



Squirrel Hayes First School
 Springfield Road
 Biddulph
 Stoke on Trent
 ST8 7DF
 Headteacher: Mrs. E. J. Pickford
 Telephone: 01782 973820
 Twitter: @squirrelhayes
 Facebook: facebook.com/squirrelhayes

Thursday 16th October 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Parking Safety

We know that drop-off and pick-up times can be very busy around our school—and across Biddulph—and unfortunately, this sometimes leads to unsafe or inconsiderate parking. Although the Town Council isn't responsible for parking enforcement, they've teamed up with local Police and Enforcement Officers to help improve the situation. Over the next couple of weeks, you may notice increased patrols around schools in the area. The aim is to encourage safer parking and make our streets safer for everyone. To support this, we'll be sending home a leaflet with each child this week. It includes helpful reminders about the dos and don'ts of parking near schools. These leaflets have been specially reprinted for first and middle schools, and we hope they'll be a useful prompt for all families. We'd really appreciate your support in helping to spread the message about safe and respectful parking. Together, we can make a big difference for our children and our community.

TOP TIPS FOR PARKING AROUND SCHOOLS
THINK BEFORE YOU PARK
 Put child safety before convenience.

- ✓ Make sure you park away from the school -Walking a short distance is good for you.
- ✓ When dropping off children, let them out on the pavement not the road.
- ✓ Drive slowly around schools.
- ✓ Be courteous to neighbours.
- ✓ Set a good example for your children, as well as other drivers. For example always wear your seatbelt.
- ✓ Consider learning key road safety skills with your children, such as e.g. crossing roads safely.
- ✓ Encourage other drivers to think about parking, to ensure that school roads are safe for everybody.
- ✓ Always stop when the lollipop person signals with their lollipop stick.
- ✗ Do not park your vehicle in dangerous, inconvenient, or obstructive areas surrounding the school.
- ✗ Do not block driveways or school entrances.
- ✗ No idling. Please turn your engine off while you wait.
- ✗ Do not block the roads as they need to be accessed at all times by emergency services and buses.
- ✗ Do not park on yellow lines or zig-zag markings.
- ✗ Do not park on pavements or any dropped curbs.
- ✗ Do not park on, or within 10 metres of a junction.
- ✗ Do not use your phone while driving.

Inspire Dance



Next year we will once again be working in partnership with Biddulph High School in order to participate in the 'Inspire Dance' performance, held at **Biddulph High School**. This will take place in the New Year on **Wednesday 25th March 2026**.

The Inspire Dance show:

- Will take place in The Lecture Theatre at Biddulph High School over several dates with different schools performing on different dates.

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- Parents form the audience and students would be based in classrooms when not performing where the show will be live-streamed.

Rehearsals are due to commence on **Monday 10th November in school from 3.15pm – 4.15pm**. The 'Inspire Dance Club' will be run by Dance Leaders from the High school but will also be supervised by a member of our school staff. The club will be open to learners from Years 1 to Year 4 however; places will be limited to for Health & Safety reasons. Letters will be sent out soon.

Spooky Disco (Wednesday 22nd October 2025)



We're excited to announce our **Spooky Disco 2025**, taking place on **Wednesday 22nd October from 3:15pm to 4:30pm** here at **Squirrel Hayes First School**! All learners from **Reception to Year 4** are invited to join the fun! The disco costs **£1.50 per child**, which includes a **drink and snack**. Payment should be made via **ParentPay**. Children are welcome to bring their **spooky costumes** into school on the morning of the disco. They will have time to get changed after school before the event begins. Please ensure your child is **collected promptly at 4:30pm** from school.

Academy Photography (Thursday 23rd October 2025)



We're pleased to let you know that **Academy Photography** will be visiting **Squirrel Hayes First School** on **Thursday 23rd October 2025** to take **individual and sibling photographs**. Photographers will be on site from **8:15am**, allowing families with siblings who do **not attend our school** to come in early for group photos. Please arrive promptly if you'd like to take advantage of this opportunity. All children will have their individual photos taken during the school day, and sibling groups within school will also be photographed.

Breakfast & Mindful Mornings - Parents & Child Activity Morning in school



We're excited to invite Parents and Carers to our upcoming '**Breakfast & Mindful Morning Activity session's**'. These sessions will be led by members of our Mental health Support Team and will focus upon the 5 ways to well-being through engaging activities for you to get involved in with your child. You are invited to join us for a



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relaxed morning where you can enjoy breakfast with your child at 8:30am followed by a number of fun activities. This is a great opportunity to connect with our Mental Health Support Team whilst having fun with your child.

The first session will be held on **Tuesday 11th November** for families in **Hydra classes**, and the second on **Tuesday 18th November** for families in **Draco classes**. Further details will be sent out soon.

Walk To School Month (October)



October marks Walk to School Month, and we're encouraging all families to take part in this fantastic initiative supported by Air Aware and Staffordshire County Council. Walking to school—even just once a week—can have a positive impact on children's mental and physical health, helping them arrive at school more alert, happier, and ready to learn. It also helps reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality around our school community. Whether you live nearby or need to drive part of the way, consider parking a little further from school and walking the rest. Every step counts! Let's work together to make our school run healthier, safer, and more sustainable.

Wake up Wednesday



Each week, we receive valuable guidance from *The National College* covering a range of important topics related to online safety, school life, and learner wellbeing. These resources are designed to support you in having meaningful conversations with your child about the challenges they may face both online and in everyday life. This week's guide is titled "Top Tips for Dealing with Traumatic and Challenging Events." It offers practical advice to help children process difficult experiences and build emotional resilience—something that is especially important in today's world.

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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MEMES

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health concerns and digital citizenship. For further guidance, visit and sign up to our [WakeUpWednesday](https://www.thenationalcollege.com) guides.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Memes may look like simple jokes, but, for many teenagers, they form a shared cultural language. Quickly created and reworked, they spread across social media platforms via images with text or short videos. Inevitably, eight in ten teenagers share memes (79%, YouTube), making them part of daily life. While memes encourage creativity and participation, they can also spread misinformation or reinforce harmful stereotypes.

SPREADING MISINFORMATION

While memes are fun to share, they can also spread misinformation. Memes are often shared on social media platforms like Facebook or Twitter, where they can be shared quickly and easily. This means that false information can spread rapidly, often without anyone checking its accuracy.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Memes can be vulgar, offensive, and not always age-appropriate. Children may see memes that contain explicit language, sexual content, or images of violence. This exposure can be harmful to their mental health and self-esteem.

MASKED MESSAGES

Some memes are designed to be humorous, but they can also contain hidden messages. These messages can be used to spread hate speech, promote discrimination, or encourage harmful behavior.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Talk regularly with young people and try to understand their online world. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings about the memes they see. If you notice any concerning content, talk to them about it and help them think critically about the messages behind the humor.

TEACH DIGITAL LITERACY

Help children find young people who are open to sharing information and encourage them to understand and evaluate the quality of the content they see. Encourage them to think before they post and to be respectful to others online.

FOSTER EMPATHY ONLINE

Remind children that you and people they meet online are real people. Encourage them to think about how their posts might be received by others. Encourage them to be kind and respectful to others online.

PERMANENT DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Unlike spoken words, things posted online can be remembered, even if intended as a joke. Digital content can be shared, copied, and spread beyond the original poster's control. This means that anything posted online can be seen by others, even if it is deleted.

Advice for Parents & Educators

Meet Our Expert
Dr. Kristina Bowden - Adjunct in e-Business and User Experience at Queen's University Belfast. Her research is in online safety, mental health, and youth culture, examining how digital spaces shape identity and experience.

WakeUpWednesday
The National College

Useful links:
@wake_up_weds /www.thenationalcollege @wake.up.wednesday @wake.up.weds

Important Diary Updates



Please find below a table of events that have been planned for the Autumn term. Please note that we always try our best to stick to the planned dates and times but on occasion's changes have to be made due to unforeseen circumstances. If this is the case, we will always try to give you as much notice as possible.

Autumn Term 1st half 2025 - Please note dates in blue have been added or changed:

DATE	EVENT	CLASS
Tuesday 21 st October 6:00pm - 7:30pm	Full Governing Body Meeting	Governors
Wednesday 22 nd October 3:15pm - 4:30pm	Spooky Disco	All classes invited
Thursday 23 rd October	Academy Photography	All classes
Friday 24 th October	3:15pm School Closes for October half Term Break	All classes
Monday 3 rd November 2025	8:45am School opens for the second Half of the Autumn Term 2025	All classes

Yours sincerely, Mrs E. J. Pickford (Headteacher) & Team

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