

# Healthy Schools: Stockton-on-Tees Newsletter



## Healthy Schools

Stockton-on-Tees

December 2025 – Family Edition



## Nutrition and Oral Health

### Healthy festive recipes



*Healthy raspberry cookies*

Christmas is a time for many things: festivities, family, and food to name a few! And what could be better than enjoying delicious treats that are also good for you? Healthy Christmas cookies are a great way to keep everyone satisfied without compromising on nutrition.

Looking for inspiration? BBC Good Food offers a fantastic range of healthy, Christmas-themed recipes that are perfect for families and schools. Why not try something new this season and make your celebrations both joyful and wholesome?

[Healthy Christmas Recipes | Good Food](#)

## Physical activity

### Holidays Are Fun



Bookings are now open for thousands of places at free and exciting Holidays Are Fun (HAF) activity sessions during the Christmas school holiday!

There's a wide range of sessions running from Saturday 20 December to Friday 2 January for eligible school age children from Reception to Year 11, including sports, arts and crafts, and SEND specific sessions. Each child can **now** book up to eight sessions for HAF Christmas.

A free nutritious meal is provided each day for every child taking part.

To be eligible, families **must be in receipt of benefits-related free school meals**.

[Find out more about the HAF programme and book a place.](#)

For more information email [HAF@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:HAF@stockton.gov.uk).

The programme is funded by the Department for Education and delivered by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

## HAF Case study



A 5 year old girl who attended HAF last summer and at Christmas was taken ill with meningitis earlier this year, she developed an infection which led to her having four lower limb amputations.

Her family wanted her to return to HAF and join the dance club we provide as it's something she enjoyed previously to her illness that had a hugely positive impact on her confidence. She had formed friendships and trusting relationships with staff.

HAF was her happy place. She was thrilled to return to our sessions this summer and was able to do so because we provided an accessible service that was inclusive and adaptive.

The only barrier for this child was that she has had to attend hospital appointments and that has meant that she has unfortunately missed some sessions. Aside from that we have ensured that our service was accessible for her. We had a continuous conversation with her family and her school teachers to ensure that we were ready to welcome her back to our provision.

Providing a club that this child felt a part of was essential to her mental health and has impacted her summer holidays. She has experienced verbal abuse when she has been out in public and her parents are now less confident with getting her out of the house. So for her to have a safe and welcoming environment and sense of community is essential to her recover and mental wellbeing.

As staff we were wondering if the children who knew her before her amputations would be emotional in seeing her since her illness.

However, they were so overjoyed and happy. It's like they didn't see a difference in her. It was an extremely special moment, and her parents were overjoyed that she was so celebrated and welcomed back into her loving friendship group as though they had never been apart.

## Something new for you



Come along and try something new for you this January!

Join us at the Forum Theatre, Billingham on Tuesday 27 January, 10am – 1pm. Browse information stalls, enjoy free activities, meet new people and see what's available in your local community including:

- Health support
- Volunteering opportunities
- Wellbeing services
- Creative activities
- Social groups
- Staying active

## Everyone is Welcome – Tees Active



A series of 360° virtual tours of Stockton's leisure centres have been created to help visitors feel more at ease before they visit. These tours highlight accessibility features like swimming pool hoists, parking and changing facilities - designed to support anyone who might benefit from seeing the space in advance - from arrival to activity and everything in between!

These tours have been developed in partnership with key stakeholders in our community - shaped by lived experience and local insight. Thank you to [Catalyst Stockton](#), [Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#), [Tees Valley Sport](#), and [Sport England](#).

We know that everyone's needs are different, big or small, and we want these tours to be genuinely helpful for all. We've also included a short survey so you can share your thoughts and help us keep improving.

Please share far and wide! We hope these tours will give greater confidence to anyone who wants to be more physically active but feels apprehensive about what the experience will look like.

360 Tours: <https://www.teesactive.co.uk/venue-tours/>

Feedback Survey:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/accesstours>

## **Let's Move! Activities to help kids move more every day**



Kids need 60 minutes of physical activity each day, with at least 30 minutes of that outside of school. You don't need to buy expensive equipment or find lots of extra time to make a difference. Every bit of movement adds up to support their health and wellbeing.

