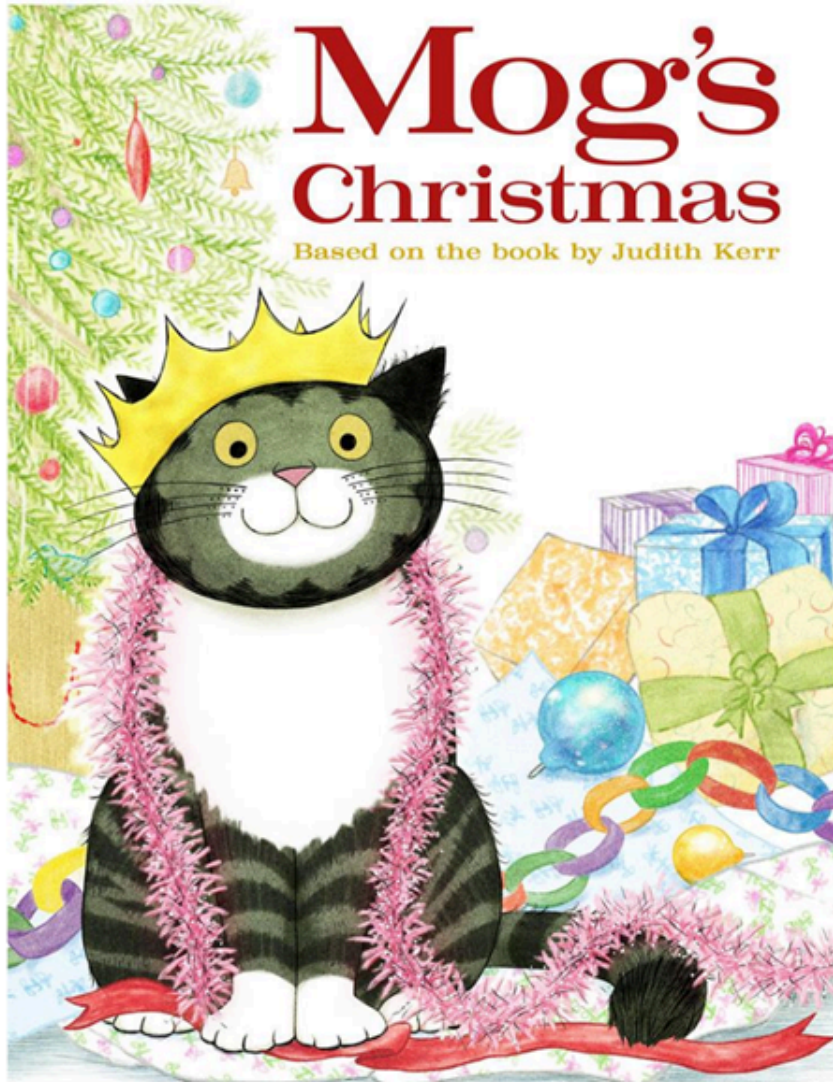


Shropshire Hills
Discovery Centre

WWW.SHROPSHIREHILLSDISCOVERYCENTRE.CO.UK
INFO@SHROPSHIREHILLSDISCOVERYCENTRE.CO.UK
01588 676060

SCHOOL ROAD, CRAVEN ARMS SY7 9RS
GROW COOK LEARN, A REGISTERED CHARITY: 1158795





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

Tuesdays 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)



Shropshire Supporting Families through Early Help



Shropshire Council

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

