

December 2025 Newsletter



It has been so lovely to hear the children working so hard on their upcoming Christmas performances over the last week or so. They have been singing beautifully during practices and I am sure you are going to thoroughly enjoy seeing them perform. I, for one, always love seeing them sing and perform. We are so lucky to have such talented and dedicated staff who write our performances specifically for each cohort of children so that each child feels comfortable with what they are doing and gets the chance to shine. Please do come along to support your child and see them in their various performances. Dates and times are at the bottom of the newsletter in the dates section. We don't issue tickets for the performances, but we do ask you to use common sense about how many family members attend each performance as we obviously have limited capacity in the school hall. Also, if you are lucky enough to secure a front row seat during one performance, please allow someone else to sit at the front during the second performance. It only seems fair!

Schools are really special places during the Christmas season and I am really looking forward to seeing the children enjoying the various Christmas celebrations that we have planned for them over the next three weeks.

The children have had a really successful Autumn term in school and have already done so much! Thank you to all of our staff for what they have made possible this term and thank you for your support too. It really is a lovely community that we are all part of.

Everyone at Lodge Lane wishes you a wonderful Christmas break and we hope you all enjoy some quality time with your families.

Sarah Spears
Head of School

CHILDREN STARTING SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2026

If you know anyone whose child is due to start school next September, please encourage them to come and have a look round and see what we have to offer. They can make an appointment via the office. Even if they are out of catchment area, they may still get a space as we have lots of families in school who don't just live in Old Catton. We'd love to see them!

POPPIES AND CHILDREN IN NEED

Thank you for supporting these charities in November.

We raised £138.65 for Children in Need and £153.95 from the sale of poppy merchandise for the Royal British Legion.



FRIENDS OF LODGE LANE WINTER FAIR

It was lovely to see so many families at our Winter Fair this year. A huge well done to the Friends of Lodge Lane committee. Many of the members of the committee are new in role and this was their first big event of the year. We are so pleased to hear that the Winter Fair raised an amazing £1081.48! Thank you so much to everyone involved and we look forward to deciding how to spend these funds very soon.

The Halloween colouring competition also raised £94.

PARKING

You may have noticed that the police paid us a visit at the end of school on Friday 21st November to monitor the parking situation outside school. Although none of the parking they saw was illegal, strictly speaking, we continue to plead with you to park safely and responsibly.

Whilst it isn't illegal to park opposite the school entrance, we would really rather you didn't as this means children are at risk when entering and leaving the site. I'm sure we would all hate for a child in our community to be injured for the sake of a few saved minutes at drop off or pick up.

The police also saw lots of children running ahead of their parents as well as children crossing the road between cars. This obviously puts children at risk and means they could be run over. I will be inviting the police officers into school to talk to children about road safety in the near future. The police will also be visiting Lodge Lane more regularly to continue to help us with keeping everyone safe.

If you park in the school car park (with our permission), please ensure you enter the car park safely, particularly if children are already leaving the site and may be walking across the car park entrance.

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ATTENDANCE

Attendance Matters



Our overall attendance so far this school year is 96%, which is amazing considering the number of horrible germs and bugs going round the school. However, there are still 20 children who fall into the persistently absent category (90% or lower) which is too many.

In line with our policy, parents of those children whose attendance sits within the persistently absent range and particularly those whose attendance has dipped even further into that range since the start of November, will receive a letter just to make you aware, even if we know it's because of a holiday or illness.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION



Because of our day-to-day contact with the children we are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, changes in behaviour or failure to develop. We have a duty to protect children from abuse; however, our role is in recognition and referral, not investigation or intervention. We are required by law to follow procedures laid down by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership if we see signs which suggest that one of our pupils may have been the victim of abuse. Use of the procedures in this way is an obligation placed on the school by legislation and in no way infers that any parent/carer is being accused of wrong-doing. Lodge Lane is registered with Operation Encompass. This means that Norfolk Police will contact the school concerning any domestic incidents which involve the families of our children the day after the incident.

CHRISTMAS CARDS



Children are welcome to bring Christmas cards to give to their friends but, if possible, they need to give them out before or after school on the playground please. We unfortunately cannot provide class lists due to GDPR.



CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

We are going to take part in Christmas Jumper Day on Friday 12th December. Anyone who wants to take part can either wear a Christmas jumper/t-shirt/dress or decorate their own jumper in a Christmassy way. We ask for donations of £1 minimum and all proceeds go to Save the Children. Your child should wear normal uniform with their Christmas top.

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PRE-LOVED CHRISTMAS JUMPERS

If you have a Christmas jumper that you would like to donate for someone else to use, please bring it to the school office. If we get a collection of pre-loved items, the PTA can sell them from the office for 50p each.