Need some inspiration? Visit [www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/activities/](http://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/activities/) for lots of ideas to help! Whatever your family enjoys, there's a fun way to get moving together.

Let's Move has been backed by Olympic medal-winning gymnasts Beth Tweddle and Max Whitlock, as well as The Body Coach, Joe Wicks, and Parenthood stars Olivia and Alex Bowen.

## **Mental health, wellbeing and**

### **Resilience**

### **Flu: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child**

**NHS**

# flu: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child

- 1. Protect your child**  
The vaccine will help protect your child against flu and serious complications such as bronchitis and pneumonia
- 2. Protect you, your family and friends**  
Vaccinating your child will help protect more vulnerable friends and family
- 3. No injection needed**  
The nasal spray is painless and easy to have
- 4. It's better than having flu**  
The nasal spray helps protect against flu, has been given to millions of children worldwide and has an excellent safety record
- 5. Avoid costs**  
If your child gets flu, you may have to take time off work or arrange alternative childcare

Most children have the nasal spray vaccine which is the preferred vaccine. A vaccine injection is also available which does not contain gelatine from pigs (porcine gelatine).

For more information visit [www.nhs.uk/child-flu](http://www.nhs.uk/child-flu)

**Flu Immunisation**  
Helping to protect children, every winter

© Crown copyright 2014. Product code: FLU08/124. UK Health Security Agency gateway number: 2021514  
If you want to order more copies of this poster, please visit: [healthcommunication.gov.uk/home.html](http://healthcommunication.gov.uk/home.html) or call 0300 123 3802

## HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS PROPERLY

1. WATER AND SOAP
2. PALM TO PALM
3. BETWEEN FINGERS
4. FOCUS ON THUMBS
5. BACK OF HANDS
6. FOCUS ON WRISTS

As well as vaccination, we can stop Flu, COVID-19 and diarrhoea and vomiting (D&V) bugs from spreading with easy steps:

- Catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue.
- Make sure to wash your hands regularly, especially after coughing/sneezing, using the toilet, and before eating. Teach younger children how to wash their hands properly with warm water and soap.
- If you feel unwell and have a high temperature, stay home until you feel better.
- If you have diarrhoea and vomiting you must stay home for 48 hours after your last symptoms, otherwise you can still spread it to others.

School aged children will be offered the nasal flu vaccine at school. The vaccine is the best protection against flu, just remember to complete the consent form!

For 2 and 3 year olds speak to your GP or [book](#) at a local pharmacy.

## We can stop winter bugs

## Check your child is protected from meningitis

**Meningitis cases are rising.** Meningitis can lead to limb loss, hearing loss, problems with eyesight, and sometimes death. **The best protection against meningitis is vaccination.**

We are offered multiple vaccines as babies, children, and teenagers that protect us from meningitis. It's important to get them all as they protect against different strains and make sure our protection gets

topped up. **Check your child is up to date with their vaccines.** If your baby or young child has missed any vaccines speak to your GP, if your teenager has missed their vaccine speak to their school.

**If you think your child has symptoms of meningitis,** even if they don't have the typical rash and/or are up to date with their vaccines, **call 999 immediately!**

## Warm Homes Healthy People



Cold temperatures can have a serious impact on your health and wellbeing. Keeping warm and healthy during the cold weather can help keep illness away.

Working with Cleveland Fire Brigade and Stockton District Advice and Information Services, we can help with:

- Boiler repairs
- Emergency heating
- Energy saving advice and energy saving schemes
- Advice and support to help keep you healthy and more able to cope with cold weather

The boiler repair scheme is only available to homeowners with gas central heating systems, living in the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, and runs from Wednesday 1 October 2025 until Tuesday 31 March 2026.

You may be eligible for a boiler repair if you are the homeowner and claiming a means-tested benefit and you are any of the following:

- 65 or over
- Under 65 and in receipt of disability benefits

- Under 65 and have a long term illness made worse by the cold or live with a child (under 5) who has a long term illness made worse by the cold
- Living with dementia

If you would like advice or further information, please call 01642 528215.

