



Dear Families,

As the festive season gets in to full swing, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful Christmas performances we've enjoyed together over the past week. From the youngest in Early Years to the oldest in Year 6, each and every child brought their unique sparkle to the stage, filling our hearts with pride and delight. There were so many highlights, songs, films, poems and wonderful readings and many of them all came together to create moments of magic that we will treasure.

This time of year holds a special place in our school community. At its core this should be a season of togetherness, gratitude, and celebration. That was very evident during the Millfield performances in the Meyer Theatre and the wonderful community spirit of The Willows Christmas Creative Afternoon. The Christmas performances are more than just events on the calendar; they are opportunities for our children to learn, grow, and shine in ways that go beyond the classroom. Preparing for these performances fosters teamwork, builds confidence, and encourages creativity. It's a reminder that learning is not just about books and lessons, but about discovering talents, expressing emotions, and sharing experiences.

The festive period also offers us a chance to teach children about the values that underpin this special time: kindness, generosity, and hope. Whether it's through the message of a Nativity play, the joy of giving and receiving, or the shared laughter of an audience, these moments help to shape who our children are and the community we build together. I was particularly taken by the Year 3 and 4 performance which was about 'thinking of others' at this time of year.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the staff who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, from scriptwriting and set design to rehearsals and logistics. Your dedication ensures that these performances are a success year after year. To you, our parents and guardians, thank you for your unwavering support, whether it was helping with costumes, practicing lines at home, or cheering from the audience. Together, we make these experiences unforgettable for our children.

As we look ahead to the holidays, I hope this season brings you and your family moments of peace, love, and happiness. May the spirit of Christmas fill your homes with warmth and your hearts with joy.

I also want to thank you for your donations to our selected charity, 2Wish, which ensures that all those affected by the sudden and unexpected death of a child or young adult aged 25 or under receive the bereavement support they need and deserve. I know that Mrs Foster greatly appreciates it and will be writing out in the new year to thank you all personally.

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, Brian Walton



IMPORTANT PRIMARY ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

Children due to Start School for the First Time in September 2025 — How to Apply

For children due to start school for the first time (those who turn four before September 2025), the closing date for applications is **15th January 2025** and the national offer day is 16th April 2025.

Parents can apply online now at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/apply-to-start-school-for-the-first-time/>

The primary admission guide for the 2025 admissions process can be found on the Somerset Council website: [Applying for school \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/). Parent/carers are advised to read the guide thoroughly before making an online application.

THANK YOU

Brookside Community came together this term, and had a wonderful time raising well in excess of £1,500 for some very worthy charities. Thank you all—together we have made a huge difference to other families lives—both locally and further afield.



We were overwhelmed by your generous donations to the 2wish Charity (a charity very close to our hearts) at our Christmas

Concerts this week. We are still counting, and Mrs Foster will be writing out in the new year to thank you all personally. Thank you all.

Save the Children
Christmas Jumper Day
Congratulations
Brookside Academy

Thank you for pulling on your most Christmassy jumper and making it the best. Day. EVER!

£ **392.22**

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Save the Children Fund is a charity registered in England & Wales (213890), Scotland (SC039570) and Isle of Man (199). Registered office: 150 John's Lane, London, EC1M 4AR.



St Margaret's Hospice Care

Thank you to

Brookside Academy

for taking part in **WEAR IT YELLOW!**

and raising £ 561.32

Proudly sponsored by:



Registered charity no:
279473



THANK YOU

Brookside Academy

for raising a fantastic

£396.60

The money you have raised will be used to help change the lives of children and young people facing disadvantage in communities across the UK.

BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

BBC Children in Need has not verified the above fundraising. This is not a receipt.
© BBC 2022 Reg. charity England & Wales no. 802052 and Scotland no. SC039557.



Congratulations to all of our football teams representing Brookside this term.

Our girls' team has not only shone on the field, but off it have shown an inspiring amount of belief and hard work to enable them to play to the best of their ability. The girls only started playing together in September and have gone on to finish 2nd in the TLE Schools Tournament. An absolutely superb effort being the youngest team in the tournament, along with having four year 4's in the squad. The future is most definitely bright!

