

Northgate Primary School

Newsletter

November 21st 2025

Headteacher's News

Today we held a parent session on the book 'The Anxious Generation', based on Jonathan Haidt's research into children's wellbeing. The talk explored how childhood has shifted from being play-based to being phone-based, and how this change is linked to rising anxiety and depression in young people since around 2010. Parents heard how reduced outdoor play and increasing indoor screen time are limiting opportunities for children to build independence and resilience.

We discussed the four main harms of a phone-based childhood: social deprivation, sleep disruption, attention fragmentation, and addictive app design. The session highlighted how healthy habits formed in primary school can make a big difference later on.

Practical ideas included delaying smartphones, modelling balanced screen habits, and encouraging more real-world play.

The school also outlined upcoming initiatives that support independence, active play, and digital literacy.

Overall, the message was that we can reclaim a healthier childhood by working together as families, schools, and a community.

As Christmas approaches, we'd like to remind families about our school approach regarding **mobile phones** for children in Years 5 and 6 and smartwatches. We understand that some families may want their child to have a way to contact them when walking to and from school. If your child needs a phone for this purpose, we encourage you to choose a simple "brick" phone rather than a smartphone, which allow for calls and texts without the additional risks that come with internet access and apps.

Smartwatches are not permitted in school. This is because they function like wearable smart devices and can access the internet, raising safeguarding concerns. We would like to encourage children to wear a **simple analogue watch** which helps them develop the important skill of telling the time independently, which is a key part of their learning at this age. Thank you for your understanding and support in keeping our children safe. Have a good weekend.

Enriching the Curriculum

This week was 'Wellbeing Week' at Northgate and the children explored the theme '5 Ways to Wellbeing': **Be Active, Connect, Give, Keep Learning, Take Notice** through a range of meaningful, creative and community-focused activities. Each day focused on a different aspect of wellbeing, giving children the chance to learn strategies, connect with others and reflect on their own mental health. The week started with a whole school shared Daily Mile, pairing classes across the school to complete their mile together. Children supported one another, chatted as they walked or ran, and enjoyed getting active as one community.



**EVERY CHILD
EVERY CHANCE • EVERY DAY**

Important Dates

Thurs 27th Nov	Y3 Orienteering walk to Waitrose
Fri 28th Nov	1.30pm KS2 Panto at South Mill Art (pick up from theatre)
Mon 1st Dec	PTA Elfridges shop for EYFS, Y1, Y3 and Y6
Tues 2nd Dec	EYFS/KS1 visiting panto 'Aladdin'
Wed 3rd Dec	PTA Elfridges shop for Y2, Y4 and Y5
Thurs 4th Dec	PTA Elfridges shop (final purchases).
Mon 8th Dec	Year 6 Church service
Tues 9th Dec	EYFS Christmas production: 9.15am-2.40pm
Fri 12th Dec	KS1 9.10am-2.40pm Christmas production
Mon 15th Dec	Reception posting letters to Santa
Tues 16th Dec	11.30am EYFS/KS1 Christmas Lunch
Wed 17th Dec	Christmas Jumper Day and Santa Fun Run
Wed 17th Dec	9.00am Volunteer Coffee Morning
Wed 17th Dec	12.30pm KS2 Christmas Lunch
Wed 17th Dec	Rock Steady Concert (Time TBC)
Thurs 18th Dec	KS2 2pm Church service St Michaels Church (pick up from church TBC)
Fri 19th Dec	Break the Rules Day
Fri 19th Dec	2pm finish Break up for Christmas
22nd Dec—2nd Jan	Christmas Holidays
Mon 5th Jan	Inset Day
Tues 6th Jan	School term starts
Mon 26th Jan	Y6 Victorian Day
Tue 27th Jan	Y2 Old Northgate School walk
16th—20th Feb	Half Term
Fri 27th Mar	2pm finish Break up for Easter
30th Mar—10th April	Easter Holidays
Thurs 22nd May	End of term
25th—29th May	Half term
Mon 1st June	Inset day
Thurs 9th July	Move up day
Tues 21st July	Break up for summer holidays
Wes 22nd July	Occasional day

*Red = New Item / Change to Item

Practical Well-Being Tips for Parents

Make time to talk: Try to check in daily with your child about how they're feeling.

Build routine: Regular sleep, healthy meals, and set routines help children feel secure.

Encourage connection: Help your child stay connected with friends, family — social connections are a big part of wellbeing.

Model self-care: Children watch and learn. Show them how to manage stress in a healthy way. Use 'the five ways to Wellbeing'.

