



Critchill School Newsletter

December 2024



Head Teacher News

Autumn Term 2

We are all extremely proud of our recent Ofsted inspection report and grading. I am sure you have all had a chance to have a look at this but for me a few of the most profound quotes are;

- **Pupils thrive at Critchill Special School.**
- **The curriculum enables and supports each pupil to flourish and excel in their learning**
- **Through a highly bespoke curriculum, the school enables and supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be successful in preparing for the adult world. The school's vision is shared by all staff.**
- **Students are enabled to be valued members of the community and are fully prepared to enjoy positive, fruitful lives as adults.**
- **The school's approach to managing the behaviour of pupils is visionary. Through very strong relationships with staff, pupils are supported very well to develop strong social interactions.**
- **Pupils' behaviour is strong and their attitudes to learning impeccable**

I know you will join me in congratulating all the students and staff at Critchill for the remarkable contribution they make to Critchill School.

This term, Students learning is beginning to be shared with you on Evidence for Learning and you will be able to see their progress towards personalised learning intentions. If you need a reminder about how to access this please get in touch with the office. We value sharing these learning experiences with you and would welcome your comments and uploads of activities you do at home.

It was pleasing to see the high quality enterprise products that students from across the school created for our Christmas Fair. I want to extend my thanks to everyone that came along and supported them as well as those who purchased raffle tickets.

We end the term with many festivities including, the Christmas Lunch, a Christmas pantomime and hopefully another visit from Santa on Friday.

I wish all our Critchill families a safe and enjoyable Christmas break and we look forward to welcoming the students back on 7th January 2025.

Kind regards,

Emma West



Please click the link to find a copy of our recent OFSTED report

[OFSTED REPORT](#)

Upcoming Dates

6th January – Inset Day

7th January – Term 3 Starts

8th January – Critchill Code

28th January – PLIM Evening

14th February – End of Term 3

24TH February - INSET DAY

25th February - Term 4 Starts

School News



1 - IT'S BEGINNING TO LOOK A LOT LIKE CHRISTMAS



CHRISTMAS TREES

We would like to say a very big thank you to a parent that very kindly donated 12 Christmas Trees to the school, one for each of the classrooms. Also a very big thank you to another parent who kindly purchased us 12 stands for the trees.

Also a big Thank You to Mole Valley Farmers in Frome for donating us the Christmas Tree for the Hall. Post 16 students had a lovely time decorating it.

FREE KINDLING FOR SCHOOLS

A very big thank you to The Scaff Shop who very kindly donated a pallet load of kindling for us to use for our Forest School . Some of this has been put to great use already.



[Christmas Fair](#)

On Tuesday 10th December we held the school Christmas Fair.

An enormous thank you to all of the families and carers for attending this festive event and supporting our school. We were very proud of all the beautiful decorations and crafts made by pupils throughout the school.

A big shout out to the catering team for the very popular mince pies and refreshments.

We are delighted to be able to share that so far, pupils have raised a very impressive £331. A small number of items are still available for sale on Facebook.

Friends of Critchill's raffle raised £1200. Many thanks to them and to all of you who purchased raffle tickets and helped raise funds for our pupils.

Enterprise projects such as the fair, encourage our learners to develop the following skills:

- Team work
- Money skills
- Organising and planning
- Awareness of a target audience
- Taking risk
- Creativity and innovation.

Critchill Council will be given the responsibility of representing how this money will be spent, more news on this to come.











Father Christmas Visit

On Thursday 12th December we were very lucky to have a very special visit from Father Christmas. The children had a lovely time seeing him and those that wrote him letters have sent them on there way with him.

A very Big Thank You to Frome Lions for organising this special treat for all the children.









Christmas Jumper Day

On Thursday 12th December the children were invited to take part in Christmas Jumper Day. It was so lovely to see them and staff take part.