Our Year 6 boys have won the TLE Plate! The boys have worked their socks off in training to become a fantastic team, showing outstanding teamwork and sportsmanship throughout. Well done, boys. Fully deserved.

Our Year 5 boys managed to reach the finals of the cup competition, unfortunately they couldn't bring home any silverware this time. Still an outstanding achievement up against Year 6 teams. Mr. Ball, Mr. Perry and Miss Wicks are confident that next year will be their year!

However, it's not over just yet! The boys mixed Year 5/6 team have qualified for the next round of the ESFA School Boys National competition. This will take place on the 14th January and we will be facing the best schools throughout Somerset. An exciting and stern test to look forward to.

Finally, a massive thank you to Friends of Brookside for funding our brand-new school football kit! The children are ever so excited about the prospect of wearing the new kit in future games.





On November 29th across the Academy we supported No Pens Day. This initiative devised by Speech and Language UK is a chance for children to put down their pens (or pencils) and spend time talking and listening to each other. The reason for this day is that recent research has shown that 1.9 million children in the UK are currently struggling with talking and understanding words which then leads to them being:

- *six times more likely to be behind in English at age 11
- *eleven times more likely to be behind in maths at age 11
- *have more mental health problems
- *twice as likely to be unemployed as an adult

For more information and ideas on how you can support your child with their speech and communication please see the website below.

<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/>

Early Years—To celebrate No Pens Day we chose a communication activity where the children had to think of and name 5 things within a certain category. This promoted their thinking skills and new vocabulary whilst also enabling them with the chance to listen to their friends.



Year One—In Year One we LOVED not having to write all day. We thought out of the box in our Maths lesson and had to recognise and sort 2D shapes with our partners rather than have to complete a worksheet.

Each week in Year One this year we are also having Talking Time where each child has a slot to talk to the class about anything they like and the other children get the chance to ask them questions. Thank you to all the parents who have supported their child with this so far this year and we look forward to more speaking and listening opportunities in the New Year.



Year Five—In Year Five we enjoyed putting down our pencils and having a class debate. We discussed our thoughts on whether Pluto should be classified as a dwarf planet or not. We clearly and calmly put across our points of view and ensured we respectfully listened to the others in our class.

What we've been up to recently ...

Exploring Brussels Sprouts Nursery!

Across nursery we have been busy getting ready for Christmas.

The babies have explored lots of sensory Christmas activities, such as shaving foam and glitter. Some made gingerbread biscuits, and they have been enjoying their weekly sports sessions, as well as walks in the bus around the Academy grounds, seeing the animals in the field.

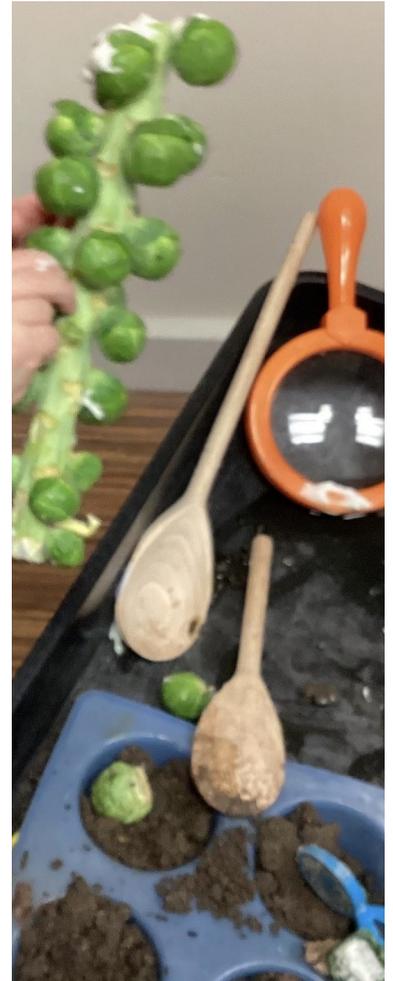
The toddlers have been busy learning Christmas songs and making Christmas crafts to take home to our families. They have also enjoyed festive baking and a visit from Father Christmas, who read us a story and brought us some resources for the garden.