FRIENDS OF LODGE LANE YEAR GROUP PARTIES



You will see in the diary dates section that the PTA are running a party for each year group –For YR and Y1 these will be on Tuesday 16th and for Y2 this is on Wednesday 17th December.

The YR party starts straight after school at 3.15pm – children who want to attend need to bring their party clothes in a named bag to school that day, and staff will help them change after school and take them to the party.

Other year groups will have time to go home and change and then return for their party.

Tuesday 16th YR 3.15-4.15pm

Tuesday 16th Y1 4.30-5.30pm

Wednesday 17th Y2 4.30-5.30pm

If your child attends Cheeky Monkeys that day and would like to come, they need to bring their party clothes to school in a named bag. They can return to Cheeky Monkeys after their party.

Payment of £2 for the party needs to be made in advance on Scopay and the deadline for this is Monday 15th December. Because this is also a fundraising event, unfortunately anyone who has not paid in advance will not be able to attend.

CLASS CHRISTMAS PARTIES

These are on Friday 19th December to finish off the term. Children can come to school dressed in party clothes if they wish, but please remember they still need to be suitably dressed to go outside at playtime and lunchtime.



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NORFOLK HOLIDAY FUN

Please follow this link to find out about the Big Norfolk Festive Holiday Fun scheme which is taking place during the Christmas Holidays.

<https://www.activenorfolk.org/public/bignorfolkholidayfun/>

BROADLAND AND SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCIL CHRISTMAS TOY DONATION APPEAL



Broadland and South Norfolk Councils are once again coordinating a Christmas present collection service to support vulnerable families in our communities, and it is now officially live! Many families face financial hardship and are unable to provide gifts for their children during the festive season.

Their aim is to help ensure every child experiences the joy and magic of Christmas.

For all of the details and information on where toy donations are being collected, please take a look at their webpage: [Christmas Toy Donation Appeal | Broadland and South Norfolk](#)

EMERGENCY CLOSURE SYSTEM

Although we have been lucky so far with the weather this winter, we never know what is round the corner so here is a reminder of our emergency closure system:



If the school has to close due to bad weather, we will do our best to send you all a text message as soon as possible. It will also always be announced on the local radio and on the school closures website: (www.schoolclosures.norfolk.gov.uk)



SEASON'S GREETINGS

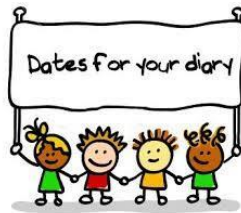
We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Term ends at 3.00pm on **Friday 19th December** and the children start again on **Tuesday 6th January 2025**

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DECEMBER			
8 th	YR Nativity	Tiger and Panda	2pm
9 th	YR Nativity	Tiger and Panda	2pm
10 th	Y1 Christmas play	Owl and Turtle	2pm
11 th	Y1 Christmas play	Owl and Turtle	2pm
12 th	Friends of Christmas Shop		
12 th	Christmas Jumper Day		
16 th	YR Friends of Christmas Party		3.15-4.15pm
16 th	Y1 Friends of Christmas Party		4.30-5.30pm
17 th	Christmas lunch		
17 th	Y2 Friends of Christmas Party		4.30-5.30pm
18 th	Y2 Christmas carols in the hall	Leopard and Hedgehog	2.30pm
19 th	Last day of term		
JANUARY			
6 th	School reopens		

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BOOKS, BAKES AND BOTTLES

SATURDAY DECEMBER 6TH 2025

10AM-1.30PM

ST MARGARET'S CHURCH HALL

BLACKSMITHS WAY, OLD CATTON, NORWICH, NR6 7DT

WHAT3WORDS: ///TRAIL.STAND.CREATE

Fundraiser for Guides and Rangers
from Catton District Girlguiding to
attend Poacher Jamboree 2026

Stalls to browse including our:
Bake Sale and Refreshments, Book Stall,
Bottle Tombola and Raffle
Gift wrapping service available too!



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AI Chatbots and companions

A simple search of "AI Chat" within the App store highlights the number of AI apps already available, many are rated as 18+ so it is important to speak to our children about them and the risks associated with them. Examples of AI chatbots that your child may have heard of are Character.AI (18+) and My AI from Snapchat (13+).

What are the risks?

- Over reliance on AI companions, for example they may replace 'real life' friendships or over reliance on using them for homework or problem solving.
- Exposure to inappropriate content.
- Privacy/data risks.
- Misinformation as not all information shared is correct and can be biased.

How can I protect my child?

- Check age ratings of any apps or websites that your child accesses.
- Discuss the risks of AI chatbots with them and have open conversations about why they may be using them.
- Set up appropriate parental controls on their devices/ broadband.
- Chat to your child regularly and ensure your child knows that they should talk to you or another trusted adult if anything concerns them.