Opening hours are:

- Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 5pm
- Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

**In a heating emergency outside of office hours, contact the Cleveland Fire Brigade on 01429 874063, who can provide heaters and other equipment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

For more information please visit: [Warm Homes Healthy People - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council](#)

## A Second Dance – Prom Pop-ups



After the success of our first pre-loved prom clothing event in May, we are pleased to announce our Second Dance - Prom pop-ups.

We have collected over 200 outfits and accessories that young people who are preparing for Prom 2026 can choose from. Our [video](#) will give you a flavour of what we have planned.

We will be holding a series of pop-up shops over the months that follow so you can come and browse the rails at times that suit you.

Dates are as follows:

- Wednesday 14 January - 3 - 5:30pm
- Wednesday 25 February - 1 - 4pm
- Wednesday 8 April - 1 - 4pm
- Wednesday 15 April - 1 - 4pm
- Wednesday 27 May - 1 - 4pm

It is still not too late to donate an outfit. If you would like to donate, please contact [fsot@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:fsot@stockton.gov.uk)

## National Year of Reading 2026



Everyone knows the benefits of reading: it expands your world, sharpens your mind. It might even make you more creative or successful.

But increasingly, fewer of us are making time to read. With so many forms of entertainment at our fingertips, reaching for a book can feel like a chore. Something we should do, but don't really want to do.

But we believe it's just a matter of shifting the focus. So for the National Year of Reading in 2026, we're bringing reading to where culture is.

### Reasons to take part

- Reading boosts brain development in children. It helps them build language skills, strengthen memory, and improve problem-solving abilities.
- Engaging with books regularly helps children build critical thinking, language, and social-emotional skills. Best of all, it can often be done at little, or no cost libraries, school resources, and community events provide access to books without putting financial strain on families.
- Books can match every interest, no matter who you are. Whether you're looking for stories about sports, adventure, gaming, or anything else, there is a book for you. The more you explore, the more you will discover and enjoy!

## Harbour: 24/7 Domestic Abuse Support during festive period

A festive-themed poster for Harbour's 24/7 Domestic Abuse Support. The poster has a white background with a decorative border of colorful stars and ornaments. At the top, it reads: 'We know the festive period can be difficult. If you or someone you know is affected by domestic abuse, you are not alone.' Below this, it states: 'You can contact us on 03000 20 25 25 if you:'. There are six icons with corresponding text: 1. A person on a headset: 'Need to talk to someone about what is happening at home'. 2. Two speech bubbles: 'Are worried about a partner/family member's behaviour'. 3. A person with a speech bubble: 'Need information about your rights or options'. 4. Hands holding a heart: 'Are thinking about leaving and need support'. 5. Hands holding a heart: 'Want advice for a friend or family member'. 6. A person with a speech bubble: 'Feel unsafe and don't know what to do next'. At the bottom, it says: 'Our phones are open throughout the festive period - 24/7' and 'If you are in danger and need immediate support please dial 999'. The Harbour logo is in the top right corner.

## Take on the Dry January Challenge!

An advertisement for the TRY DRY app. It features a hand holding a smartphone displaying the app's interface. The background is purple with the text 'WINNING STREAK' in large, bold, yellow and pink letters. Below the phone, it says: 'The TRY DRY® app tracks your alcohol-free streak. Intoxicating stuff.' A small 'DRY JANUARY CHALLENGE' logo is in the top right corner.

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council is calling on residents to take on the [Dry January® challenge](#) with Alcohol Change UK to reset their drinking habits and start 2026 feeling happier, healthier and better off.

[Dry January®](#) is for everyone who drinks alcohol who would like to pause for a month for the health and wellbeing benefits, including better

sleep, boosted energy, improved mood, and a fuller wallet.

Those who use Alcohol Change UK's free tools, including the [Try Dry® app and Dry January® email journey](#), are twice as likely to stay alcohol-free for the full 31 days and achieve lasting changes to their drinking habits compared to those attempting to avoid alcohol on their own.