One sensory activity that was a particular hit with the children was exploring the Brussels Sprouts with shaving foam and soil. They pulled the sprouts off the stem and found the hidden sprouts in the soil, mixing the soil and shaving foam together.

Pre-school have enjoyed exploring the Academy grounds looking for signs of Autumn, we followed the children's interests around colours and colour mixing. We have done lots about emotions and have really liked reading the colour monster story. They have also enjoyed joining with the toddlers and babies for Christmas singing, dancing and party games.

The Incy Wincy group have enjoyed exploring Christmas tuff trays trying to develop their fine motor skills. They have also enjoyed their weekly sports sessions in the hall.

We hope you all have a lovely Christmas break.



Early Years—Diwali, Nursery Rhymes and ‘Room on the Broom’!

This half-term we started off learning about the Hindu festival of light...Diwali. We explored colourful Rangoli patterns, created our own Mehndi hand patterns and made beautiful Diva lamps from clay.

Then we had Nursery Rhyme Week. Each day we enjoyed a different nursery rhyme and had the opportunity to sing it throughout the day using various props available.

Finally, we introduced the wonderful Julia Donaldson text ‘Room on the Broom’. We used this text to help us identify and understand rhyming words. Mrs Redman also helped us retell the story in key groups using amazing, knitted characters from the story and other props.



Year 1—Children in Need and Gingerbread!

Year One loved making gingerbread shapes with the staff from the kitchen and really enjoyed eating them!

A big thank you for all of your Children in Need donations.



Year 2 — Visit from Santa!

Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed their visit from Santa this week. He read us a wonderful story and we were allowed to ask him loads of questions. We discovered quite how he manages to deliver so many presents in one evening!

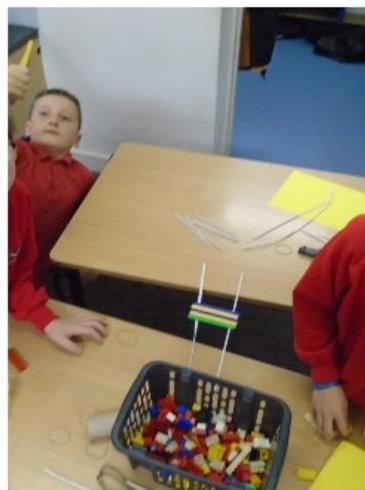
Santa even bought us some new construction to play with in Golden Time! We were so grateful!

Year 3 – No Pens Day, Forest School, Glockenspiels and iMotion

Gophers and Meerkats enjoyed no pens day, where we couldn't touch a pencil ALL day! It was great.

We started off by thinking about other ways to communicate and understood rules of good talking and listening. We played little games with our voices and facial expressions. Then we were given a challenge to get a toy car from one side of the table to the other using a variety of materials. It taught us that communication is essential when designing something like a bridge. We finished off the day by creating shadow puppets and gave our friends a puppet show using the characters from 'The Three Little Pigs.'

It was exhausting not picking up a pen!



Year 3 – Continued ...

Year 3 enjoyed Forest School, where we saw strawberries growing, raked leaves, played in the mud kitchen and found lots of bugs. Thank you to Keelie for providing a fantastic place to go and enjoy learning outside.

In Music this term, we are learning to play the Glockenspiels. We have learnt how to play E and D notes and are really enjoying it. We have learnt where the E and D notes sit on the stave. It is great fun and sounds great when everyone is in time!

In computing, we are looking at making an animation using iMotion app. It takes a lot of patience and team work to make the animation work. This week we put our skills to the test and used characters to make an image move. We had to make sure to move the characters a little bit at a time and to keep the iPad very still!



Year 4 — Pop Art and more ...

This term in Year 4, we have been getting very creative as we have been learning about Pop Art. We looked at two famous Pop Artists – Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. Inspired by their work, we created Pop Art paintings of the Tor and used Ben-Day dots to draw self-portraits in a cartoon style. For Remembrance Day, we used oil pastels and poster paint to create stained glass window effect pictures of poppy fields.