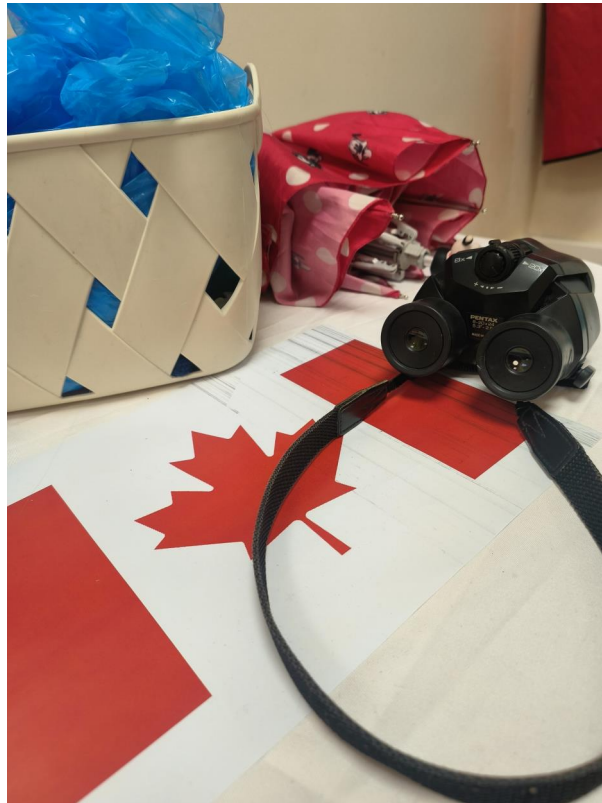


MFL - Canada Day

On Friday 13th December the whole school took part in MFL day. The focus for this day was Canada.

During the day there were lots of different learning activities for the children to take part in, along with trying different foods from the country.

Pupils and staff were also invited to wear something red and white to represent the countries flag.







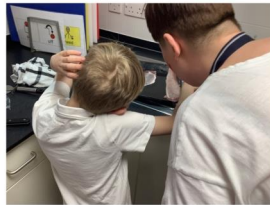






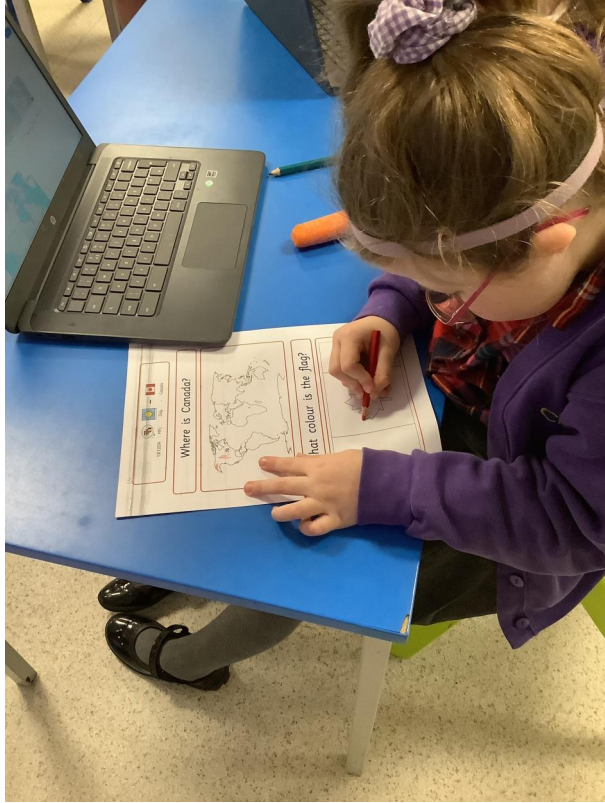
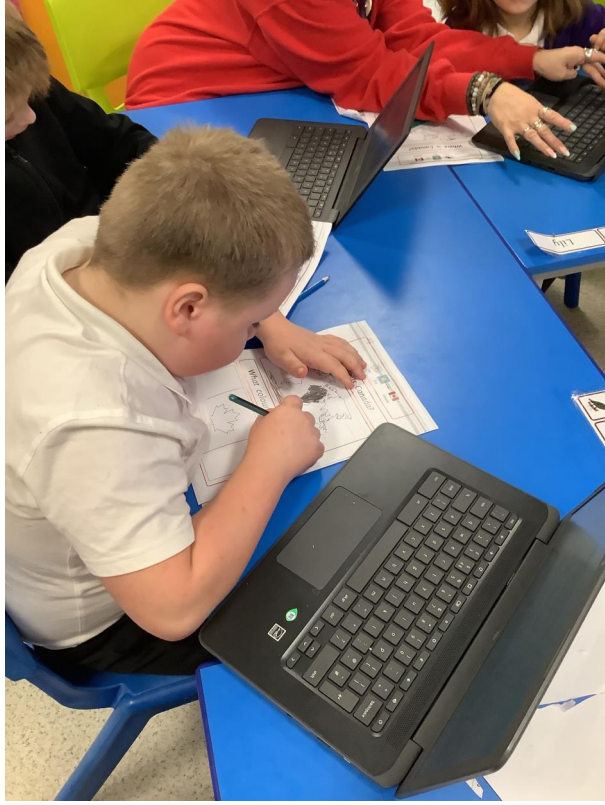






