



The Wren

Christmas Special 2025



Winter 2025
Edition

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EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE : STEP BY STEP



Part of Creating Tomorrow Trust



Welcome Letter:

Dear Wren Spinney School Community,

As we come to the end of a busy term, we want to thank you for your continued support.



Wren Spinney won the Northamptonshire Education Award - SEND Team of the Year 2025!

We are incredibly proud to announce that our school has won the SEND team of the Year Award.

This achievement recognises our pupils, staff and families and it is a lovely recognition of our school community.

Christmas Music & Festivities – the 2nd half of the Autumn Term has been filled with lots of activities including

- Christmas Dinner
- Visit from the brass band
- Visit from the Polar Express
- Christmas singalong
- Nativity
- Christmas Disco

Further details about some of these events and other activities that have been happening in school can be found within this newsletter.

As we head into the holiday break, we hope you all find time to enjoy moments with family and friends. Please take care, keep well, and enjoy this special time of year.

From all of us at school, we wish you a **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.**

We Thank you for a fantastic term – we look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year on Tuesday January 6th 2026!



Sensory Provision Winter Update:

Sara Lambert
Assistant Headteacher



The Sensory Provision have had a fabulous Autumn term, we have welcomed some new students to the department, and it has been lovely to get to know them and see them settle so well into their new classes. Our first of two themes for this academic year is 'Sing a Rainbow' and we have all enjoyed taking part in some fantastic colour themed activities.

Students from across the provision have had the opportunity to access activities both on an offsite, including our mixed Post 16 groups, horse riding, swimming and whole school Play Days.



I am immensely proud of all that the students have achieved and am I delighted to share some updates with you from each class. out from each class.

I hope everyone has a wonderful break and wish you all the best for the New Year.

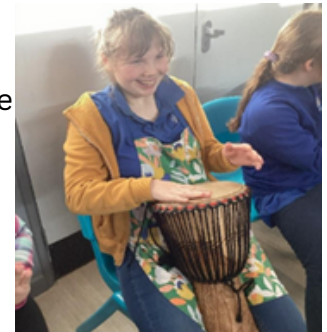
Parrots



We have had a fantastic Autumn term. We have said goodbye to some old friends and hello to some new Parrots. We have enjoyed lots of activities linked to our theme of colour. Our sensory story has been based on the colours of the rainbow! In Sensory Cookery we have enjoyed making pizzas along with lots of mess. We have had lots of visits from the music man which has been enjoyed by everyone. Our creativity sessions have been particularly popular, particularly our Christmas crafting.

Robins

Robins have had a term full of colour linked to our theme. Our students have been exploring different coloured food and making delicious pizzas in Sensory Cooking. We have been very creative by using our hands and feet to make artwork for our display. Students have also enjoyed taking part in our school pumpkin competition, Black History month, Children in Need, Diwali and Remembrance Day activities. We have enjoyed our music sessions with the music man and visits from Bertie the therapy dog. Robins class wish you all a very merry Xmas and we look forward to having lots more fun in the Spring term.



Flamingos



This term the children have been enjoying sensory exploration during sensory cooking. The children have touched, smelled and tasted the ingredients for pizzas and then used their communication systems to communicate their likes and dislikes. They have experienced sensory stories relating to the colours of the rainbow and then made a footprint rainbow for display. They also had lots of fun with a spooky Halloween story and The Night Before Christmas story too. They have worked hard on their physio and mobility, but we have also found time to relax and enjoy some sensory story and song massage. We have had visits from The Music Therapist and Bertie the Therapy dog and enjoyed lots of music during 'body awareness sessions' and 'All Join In'. Well done to the children for all their hard work!!

Falcons

Falcons have had a lovely Autumn term, we have worked hard on our Independence and Communication skills and experienced a range of activities related to our theme. Including a Rainbow sensory story, making some fantastic artwork in creativity, tasting and exploring ingredients when making rainbow pizzas in Sensory cooking and getting very messy in Exploratory play!

We have also loved visits from Bertie the therapy dog and Paul the music man. We had a great time with the African drummers as part of our Black History Month celebrations and we were very excited to be awarded third place in the Annual Pumpkin Competition. We have been enjoying lots of Christmas activities and we look forward to more adventures next term.