Also as it's the festive season, we have made Christmas cards using cut outs to create silhouettes and shadows, and we were lucky enough to be visited by Father Christmas, who gave us some new games and activities to use during wet play.

In French, we have been learning how to talk about how we get to school and developing our skills around talking about the weather. We got into the festive spirit learning a French Christmas song which we performed at the Christmas show - C'est magnifique!

In PSHE, we talked about and explored our relationships with each other - what makes a friendship work, what to do if we're unhappy, how to be respectful of each other's personal space and how to self-regulate our emotions for those difficult times we all have now and again.



Year 4 — Continued ...



Simple Sentences
A sentence is also called an independent clause. It contains a **VERB** and expresses a complete thought.

Compound Sentences
A compound sentence contains two independent clauses joined by a **COORDINATING CONJUNCTION** (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet).
Example: Scott was playing tennis, so Mary was reading a book.

Complex Sentences
A complex sentence combines an independent clause with one or more dependent clauses. A complex sentence always has a **SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION** (after, although, because, since, when, who, which, whose, where, whether, while, as, until, once, as long as, as soon as, as far as, as long as, as much as, as many as, as few as, as little as, as long as, as far as, as long as, as much as, as many as, as few as, as little as).

Co-ordinating Conjunctions
These are used to join two independent clauses. They are: and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet.

Subordinating Conjunctions
These are used to join a dependent clause to an independent clause. They are: after, although, because, since, when, who, which, whose, where, whether, while, as, until, once, as long as, as far as, as long as, as much as, as many as, as few as, as little as.

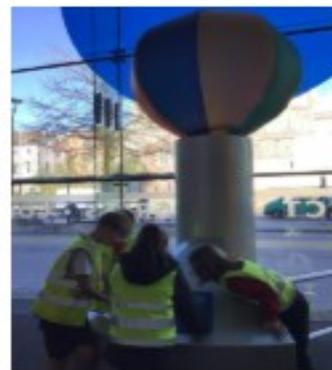
Fronted Adverbial
Verb
Adjective
Noun

Year 5 – The Solar System, We The Curious, Empathy and Truth

Year 5 have been studying the planets in our solar system. We have learnt the order of the planets, and we had a go at 'speed learning' to learn facts about each of the planets (ask your children!!!). We really enjoyed our trip to We The Curious earlier this month where we watched a planetarium show, delving into lots of different facts about moons, and expanding our knowledge of the solar system.

In PSHE, we have been exploring the importance of empathy and why this is an essential life skill to develop. We are trying very hard to see things from the perspective of others and to understand that other people are just as important as we are.

We have been discussing the meaning of truth and its relevance in relation to the Christmas story in R.E. We read chapters from Luke and Matthew that gave different accounts of the birth of Jesus and considered which is true. Can they both be true? We hope you all enjoyed our Christmas performance as much as we did!



Year 6— Rose Blanche, Fleet Air Arm Museum, and much more ...

This term, we have been extremely busy in Year 6. Here's a glimpse into what we've been up to!

English - Our budding authors have been exploring dialogue through the poignant tale of Rose Blanche over the past couple of weeks. We've also embarked on a heartfelt mission, crafting letters from soldiers and evacuees, allowing us to connect with the emotional aspects of history in a personal way.

History - The highlight of our history learning was a fantastic trip to the Fleet Air Arm Museum recently. All of the children looked brilliant in their evacuee inspired outfits; thank you for supporting the children with this. We gained insight into the vital role of aircraft during World War II, tying our learnings to the impact of the war on our local area and families. We were amazed at the time and effort that many of the children had put into their history projects about their relatives over the half term break. The children got to write these up and present them to the class. They will now be a part of our class family history tree.



Science - In science, we have been focused on continuing our learning on our circulatory and respiratory system. We have made model lungs and blood using the plastic bottles which the children brought in. This helped us to understand more about what is happening in our bodies all the time. We have also looked at how we can maintain healthy bodies and hearts. A special session with Biology staff from Millfield allowed us to engage in a hands-on heart dissection lesson, reinforcing our learning in an unforgettable way.