PIC•COLLAGE









Class News



2 - Finches Class

This term **Finches** have been looking at Stone Age to Iron Age. We have been exploring how people in the past may have lived through our senses. What could they see? What did they eat? Where did they live? The children have really enjoyed it.



3 - Starlings Class









This term **Starlings** have been learning about the theme "Stone Age to the Iron Age". We started off our theme by entering a cave and listening to the story of "Cave Baby". We have then explored digging for fossils, cave paintings, stone age shelters and the tools that were

used. Can you imagine having to hunt for your food? I'm not sure I would want to live in the Stone Age.





Wrens class had a visit from our local PCSOs. They engaged with a 'Stranger Danger' story and were able to explore the police van! All of Wrens showed great engagement and really enjoyed this visit.

Critchill School Council





Thank you to everyone who has already donated to the Fair Frome Food Bank. Critchill Council are delighted with your generosity.

Working Futures (P16)

Post 16 have had a fantastic time building up to Christmas. They designed Christmas decorations which they sold at the Christmas Fair, decorated their own tree, made Christmas cards, investigated statistics about mince pies and were treated to a fantastic pantomime. It has been an amazing first two terms and the P16 staff would like to say a huge well done to all the pupils. We wish everyone associated with Critchill School a Happy Christmas.

The class also had a visit to Garston Veterinary Practice in Frome. The pupils learnt about the types of jobs the staff do, the range of animals they look after and the responsibilities of being a pet owner. We would like to thank the staff for making us feel very welcome and giving us such an interesting afternoon.





Friends of Critchill School

It's been a busy term for Friends of Critchill.

In October we held a Halloween event, which was great fun for the children and raised nearly £500. More recently, we organised the raffle, which was drawn at the Christmas Fayre, raising £1200.

We have continued to fund equipment for the children, most recently purchasing a new games console for console club and a sensory tent for Bramblings class. We also put a lot of work into sourcing the Christmas trees and Christmas tree stands for each of the classrooms; a big thank you to the parent who came through with the Christmas trees and to the other parent who donated the Christmas tree stands.

We will be sending home a festive treat for each child at the end of the term.

The Friends of Critchill AGM was held on December 11th, and the new Chair, Sunny Curzon, was voted in. We'd like to give a big thank you to Jess Cullen, the outgoing Chair, for her hard work this year. We are still looking for a new Secretary to join the committee in the new year as the current Secretary is moving away.

If you can help with this role, or with Friends of Critchill in general, please contact us through friendsofcritchill@gmail.com.

Thank you to everybody who has pitched-in to help at events this year and to everybody who has donated, whether their time or money.

Other Information

Carpark

Thank you all for your continued support in keeping the car park a safe place for students. We will lessen staff presence in January and hope that car park users can be vigilant and only enter the car park when there is an adequate space.

Just a reminder that entry to the car park in the afternoons is at 3.10pm. The hydro pool car park can be used in the morning drop off, but not during the afternoon. Also please keep engines off once parked.

Uniform and equipment

Please can we ask that students are dressed in full school uniform and have adequate wet weather clothing to support outdoor learning. Primary aged students can come dressed in PE kit on their PE days. Please ask class teachers if you need a reminder of your child's days for swimming/hydrotherapy/PE/ forest school etc where they will need additional clothes/equipment.