Collaborative Provision Winter Update:

Toby Widdicombe
Assistant Headteacher



This term the Collaborative provision has been working hard on our independence skills. Our classes have been cooking pizzas and scones with a huge focus on completing the tasks as independently as possible. Our Post 16 class made cakes for the Transition event and cake sale in November which was a huge success.



Classes have all been accessing shopping trips following prompts and visual supports to use a shopping list.

All of our classes took part in the Pumpkin Competition in October, sadly no collaborative classes placed in the top 3 but it was a valiant effort all the same.



Our students loved the African Drummers that came in for Black History month. Lots of engagement and enjoyment had by all.

The collaborative department enjoyed and interacted well with the Winter Wonderland playdays in early December. It was a great time to spend together playing and having fun in the build up to Christmas. Starlings class engaged in a wreath making art session, with all students joining in and making some very festive creations.





Structured Provision Winter Update:

Mihaela Shoebridge
Assistant Headteacher



This term has been filled with wonderful opportunities for our pupils to explore, discover and grow in a wide range of engaging environments. We are delighted to share some of the highlights from across the school.

Our outdoor learning sessions have been a huge success, giving pupils the chance to build confidence while exploring nature. Whether investigating textures in the garden, or enjoying sensory walks, children have been developing communication, problem-solving in meaningful real-world contexts. The joy on their faces as they explore the outdoors truly shows the power of learning beyond the classroom.



Our play-based sessions have provided pupils with rich opportunities for sensory exploration. From messy play trays filled with foam, rice, and water to light-up toys and tactile fabrics, children have been able to investigate different textures, sounds, and visuals. These experiences help support emotional regulation, communication, and curiosity—while also being lots of fun!

Cooking sessions have been full of tempting smells and hands-on learning. Pupils have been practicing real-life skills such as measuring, pouring, and mixing. These activities not only support fine-motor development but also give pupils a sense of achievement.



Trips to local parks have provided wonderful opportunities for physical development, social interaction, and sensory exploration. Pupils have been enjoying the swings, slides, and open spaces while practicing turn-taking, communication, and road-safety routines. Being out in the community also supports pupils in becoming confident and engaged learners beyond school.



A key focus this term has been road-safety awareness. With support from staff, pupils have been learning how to stop, look, listen before crossing. Practicing these skills during local walks has helped children understand real-world routines and build the confidence they need to navigate their environment safely.

Attention Autism sessions have continued to captivate our pupils with exciting stages full of colour, movement, and surprise! These sessions are helping pupils develop shared attention, communication, and turn-taking in a motivating and structured way.



We were thrilled to welcome a group of African drummers into school this term, who created an atmosphere full of excitement and curiosity. Pupils had the opportunity to listen to traditional drumming, explore the instruments up close, and even join in with simple beats and call-and-response patterns. The session offered a rich cultural experience while supporting communication, sensory engagement, and participation. The sound of the drums had everyone smiling!

On Remembrance Day, the school came together to reflect on the importance of peace, respect, and remembering those who have served. Pupils created poppy artwork, watched calming sensory videos, and took part in a quiet moment of reflection during assembly. We are incredibly proud of everything our pupils have achieved. We would like to say a big thank you to all families for your ongoing support.





Wellbeing Winter Update:

Thea Smith
Wellbeing Support Office



The festive season can be a magical time, but it can also be busy, noisy, and overwhelming. Here are some tips to help make the festive season smoother for you and your family:

☀️ **Keep Routines Steady**

Try to keep mealtimes, bedtimes, and daily rhythms familiar.

🧘 **Create Calm Corners**

The festive season can be busy and overwhelming, providing a calm space or breaks can help support regulation.

🎁 **Keep It Simple**

You don't need to do everything. Choose the traditions your family loves and let the rest go, stress-free is best.

💛 **Take Care of YOU Too**

Grab a quiet moment and remember you're doing brilliantly. Your wellbeing matters just as much as your child's.

This term has been full of positive wellbeing activities and support for our students and families. A highlight for many was a visit from our therapy dog, Bertie, who brought calm, comfort, and plenty of smiles to pupils across the school.



We were also pleased to welcome Julie from the DWP, who spent time with our Post-16 students, offering guidance on their next steps and helping them think about future aspirations. In addition, representatives from SENDIASS and Sea of Support joined us at our recent transitions event, providing valuable advice, information, and reassurance to parents as they navigate important decisions for their children. We are grateful for these partnerships, which continue to strengthen the wellbeing and confidence of our school community.