Maths - In Maths we have been working hard with multiplication, division and fractions. We have been adding and subtracting fractions this week and will be moving on to multiplying and dividing fractions.

Art - Inspired by Picasso's portraits and artwork Guernica, we have been creating stunning oil pastel portraits and our own versions of the art. We have also created carbon portraits using tone and shading techniques.

Music - This term in our music lesson we have begun learning the recorder! We are mastering learning different notes and enjoying the challenge of playing along to various tunes, making music come alive in the classrooms.

A heartfelt thank you to all the parents, carers and loved ones who joined us for our sharing assembly; it was a pleasure to showcase the incredible work our students have accomplished this term.

Year 6—Continued ...



Year 6 had the best time using their design and technology skills to create marvellous shelters that would provide accommodation in times of earthquake, tsunami, The Blitz and other cheery scenarios! Who wouldn't want to live in a baked bean can or a house on lollipop stilts?

The children created a design and then worked hard to construct their design as best as possible, using small hand saws, glue-guns, sandpaper and a sharp eye for detail. After completion, the children evaluated their finished creation and discussed whether they had made any modifications and how they might improve it next time.

...Best day ever...for the children, not the teachers – there was quite a lot of mess!!





We need your votes please!

From mid-January 2025 until the
end of March 2025 at

[Glastonbury Tesco](#)

Please vote for **Brookside EYFS**
to help us win a grant to help pay
for resources to support the NHS
'Let's Get Moving' programme.

TESCO

Every little helps

shutterstock.com - 2366309871

**Stronger
Starts.** 

Absence from School

Attendance at school is vital to your child's learning and development.

Children's progress will be affected if they are absent.

We have a statutory obligation to investigate any child's attendance that falls **below 90%** or **below the 10 session absence threshold** (10 or more half day absences within a 12-week period). Evidence of medical appointments, e.g. Doctor's/hospital/Dentist appointment cards/letters, etc., is required.

If your child is ill, please notify us before 8.45am via the **Studybugs app**, which is available to download from: **studybugs.com**.

Please inform the school beforehand if your child has to attend an appointment.

We are not able to authorise holidays in term time.

Children who arrive or leave school during the day **must** be signed in or out at the Academy office.



As per paragraph 38 of the Department for Education Statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance, "The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours." The amendments made it clear that Headteachers can only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstance.

There is no longer a H code for authorised term time leave for holidays and In accordance with Government guidelines we cannot authorise this request.

If your child is absent for this period, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised term time leave on their record. I should inform you that a fixed penalty fine may be requested.

The new national framework for issuing penalty notices is to ensure consistency across the country.

Penalty Notices are issued by Somerset Council as below:

1st penalty notice £160 if paid within 28 days reduced to £80 to be paid within 21 days

2nd penalty notice £160

3rd penalty notice cannot be made to the same parent regarding the same child within 3 years, alternative action should be taken.

Penalty Notices are per parent/carer per child and may be requested should the absence be for 5 consecutive days or more and your child's attendance is below 97%.



Dates for your Diary

Please check the School Calendar on our Website for events throughout the year: <https://www.brooksideacademy.co.uk/calendar/>



We use email and phone as our main means of communicating with parents and carers. If you have not provided us with an up-to-date email address or mobile phone number, please do so. You may be missing out on important information.



Free School Meals

Children who attend a Somerset Council school, whose parents or carers receive any of the following are entitled to free school meals:



- Income Support (IS)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Universal Credit with an annual household income of less than £7400 after tax
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit, with an annual taxable income (as assessed by HMRC) of less than £16,190

Only the benefits listed above qualify for free school meals. If you have recently become unemployed, but are still receiving Working Tax Credits, you may be entitled to free school meals.

Non-Benefit related additional eligibility criteria:

Children of families who don't receive these benefits may also qualify for free school meals if the family's annual household income is no higher than the following:

- £22,700 for families outside of London with one child
- £26,300 for families outside of London with two or more children.

In addition to these thresholds, families must hold no more than £16,000 in capital and savings.