Wise Up Workshop Information

Please find the email address for information regarding Wise Up Workshops that are being held through out the next few months.

www.somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk

Please contact Hayley Cobb if you would like any further information.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding

We recently shared some information about a game that is causing distress to users. For those students that it is appropriate, please talk with your child, ensuring their safety online and reassure them that reporting and talking to a trusted adult is always the best thing to do. Below is a link, with resources to support parents in having open conversations about online safety. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Family Information

SCHOOL MEALS

School meals are now available to book on Parent Pay for after the Christmas Break. Please make sure these are booked by Thursday 2nd January ready for the start of term on Tuesday 7th January.



4 - Headlice

We have seen an increase in cases of head lice in school. It is important to check your child's hair for head lice.

The best technique is to use a head lice comb when the hair is wet, leaving in conditioner and combing the hair in sections. When the hair is wet, head lice cannot move so they are easier to comb out. Please note that they do not jump or fly, you can only catch head lice from head to head contact. If you find head lice, you should: Treat appropriately: the wet combing technique eradicates the lice and eggs. This should be done every 3 to 4 days over a 2-week period to break the life cycle. If you require further information please have a look at the following website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/> Children who become clear of head lice can be re-infected at school. You can help to tackle this by following good prevention, by being vigilant to spot any new infections or re-infections and by seeking prompt treatment if you find any head lice. Head lice are best prevented and controlled by regular wet combing, and keeping long hair tied up.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Nut Free

THIS SCHOOL IS NUT FREE



A reminder we are a nut free school. We are asking that you do not send any food or drink into school that contains nuts.

Whats on in the local area



The poster is designed to look like a spiral-bound notebook with a grey top edge featuring black rings. The background is a dark teal with white stars. In the top left corner is a circular logo with colorful hands. In the top right corner is the Somerset Council logo, which includes a stylized horse head and the text 'Somerset Council'. The main title 'Activity Calendar' is written in a large, white, brush-stroke font, with 'Calendar' in red. Below it, in a smaller white font, is 'Community Inclusion and Activity Team'. The dates 'Christmas Holidays Saturday 21 Dec - 3 Jan 2025' are written in a white, sans-serif font. Five photographs are arranged in a collage: a child working with wood, two children walking on a path, a child on a carousel horse, a child in a wheelchair, and a child sitting on a bench. The bottom of the poster features a white border with stylized Christmas trees and candy canes. A white box at the bottom contains the following text:

For ALL children and young people in Somerset with a disability or additional needs
*You DO NOT have to be referred to any service to access these activities, unless otherwise stated.

SATURDAY 21ST DECEMBER

Wilderwoods

Wilderwoods Forest School, Drayton, TA10 0JZ. Midwinter Candlelit Celebration- Decorations, candles and songs in the woods with refreshments around the campfire afterwards. 3-6pm. For ages 0-16. £5 per child. £10 per family (max 1 adult and 3 children).

To book, please call Hannah Aitken 07970 883264 or email hannah@wilderwoods.org



SATURDAY 28TH DECEMBER

In the Mix Project

The Hub Centre, Hartswell, South Street, Wiveliscombe TA4 2NE. A Christmas treat - Baking fudge and making chocolates, and truffles, christmas crafts and creating your own gift box. 10am-12:30pm. For ages 11-18. £2 per person.

To book, please email Jemma. lay@inthemixproject.org.uk.



FRIDAY 3RD JANUARY

Green Goblins Games Club

Riverside Church, The Exchange, Hamilton Rd, Taunton, TA1 2EQ. Tabletop games including Pokemon Trading Card Game, Board Games and D&D Roleplay Games. 6-10.30pm. For age 10+ (under 10s may attend when accompanied by a parent carer). £3 entry. First time free. Parent carers free.