Be ready to ask for help: Recognise when things might be beyond what you can support at home.

Safeguarding

Please find below a link to the HFL Education Online Safety Newsletter for Autumn 2025. This edition includes guidance, useful links, and key updates on online safety across all age groups, including: Keeping Children Safe Online: Changes to the Online Safety Act explained, supporting your teen on social media, app safety settings, a talk checklist with practical tips for parents, Pinterest privacy and safety settings, and parental controls for Fall Guys, which is a new and popular multi-player game.

[The HFL Education Online Safety Newsletters for autumn 2025](#)

Enriching the Curriculum

Throughout the week, classes focused on building safe, trusting relationships and developing self-regulation skills. In Nursery, children tried *rainbow breathing* to help them stay calm and centred. Year 1 created their own "checklist toolkits" to support their emotional wellbeing, while Year 2 explored the importance of connection through a fun spider-web activity that encouraged teamwork and communication.



Year 3 designed their own breathing regulatory poster to keep on their desk to use when needed. Upper KS2 completed the Three Houses activity to reflect on safety and support. The Three Houses activity helps children explore their thoughts and feelings by identifying their worries, celebrating the good things in their lives, and sharing their hopes and dreams for the future.



The week ended with a creative day inspired by *The Dot*, where children reflected on confidence and creativity by making their own artwork and "making their mark."



A huge thank you to Mrs Stephens for organising these events and all staff for helping to make it such a positive and inspiring experience.

Reminders and Updates

KS2 Panto at South Mills Theatre

Next **Friday, 28th November** all KS2 children will walk to the theatre for 1pm.

Pick-up from outside the theatre is staggered **Y3: 3.30pm, Y4: 3.35pm, Y5: 3.40pm, Y6: 3.45pm**. Please be prompt for collection and disperse quickly. Remember to register your car at the terminal if you use the theatre car park.

If you also have a child in KS1, you can pick them up at **3.00pm**, please inform the office in advance by emailing:

admin@northgate.herts.sch.uk.

School Christmas Dinner

Christmas dinner is live on School Gird. Please login and book your child's meal before **Monday 8th December!**

Please ensure you select the correct days for your child:

Tues 17th Dec

EYFS/KS1 Christmas lunch

Wed 18th Dec

KS2 Christmas lunch

Celebration of Achievements

This week's stars of the week are:



Ducklings: Margo and Ottlie

Puffins: Hattie **Owls:** Jessica

'Learner of the Week' focus on Learning Powers and the School Code.

Our Star Learners were praised by their class teachers this week for a range of skills including: showing great independence and perseverance with long division, sharing lovely contributions and sensible participation in PHSE, always demonstrating brilliant effort in lessons, consistently trying their best with everything, displaying independence and having insightful and thoughtful observations during Wellbeing Week.



Well done to:

Robins: Ted

Wrens: Liam

Starlings: Vanya

Sparrows: Olly

Skylarks: Alyssa

Swifts: Bayley

Nightingales: Hepzi

Kingfishers: Ashton

Kestrels: Ege

Kites: Izzy

Harriers: Max

Hawks: Alexis

Foodbank Collection

During Wellbeing Week the Children explored kindness and community. We talked about our local foodbank and our collection at Christmas. If your family would like to donate please remember the collection is from **Wednesday 17th to Friday 19th December**. Thank you.

Northgate School Association

Christmas Pre-Loved Sale Now Open!

Our PTA Shedquarters is stocked and ready for Christmas! Pick up jumpers, dresses, pyjamas, T-shirts and accessories — all just £3 each.

We've also restocked the pre-loved uniform rail, so do stop by if you need anything.

You'll find the Shedquarters facing the field, right by the pagoda between the KS1 & KS2 playgrounds.

The shed is open every day at pick-up, self-service, with payment via QR code.

Please leave it tidy and make sure the door is closed properly after your visit.

Thank you for supporting the PTA!

Elfridges Shop

Our Christmas 'Elfridges' shop takes place in the week commencing 1st December.

This shop, gives the children an opportunity to independently buy a gift for their parents/carers.

The sales will take place in the dining hall at morning break on the following dates:

Mon 2nd December- Nursery, Reception, Years 1, 3 and 6

Tues 3rd December- Years 2, 4 and 5

Wed 4th December- All Years (final purchases).

Each gift will be priced at **£5.00** Please bring cash into class on sale day.

Thank you for your continued support.

Hope you all have a lovely weekend.

The PTA Team