[Download the free Try Dry® app](#) to start your 31-day alcohol-free streak. Sign up for daily coaching emails and collect your daily teacups while tracking your calories, drinks saved, and mood. Take control of your Dry January® and double your chance of having a totally alcohol-free month.

If you are alcohol dependent, you should not suddenly stop drinking. If you experience fits, shaking hands, sweating, seeing things that are not real, depression, anxiety, or difficulty sleeping after a period of drinking and while sobering up, you may be clinically alcohol dependent and should not suddenly stop drinking. Please seek support from your GP or [Stockton-on-Tees Recovery Service](#), who will be able to help you to reduce your drinking safely.

## **Media Smart radio challenge**



### **Exciting Opportunity for Young Creators!**

Media Smart and Fun Kids Radio have launched a fantastic competition for primary schools, youth clubs, and families. Young people are invited to create a short radio advert highlighting the importance of servicing gas appliances to prevent carbon monoxide risks. The winning entry will be aired on Fun Kids Radio, featured on Media

Smart's channels, and earn great prizes including £100 voucher and £250 for schools or clubs. Going towards vital media or its equipment. Entries close at the end of February, so there's plenty of time to get creative after the festive season!

### **What's involved?**

Safety Seymour and his friends from the CO Crew are calling on you to help spread the message about staying safe from carbon monoxide (CO). The challenge is simple: create a 30-second advert (around 100 words) that grabs attention and delivers the safety message. You can write a script or produce the full advert—feel free to include sound effects, voiceovers, and music (with permission, of course).

### **Why it's important**

Regular servicing of gas appliances—like boilers and cookers—is essential for safety. Without checks, they can produce carbon monoxide, a silent and dangerous gas you can't see or smell. This campaign encourages families to book an annual service with a Gas Safe-registered engineer. A simple step can help protect lives.

### **How to enter**

To enter the competition, use the link below where more of the details about the competitions are available. The competition will be over on Saturday 28 February 2026. If you think you have what it takes then make sure you don't miss out! Enter the competition [here](#).



*Merry Christmas! We wish you a joyful and restful Christmas and Happy New Year!*



# Services and Support

December 2025



## **General information**

[Family Hubs](#)

[Footsteps Youth Wellbeing](#)

[NHS Better Health: Healthier Families](#)

[NHS NENC: Healthier Together](#)

Single Point of Contact (0-19 Service)  
0333 3202 302

[Stockton Information Directory](#)

## **Mental health, wellbeing and resilience**

[Anna Freud](#)

[Beat Eating Disorders](#)

[Brook](#)

[CAMHS Training for Parents/Carers](#)

[CGL Young People's Service](#)  
07730616766 or 07884568823  
[stocktonyp@cgl.org.uk](mailto:stocktonyp@cgl.org.uk)

[Cost of Living Support](#)

[Cruse Bereavement Support](#)  
0808 808 1677

[Eastern Ravens Trust](#)  
01642 678454  
[info@easternravenstrust.org](mailto:info@easternravenstrust.org)

[Harbour](#) 03000 20 25 25

[Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Children's Hub](#)  
01642 130080 or 01642 524552 (out of hours)

[Impact on Teesside](#)

[Teesside Mind](#)

[Moving On Asthma](#)

[swgfl \(South Western Grid for Learning\)](#)

[Stockton-on-Tees Stop Smoking Service](#)  
01642 383819

[Talk to Frank](#)  
0300 123 6600

[UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

[Young Minds](#)

## **Nutrition and oral health**

[British Heart Foundation](#)

[Growing Well Growing Healthy](#)  
0333 3202 302

## **Physical activity and things to do**

[ARC](#)

[BCT Aspire](#)

[Five Lamps Youth Clubs](#)  
<https://www.facebook.com/fivelampstheyouth/>

[Hardwick in Partnership](#)

[Holidays Are Fun \(HAF\) Programme](#)

[Libraries](#)

[Parks](#)

[Preston Park Museum](#)

[Tees Active](#)

[Tees Valley Music Service](#)

[Tennis Courts](#)

[The Hub](#)

[Visit Tees Valley](#)