- And the parent or carer meets any of the following criteria:
- you are a Zambrano or Chen carer
- families who have no recourse to public funds with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private and family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights
- families receiving support under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 who are also subject to a no recourse to public funds restriction
- a subset of failed asylum seekers supported under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- you hold a British National (Overseas) – BN(O) – passport
- you are a spousal visa, work visa or student visa holder
- you have no immigration status.

Please phone the Entitlements Team, County Hall, on **0300 123 2224** for advice.

Children must be in school all day and they will be provided with a meal at lunchtime which is paid for by the school.

It is the responsibility of the parents or carers to register their entitlement and request free school meals for their children.

Children in nursery do not qualify for a free meal until they start school, but applications will be processed so that when your child starts school, you will already be notified whether they qualify for a free school meal or not.

Forms are available from the Brookside Academy Office or apply online at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/school-life/free-school-meals/>



Uniform Reminder

The school uniform is very simple and reasonably priced. We expect the children to wear it: White or red shirt/blouse or polo shirt, Brookside sweatshirt or cardigan (a plain, low-cost, red sweatshirt or cardigan is acceptable), grey or black skirt or trousers/shorts, red & white summer dress, black shoes. PE kit is red t-shirt and black shorts and warm joggers and trainers for the Winter. A warm, waterproof coat in wet/cold weather. Hair should be natural in colour and not of an extreme style (Mohicans, skinheads, or tramlines, are not acceptable). Every child should have a book bag and a PE bag. We give each new Early Years child a book bag before they start school. Sweatshirts, cardigans, PE kit and book bags can be ordered via the 'Uniform' link on the Academy Website. **ALL ITEMS SHOULD BE CLEARLY NAMED – PLEASE.** Parents/carers will receive a reminder if their child isn't wearing the correct uniform.



Welcome to Brookside Academy

Thank you for visiting us; we are looking forward to working with you.

In order to provide the best learning environment possible, schools across Street are committed to the wellbeing of all members of our community, this includes children, parents / carers and staff. We expect all staff and visitors to treat children and colleagues with the courtesy and respect they would expect to receive themselves. In addition, it is important that adults should set a good example to children at all times.

We expect all visitors to

- Respect the caring ethos at each school
- To follow all safeguarding guidelines
- To approach members of staff for assistance with any issues in an appropriate manner.
- To work with the school in the correction of child's actions, especially where it has, or could lead to, conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour

Unacceptable conduct includes

- Verbal abuse which includes swearing and shouting
- Any form, or threat of, violence
- Aggression
- Harassment
- Derogatory comments linked to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic
- Possessing, abusing, or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances on the school site
- Sending abusive or threatening emails, texts, phone messages or letters to anyone within the school community
- Disruptive behaviour which interferes with areas such as classrooms or office areas
- Using social networking sites to single out individuals, bully or to distribute untruthful or malicious information or comments

In the event that these expectations are not met visitors may be asked to:

- Stop and consider changing their actions
- Leave the school site
- Refrain from contacting members of staff

In the event of serious or persistent breaches of these expectations we may:

- Send parents a legally approved warning letter
- Withdraw permission for visitors to enter the school premises.
- In the case of bullying, untruthful or malicious comments on social networking sites, the schools may request that the comments are deleted. The governing bodies and individuals in liaison with their professional associations may also consider legal action.

This code is supported by our Governing Body and all schools in Street.

All staff and visitors have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of intimidation, abuse or assault.



Navigating the internet can be challenging for children. Distinguishing between real and fake content, avoiding negativity, and handling mistakes can be tough. To address this, the NSPCC have introduced six positive online habits. These tips empower parents to discuss online well-being with their families, to help develop informed, confident, and happy internet use. Their new Positively Online campaign offers content, videos, and a quiz to support parents in guiding their children through the online world:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-wellbeing/positively-online>

Should my child go to school/nursery today?

<https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/my-health/parent-zone/?#7>

Do I need to keep my child off school?



Chicken Pox Until all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after starting antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies Until after first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after starting antibiotics	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 hours after starting antibiotics
Flu or Covid-19 Until recovered	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed		