



Dear Parents & Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you all have a very enjoyable Christmas break and enjoyed catching up with family and friends- as well as relaxing and enjoying the season. The children have come back, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed! They were keen to get going from the first day back (see the class accounts, below) and are already getting in to their new learning journeys. There have been 'fresh starts' for adults too. We welcomed Mr Edgington into Willow Class and Miss Dewsbury into Chestnut Class- please do say 'hello' to them when you see them around. Mrs Hathaway also began a new role, as our fantastic Child & Family Support Worker!

A new year is a good time for reminders too- just to catch some of those things which might have slipped. Please note the following:

- All children must be dressed in school uniform- this includes no trainers. For PE, school kit should be worn, not branded tracksuit bottoms and hoodies with logos.
- At snack time, please ensure this is a healthy snack- we have already seen cookies!
- No Nutella or chocolate & nut spread in sandwiches. If you have to give your child chocolate spread at lunchtimes, please ensure that this is nut-free.
- Please monitor your child's phone use, including social media- we have already had some issues with out-of-school, unpleasant communications between pupils.
- If your child has a smart watch, please ensure that this is set to school mode during the school day. Any smart watches that distract or are not on school mode will be collected by class teachers and given back to parents/carers at the end of the day.

Jim Cascarini – Headteacher

headteacher@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Vision Awards

Congratulations to all our children who received a Vision Award this week...	Love	Courage	Trust
<i>Oak</i>			Nathan V
<i>Willow</i>	Milo G		
<i>Sycamore</i>			Poppy H
<i>Maple</i>	Esmae H		
<i>Hazel</i>	Leighton M		
<i>Lime</i>		Adam K	
<i>Chestnut</i>	Leo C		
<i>Elm</i>			Pollyanna W
<i>Ash</i>	Amelie S		
<i>Beech</i>	Scarlett-Hope B		
<i>Pine</i>			Bobby C
<i>Hawthorn</i>			Freya H
<i>Aspen</i>		Darcey W	
<i>Juniper</i>			Isabella H

What we have been learning this week...

Willow & Oak

Wow, what an exciting first week back for the children. We've had snow and temperatures of -4. We have had a great first week back and used our welly Wednesday time as the perfect opportunity to go on a sensory walk looking for signs of Winter. We have also explored the ice by leaving bowls of water outside with animals in so they would freeze and the children could investigate this the next day.

Our phonics sounds were "ai", "ee", "igh" and "oa" this week. Which means we learnt our first trigraph (3 letters and 1 sound).

Maths we focused on the meaning of the number 0 and then numbers from 0 to 5 through the song give little speckled frogs (one of our favourite songs).

We also made snowmen out of playdough, a small world for a penguin, started to look at how we can create textures of a snake using paint and different materials and talked about Christmas and the snow A LOT!!

Great first week back and also well done to Mr Edgington who also had an amazing first week with us all. This is going to be an amazing term for us all!!

Mrs Cleary-King, Mrs Treasure & Mr Edgington

Sycamore & Maple

What an exciting week to start our learning journey about weather! We've had sun, clouds, rain, snow and ice to explore. The children have thoroughly enjoyed coming into school each morning to record the weather in their 'Weather Diaries'. We've also learnt about the countries in the United Kingdom and their capital cities. We discovered that the weather is not the same in Edinburgh as it is in London!

In English we have begun exploring a new book all about Mini Rabbit. The children have generated adjectives to describe her and have used these within sentences. We are excited to find out next week whether or not our story predictions are right - will Mini Rabbit manage to find berries for her cake?

In Maths the children have been exploring the numbers 11 - 20 and have been thinking about how many tens and ones are in them - 17 has 1 ten and 7 ones.

In Science we drew around some of the children and labelled as many body parts as we could. The children were able to think of so many different body parts from armpits to ankles!

What a fantastic start to the term it has been. Well done Year One!

Mrs Edgington and Miss Miners

Lime & Hazel

Welcome back to our brilliant Year 2s! It has been wonderful hearing all about what the children got up to over the holidays, and we used that excitement to launch our new Learning Journey: Our Perfect Planet! On

Tuesday we made paper-mâché Earths which we are hoping to have painted by the time you're reading this!

We got stuck into learning about landmarks around the UK and we will be continuing to explore famous physical and human features across the globe. We have started our new text in English and have delved into making inferences about Lila and her family. In Maths we are continuing our Shape work, this week with a focus on vertical lines of symmetry. In Art we have been mixing colours and in Science we took a look at everyday materials. Thank you for a fantastic first week back!

Miss Samuel and Miss Lavin

Chestnut & Elm

Our Spring 1 learning adventure 'Amazing Antarctica' began with learning how to draw penguins and humpback whales, and making snow! In English, the children have enjoyed looking at an information book, answering questions and discussing vocabulary about 'Antarctica.' In maths, they have worked hard on understanding the division sign; using resources and the bar model to solve questions. In R.E, the children have explored some key Jewish beliefs about scriptures by looking at art work and revelations. The children also began their D.T learning with finding out about research stations and designing their own which they will be making in the next few weeks. If you do have any small boxes, plastic bottles and cardboard tubes then do please send them in. Thank you!

A great start to 2025, Year 3!

Miss Plaw and Mrs Dewsbury

Beech & Ash

We're back with a bang! As we launched into our new learning journey all about Fairtrade, we learnt about food miles by creating a burger and seeing how far all the ingredients had to travel. We also delved into the world of design by critiquing chocolate packaging and designing our own. We were very impressed by the ideas in the class and are very disappointed these chocolate creations aren't real! We continued our work on multiplication by learning all about factor pairs. It was also great to recap our French numbers and work out some addition and subtraction questions in French.

Thank you, Ash and Beech class, for all your hard work this week.

Miss Collier and Mrs Allison

Pine & Hawthorn

It was lovely to welcome back everyone from Christmas break in Year 5. We have dived straight into our learning in English by watching and analysing the film clip we are using for our writing and developing our language through the use of tiered vocabulary. In Maths we have revisited fractions and how to multiply and divide unit and non-unit fractions. The children have spent lots of time on their handwriting and overall work presentation in order to earn their pen licenses and myself and Mr Dookheran have been extremely impressed with the effort that all the children have delivered on the first week back. Well done everyone!

Mr Dookheran & Mr Childs

Aspen & Juniper

Year 6 started the week with some super collaborative learning during a Hook Day to kick off our new Geography Learning Journey, 'Where does our energy come from? This involved exploring the main sources of energy used worldwide, including coal, oil, natural gas, biofuel, solar and wind power. We learnt about the terms 'renewable' and 'non-renewable' and went on to explore how burning fossils fuels contributes to climate change.

During the afternoon we introduced our science learning - Evolution and Inheritance - by creating some amazing pop art; our subjects were some of the animals Darwin studied.



Mrs Cocks, Miss Howick and Mr Osmond

Family Support



My name is Mrs Hathaway and after nearly 8 years of working in the school and being lucky enough to work with so many children and families I am thrilled to be moving into an area I am passionate about as the new Child and Family Support Worker.

We understand that life can be challenging at times and recognise the affects this can have on children and parents.

My role is based around offering support and information with the aim of enabling all our children at Pilgrims' Cross the opportunity to thrive and be successful.

I will be around the school grounds in the mornings and afternoons as well as being contactable via the email address below should you wish to arrange a time for a chat.

Email – familysupport@pilgrimscross.co.uk

Tel – 01264 369523

Coffee & catch-up

We are re-instating the parent/carer & Headteacher coffee & catch-up mornings, on Tuesdays. If you would like to drop by for a chat, to ask anything or simply to make contact, please do. They will be from 8.40am-9.00am. Mrs Hathaway will also be there- do come along!

Parents'/carers' evenings

It was good to see so many of you at the parent/carer consultations on Thursday 9th January. We have our second date on **Tuesday 14th January, from 3.00pm-6.00pm**. These consultations will focus on academic progress, gaps in learning and next-step targets. I hope that you (and your children!) appreciated the children being supervised outside the meetings, so that you could have your conversations with class teachers in a quiet environment. Thank you to all parents & carers for positive responses to our information evening this Thursday.

Lunchtime helpers needed!

Do you have an hour to spare at lunchtimes? We desperately need some volunteers to help wipe tables & pour water in the hall between 12.00-1.00pm. Please contact the office if you could help with this.

Safeguarding- getting children back into routine

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 and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO RETURN TO ROUTINE

Most of us look forward to the school holidays as an opportunity to slow down and relax, stay up later, sleep in and generally approach life in a more leisurely fashion. However, this does mean that returning to normal school-day routines can feel like an uphill battle. Here are some practical tips to ease that transition, reduce stress and set children up for success.

1 START SMALL AND EARLY

Begin reintroducing elements of the school routine at least a few days before term starts. Gradually adjust bedtime, wake-up times and mealtimes to be more in line with school-day rhythms. Small changes can make a big difference in avoiding last-minute panic and helping children to readjust smoothly.

2 REVISIT THE SCHEDULE

Involve your child in mapping out their daily routine so they understand what's going to change. Visual tools like charts or calendars can help keeping to that schedule feel more engaging. When children understand and anticipate their personal timetable, they feel more secure and in control.

3 CREATE A SLEEP PLAN

Sleep can present one of the biggest challenges, as children can sometimes become night owls, prone to staying up late during the holidays. Limit screen time before bed and encourage winding-down activities like reading or listening to calming music. A restful night's sleep improves focus, mood and overall wellbeing, making mornings much smoother.

4 ENCOURAGE FRIENDSHIPS

Help your child to reconnect with school friends by organising playdates, catch-ups or arranging to go to after-school clubs. Re-establishing social bonds can make the return to school more exciting and less intimidating, allowing youngsters to focus on the positive aspects of the new term.

5 GRANT RESPONSIBILITY

Give children control over some aspects of the morning routine. Maybe they could be in charge of waking everyone up, serving breakfast or choosing the radio station that everyone listens to while getting ready. Something that gives them a sense of ownership over their morning schedule can help them view the task as one they've chosen to do, rather than being told to do it.

6 FOCUS ON NUTRITION

Make sure children are receiving balanced meals (with regular healthy snacks to boost energy and concentration), putting them in the best possible state to return to education. A nutritious breakfast is particularly crucial for a positive start to the day. Involve children in meal planning to make it enjoyable and collaborative.

7 COMMUNICATE OPENLY

Talk with your child about how they're feeling about returning to school: whether they're excited, anxious or a mix of both. Validating their emotions helps them feel supported and understood. Try asking them about the things they're looking forward to at school, such as seeing their friends again. Focusing on the positives can be useful for children struggling with change.

8 RECONNECT WITH LEARNING

Ease children back into a learning mindset by incorporating fun, educational activities into their home life. Reading a favourite book, playing games that involve maths or discussing an interesting topic can gently reawaken their focus and prime their minds to learn, which can have helpful impacts on their academic performance.

9 PREP TOGETHER

Turn preparation into a shared activity, to shoulder the responsibility together and provide support where needed. Pack school bags, lay out uniforms and plan lunch the night before. This not only reduces early morning stress but also gives children a sense of ownership over being ready for school.

10 BE PATIENT AND FLEXIBLE

Transitions take time, and every child adjusts differently: so, it's important to stay calm and supportive, especially if they're reacting adversely to the change in their daily life. Be ready to tweak routines as needed, and work with the child to make the return to education as easy as possible for them. Patience can go a long way to setting a positive tone for the new school year.

Meet Our Expert

Becky Dawson is an education expert with a focus on mental health and wellbeing. Passionate about empowering adults who spend time with and care for young people, Becky specialises in creating practical strategies that promote wellbeing and resilience in children during life's transitions.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/supporting-children-to-return-to-routine>

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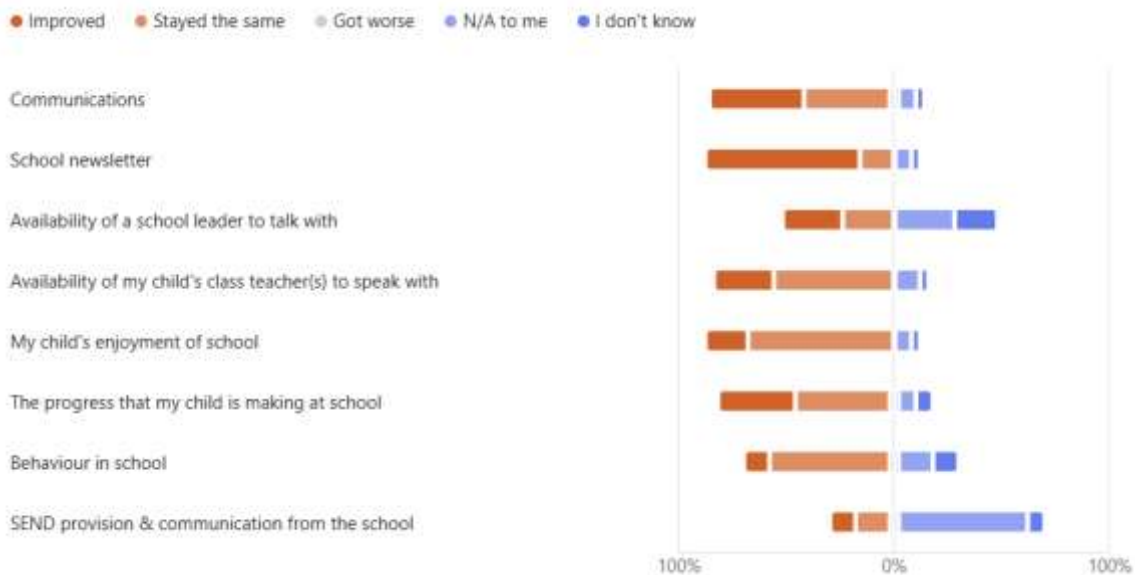
Attendance

Our school attendance this year stands at 96%- above the current national average of 94.5%. Children need to be in school every day to make the best progress.

Survey feedback

Here are some headlines from the recent parent/carers survey...

You said...	We did...
<i>We preferred the new format of the parent/carers consultations (76%)</i>	We will continue with this format for the January consultations
<i>The hall was quite loud, however (20%)</i>	The next appointments will have a supervised children's area in the music room, next door
<i>There have been improvements this term in communications (44%), the newsletter (72%), availability of a school leader to talk to (28%), my child's enjoyment of school (28%), the progress that my child is making (36%), behaviour (12%) and SEND provision (12%)</i>	



Key dates

- **Tuesday 14th January- Parent/carers learning consultations (3.00pm-6.00pm)**
- Year 6 *Bikeability* 3rd – 5th February
- w/b Monday 16th June- Thursday 19th June-Year 6 residential, Hooke Court

Please check out our website calendar for all relevant dates:

<https://www.pilgrimscross.co.uk/calendar/?calid=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8&pid=8&viewid=1>