To book, please call Michael Ford on 07733066157 or email email@greengoblinsgamesclub.co.uk



FRIDAY 3RD JANUARY

Minehead Eye

1A Mart road, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 5BJ. include games, music, lights, lego and a water and sand tray activity area in our pod. The centre includes a café style space for parents. Children and parents can use both spaces throughout the 2 hour session. They will be supported and advised by our 2 qualified youth workers. One in each area. 3-5pm. For ages 0-10. £1 per family.

To book, please email reception@minehead-eye.co.uk



MONDAY 23RD DECEMBER

Purple Elephant

The Assembly Rooms, Christchurch Street West, Frome BA11 1EB. Family holiday fun - Christmas party! With festive crafts, Santa and a hot meal followed by a silent disco. 10am-2pm. For all ages. £2 suggested donation per child but free to those on FSMs.

To book, email rebecca.harrison@purpleelephant.org.uk



THURSDAY 2ND JANUARY

Community Inclusion Activity Team Family Day

Sanders Garden Centre, Brent Knoll, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, TA9 4HJ.

In the festive Big Top prepare to be mesmerised by spinning fairies, elf on a shelf mischief, incredible aerialists, acrobats, rollerskaters, the heart stopping wheel of death and the adrenaline pumping motorbikes in the globe. Even Santa makes an appearance! Venue has a limited number of ear defenders which can be borrowed for the duration of the show, so please bring your own if you think you'll need them. Show includes flashing lights. 5:30-7:30pm. Please arrive at 5pm to allow time to be seated. For all ages. £5 per person. Under 2s free but will need to be seated on parent carer's lap. Please make payment by 13th December.

To book, call 07977 412199 from 10am on Tuesday 3 December.



FRIDAY 27TH DECEMBER

Neroche

Young Wood, Staple Fitzpaine TA3 5AZ. Seasonal Forest Activities. We will base the sessions on seasonal themes - 1D trees, buds and leaves and look for animal tracks. We return for a snack/lunch and have some seasonal craft and play options with child led activities. Families will be asked to bring their own food, and we do a small campfire cooking activity. There are hot drinks 'on tap' for parent carers, and cold drinks are also available. 11am-2pm. For 2-18th birthday. £10 per family.

To book, please email sarah@nerocheewoodlanders.org/ or info@nerocheewoodlanders.org or go to www.nerocheewoodlanders.org or call Sarah Holdway on 07784 800641



XMAS ACTIVITY PACKS

Step4ward-in2-growth

Christmas Activity Packs. Each pack will be focused on Christmas crafts, fun and fact, and I will include a letter to Santa kit in their activity packs, along with the tailor-made element. Hand delivered if local to Shepton Mallet or sent by Royal Mail. For ages 3-18th Birthday. £3 per pack.

To order, please contact Becky on 07737 331174 or email Step4ward-in2growth@mail.com

Community Inclusion Activity Team

Winter' or 'Christmas' themed activity packs, containing arts & crafts, puzzles and more! £3 per pack, to be paid prior to delivery. Please ensure payment is made by 13 December.

To order, please email ciateam@somerset.gov.uk by 9 December with your child's name, age, nature of disability, address, phone number and where we can safely leave the pack if you're not in. Delivery w/c 16 December.



Christmas Eve Movie Night

Tuesday, December 24th
3 PM - 4:30 PM
Axminster Guildhall
£1 per ticket
(includes drink and mince pie)*
see booking page for more details

www.axminster-guildhall.co.uk



Family Holiday Activities at Wells Cathedral

Festive Foliage

Saturday 21 December 2024

Get the holidays off to a festive start with this creative workshop for children!

- **Make a seasonal centrepiece** to adorn your table this Christmas using natural materials, including foliage from the Cathedral gardens
- **Explore the Cathedral** with our free Christmas Story trail

FREE with adult entry
No need to book – simply drop in on the day!

Sessions in the Education Room of Wells Cathedral
11.15am – 3.15pm

There is no charge for children. Standard adult admission tickets include re-entry for 12 months from date of purchase, so you can enjoy access to a number of seasonal events, including exhibitions and Family Holiday Activities beyond your initial visit. Only assistance dogs are allowed at this activity.

WELLS CATHEDRAL
EXPLORE • CREATE • DISCOVER

Wells Cathedral Registered Charity Number 1207269