Further information

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/newsroom/blogs/ai-chatbots-and-companions-risks-to-children-and-young-people>

New Technology

As some children may be receiving new technology or related games at Christmas, here is a quick reminder of the importance of setting up appropriate parental controls.



Games/Consoles

- Check age ratings: look at the PEGI rating of any new games. *Remember, PEGI rates the gameplay so whilst it is important to review age ratings, you must also check to see if it has any communication elements.*
- If a game does allow your child to communicate with others, then adjust or disable the settings as appropriate to your child.
- On the device itself, set up applicable controls such as restricting spending limits. Follow the links below to find out how to set up Parental Controls for popular devices here:

Xbox: <https://www.xbox.com/en-GB/family-hub>

PSS: <https://www.playstation.com/en-gb/support/account/ps5-parental-controls-spending-limits/>

Nintendo Switch: <https://www.nintendo.com/en-gb/Hardware/Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls/Nintendo-Switch-2-Nintendo-Switch-Parental-Controls-2873385.html>

Tablets/Smart phones

Set up parental controls on the device to prevent purchases, restrict content viewed and adjust privacy settings. Furthermore, remember to check any apps your child requests to check that they are suitable for their age. Follow the links below to find out more:

iPhones/iPad: <https://support.apple.com/en-gb/105121>

Android Device: <https://support.google.com/googleplay/answer/1075738>

Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>

The Safety-First Smartphone

The Other phone is a new smartphone, which includes "SafetyMode" software. The software automatically blocks nudity, profanity, and bullying language in real time. You can find out more here: <https://otherphone.co.uk/>.

Smart Phone Free Childhood also list some alternatives that you could consider here: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives>.

Please note, that the inclusion of these models does not constitute an endorsement or recommendation. While these devices may provide a 'safer' alternative to traditional smartphones, there are still potential risks associated with children using any type of phone.

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Roblox

Following a recent ITV investigation*, which found extremist content on Roblox, we thought we would provide a reminder of what you need to be aware of. Roblox is a platform consisting of a collection of games. Players can either create games or play games that other users have created. It is free to download (however subscription options and in game/app purchases are available) and can be played across numerous devices. A lot of the content is user generated, which means not all games will be suitable for your child to view/play. If your child is playing Roblox, it is important to monitor what your child is accessing and set up appropriate parental controls. PEGI rate Roblox with a Parental Guidance label, this is because it is considered a platform with a huge level of user generated content.

What should I be aware of?

Game content – as mentioned, users create games so the content/themes may not be appropriate for your child. Roblox label content based on the type of content rather than by age. The labels are Minimal, Mild, Moderate and Restricted.

Chat Facility - Players can chat with each other (users under the age of 13 need parent permission to access certain chat features though). You can turn communication off completely or add restrictions, such as only able to communicate with friends.

Virtual Currency - Players can buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in-game upgrades or accessories.

How do I report abuse and block users?

This article outlines the different reporting facilities:

<https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/203312410-How-to-Report-Rule-Violations>

What else can I do?

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

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/roblox>

[*Source: <https://www.itv.com/news/2025-11-14/mosque-attacks-and-far-right-skins-roblox-teens-exposed-to-extremist-content>]

Signal Private Messenger

Signal is rated as 13+ on the App store. It is a messaging app where users can text, send voice messages and photos plus participate in group chats and calls. There are no parental controls currently available. As with all messaging apps, the risks can include bullying and viewing inappropriate content. Find out more here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

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Discord

Discord is a social networking app originally designed for gamers but is now used by lots of different people to chat to each other online. The minimum age to access Discord is 13. The App store rates it as 17+.

Discord is made up of servers, which are spaces for groups to chat, upload files and share images etc. Anybody can set up a server, and they can either be public or private. Users can video call and send direct messages to other individuals or groups. Children who play online games such as Fortnite may use Discord to chat whilst playing the game (rather than using the game's own chat facility). In-app purchases are available through Discord's subscription service called Nitro.

How can I make it safer?

Discord have created a Family Centre, which provides further information about what Discord is, as well as information about different safety settings available:

<https://discord.com/safety-family-center>

As always, we would encourage you to chat to your child to see why they use Discord and ensure that they know how to block users and what to do if they see any inappropriate content. It is important to be aware that Discord does include video/voice calling which cannot be filtered. Discord is used by an array of users and therefore adult content can be found on Discord as well as inappropriate language. Discord have produced this article, which answers frequent questions:

<https://discord.com/safety/360044149591-answering-parents-and-educators-top-questions>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version:

<https://www.knowsleyclcs.org.uk/deceember-2025-primary/>

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