Student Council

The School Council has had a busy and exciting term as we continue working towards achieving our Rights Respecting School Award. As part of this journey, we've been working hard to ensure every pupil's voice is heard throughout the school. We regularly gather ideas, suggestions, and feedback from pupils, which are then brought to our council meetings for discussion and planning. We use this valuable student voice to help plan and decide on the activities and events we hold throughout the year, ensuring our school is a place where everyone feels included, respected, and empowered to make a positive difference.



Winter Events



Bertie Therapy Dog

Bertie the therapy dog is a much-loved visitor at our school, brightening the day of both staff and students the moment he walks through the door. His calm, friendly nature brings comfort to those who need it, and his wagging tail never fails to bring a smile to everyone's face. Bertie has formed amazing relationships with many students and staff members, offering support, joy, and a sense of connection that makes our school community feel even more special.



Foodbank

Over the festive period, our school community comes together to support those in need through the Foodbank collection. Students, families, and staff generously donate food, toiletries, and essential items to help local families enjoy a brighter holiday season. These contributions make a real difference, spreading kindness, warmth, and the true spirit of giving throughout the school and beyond.



Transitions Event

On the 18th of November, we hosted our annual transitions event. The morning was a great success, with lots of post-18 providers attending, and several support services. Guests included: SEND IASS, Sea of Support, the Moving into adulthood team, Teamwork trust, CANTO college, Suncare, The Sweet Shop, Born to Perform and Freedom support. There was also a cake sale, hosted by Hummingbirds class, selling a huge variety of delicious baked goods, and a cup of tea to go alongside.



Winter Wonderland



For 2 days, our school hall was turned into a Winter Wonderland with lots of different play and sensory activities for the students to explore. The students had fun dressing up as santa, decorating Christmas tree, throwing snowballs and exploring the shredded paper snow! Many of our students this year enjoyed the Santa infinity mirror and the snowy forest scene.

Brass Band

We had the pleasure of welcoming the 60's Brass Band in to the school. They brought cheer with their brass instrument versions of popular Christmas songs and carols. Our students and staff joined in singing and clapping along and there was a real feeling of Christmas joy in the air



The Polar Express



Excitement filled the school as the Polar Express lorry arrived to spread festive cheer this Christmas. Pupils were delighted to see the magical lorry, bringing smiles, wonder, and a touch of Christmas magic to the day. The special visit created lasting memories and added to the joyful atmosphere throughout the school as we celebrated the season together.



For careers at Wren, we focus on the future destinations of our learners and the skills they will need to access post-18 provisions. Learners have been engaging in activities such as, swimming, horse riding, shopping, and park visits. Group play sessions, visits from the music therapist and whole-school celebration days also contribute to learners' preparation for adulthood.

Earlier in the term, a group of learners had a visit from the DWP, to discuss how we use money. A group of learners have also accessed a 3D printing workshop at Tresham college, a transition event at the Beehive in Northampton, and represented the school at an education event at the University of Northampton. We are also continuing to access the Teamwork Trust and the Isebrook animal care facilities.

Classes have been working hard this term to make Christmas cards for the Charity Serve. Serve is a voluntary organisation and charity that are based in Rushden, supporting vulnerable adults with various services. Learners have created a large amount of Christmas cards which will be collected by Serve and shared with their service users, spreading the Christmas cheer. We look forward to working together to create opportunities for our learners.



If you would like to know more about transitions at post-18, please call and ask to speak to Thea or Anna.



SAFEGUARDING

What is Safeguarding?



Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge

Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online

Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

And in Working Together to Safeguard Children only:
Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children



Wren Spinney have **Designated Safeguarding Leads** (DSLs), who work as a team, alongside all staff to promote the culture of Safeguarding with the school.

Support from Social Care

Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) have recently published their new 'Right Help, Right time – A continuum of need' document. This gives guidance to schools to support children, young people and their families.

If as a family you need support outside of school, Wren's pastoral team can support via the Early Help/Family Help process which links into a range of different services and can lead into support from social care.

Useful Contacts: - School is closed over the holidays but here are some useful contacts if you have any major concerns:

- MASH - If you are worried or concerned about something that has happened to you, a friend or someone you know, please call the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) 0300 126 7000.
- NSPCC - If you have any concerns about a child. You can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 (10am–4pm Monday to Friday), emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk or via their website. www.nspcc.org.uk
- Childline - telephone number is 0800 1111