

Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day



Thameside In-touch!

Edition 36: 20th December 2024

Facebook: @ThamesidePrimary

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have almost come to the end of 2024! This term, as ever, has been a busy and incredibly productive term, with some much learning and smiles. Our children have been brilliant and although the festive season can often be filled with coughs and colds and chillier weather, they certainly ensure that the school is filled with joy and wonder at this time of year.

We have enjoyed so many Christmas events where the children have made us all incredibly proud, from the Early Years Sing-song and our Year 1 and 2 production of 'Boogie Woogie Nativity'. A huge thank you and well done to all of the children and staff who brought so many smiles to us all!

We also held our annual Christmas Fayre which was simply wonderful and so well attended – our PTA worked tirelessly to host such a wonderful event and we thank everyone who helped and supported. We raised an incredible £1600 for our school – just awesome!

Last week we were also visited by the trust CEO and Director of Learning to conduct our annual review of



leadership – this was very positive and we were delighted to receive the feedback that all leaders shared an ambitious vision of the school – we are so proud of our school and were delighted to receive the following recognition:

'Leaders have a bespoke and clear vision for the school which has been designed to serve its context. It is passionately articulated and supported by the written narrative. It is widely shared by staff, forms the culture of the school and is lived daily in the community.'

Home School Link Worker update

As shared in our last newsletter, we say a goodbye to Mrs Winder today who takes on a brand-new role at the Mulberry Bush School. We will miss her hugely as I know she has touched the lives of so many staff, children and families, but we know she will be fantastic in her new role. We know she will miss our Thameside family too – she has promised to come back and see us!

We are delighted to have appointed a new HSLW, Julie Price, who we hope will start in mid-January – she has significant school experience as well as previous experience in supporting families. Until then, Leah Spiers and Lynne Hammond from the trust central team will be supporting each week, but for any immediate questions please refer to the Senior Leadership – myself (Mrs Youngman), Miss Polley or Mrs Russell. Please be aware that there will be a period of induction and training for our new team member, so I ask for your patience and support. We will introduce her formally early next term!

Finally, we are currently advertising for an additional teaching assistant – all information can be found on our website vacancies page.

Just a reminder that we **DO NOT** have an INSET day on Monday 6th January so look forward to welcoming everyone back at school on Monday 6th January.

There will also be no teacher led clubs in week 1 – a letter will be sent out on the first day back. **Only Cleal's Wheels and Yoga will run in Week 1.**

Best wishes for a wonderful Christmas and we will see you again in 2025!

Laura Youngman

Headteacher





In this edition:

- **An introduction to Miss Polley – SENCO and Inclusion Lead**
- **Festive gallery**
- **An update from our pupil leaders and pupil parliament**
- **Class learning reviews!**
- **Stars of the Term!**
- **TTRockstars update.**
- **Links for the Christmas break**
- **Library corner**
- **Diary dates**

Cambrian Trust Newsletter link: Please find below a link to the latest Cambrian Trust parent and carer newsletter:

[Cambrian External Update](#)

An introduction to Miss Polley – Our SENCO and Inclusion Lead



Hi, I am Miss Polley and my role in school is the Inclusion Lead. This role covers being the Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO and Attendance Officer.

In my role as SENCO, I am responsible for overseeing provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This includes:

- Coordinating support and education plans for students with SEND**
- Liaising with parents of children with SEND**
- Advising fellow teachers and those working directly with children on SEND best practices and strategies**
- Managing teaching assistants and support staff**
- Overseeing implementation of the SEND policy**
- Monitoring effectiveness of SEND provisions**
- Maintaining accurate SEND records**
- Referring students for specialised assessments when needed**
- Staying up to date on SEND developments and training**

My other roles are specifically focussed on safeguarding and attendance, which involves supporting children and their families, liaising with outside agencies and implementing and monitoring practices and procedures within school.

I can be contacted via the school office.

Festive Gallery!



An update from our amazing Pupil leaders!

Pupil Parliament

This term our parliament members have been carrying out pupil surveys to find out children's opinions about key priorities that we are focusing on this year.

We first asked pupils about how confident they feel in Maths lessons and how they learn best. We also discussed ways in which we celebrate differences at Thameside. The children shared some lovely examples, and many mentioned our recent Odd Sock Day.

Arguably most excitingly, Mrs Russell shared some of the plans for our new play initiative which we will be launching after Christmas to make our playtimes even better with new equipment and areas to play. Watch this space for an update next term!

Pupil Leaders

Our pupil Leaders have been hard at work this term! They have been giving tours during our open day and even helping to organise pupils when the school photographer came. They showed incredible kindness and responsibility; well done!

Thameside in the Community

This term, Year 4 sang at a local care home – they brought so much joy and the residents were enjoying singing all of the songs. We have been asked to come in the New Year!

Last week we also welcomed MakeSpace Artists and a member of the local council to Thameside – we have been asked to be part of re-designing the local park in Cotman Close which is a huge honour! We can't wait to be part of shaping this important part of the community – watch this space!



Class learning reviews

To find out more about what each year group is learning, please do check out our updated parent curriculum overviews on the class pages of our website!

[Thameside Primary School - Class Pages \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)

Nursery

Nursery have been on a magical Christmas adventure. We had such a great time enjoying the build up to Christmas. We have been busy making hats for our Christmas sing songs and cards for our loved ones. We have also made a gingerbread house which we can go in and play.

We have had lots of sensory experiences such as coloured rice, pretend snow, slime and much more. We have also been looking at patterns and colours - we enjoyed reading lots of different Elmer stories and learning about similarities and differences. In Maths we have been looking at different patterns including swirls, dots, lines and zigzags. The children went on pattern hunts and enjoyed chalking their own patterns in the garden.

In Phonics we have learnt five new nursery rhymes and learnt the sounds p,i,n and m. We hope all the children have a wonderful Christmas break and will be back refreshed and ready for a fun new year.



Colours and Patterns

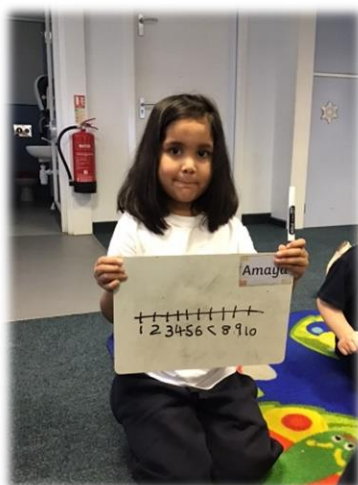


Reception

Reception have been learning all about Dinosaurs. We transformed the classroom into a dinosaur den, became dinosaur detectives when we found an egg in our garden and learnt all about what life was like in the past when dinosaurs were alive. We even made our own volcano and fossils and did a big volcanic explosion experiment!



We also had fun doing lots of singing and learning new signs for our Christmas sing song performance to our grownups in the lead up to Christmas!





Year 1

Year 1 have been enjoying stories of knights, princesses and dragons this term, tying in with our History topic - Castles. They've particularly enjoyed the Zog books, written by their class author from Reception: Julia Donaldson. They have drawn some wonderfully creative dragons and come up with fantastic words and sentences to describe what the dragons are doing. In Maths, we've finished the term with a unit on shape. See which 3D shapes they can spot at home or when out and about! We had some great Christmas tree designs, using only three triangles, two rectangles and six circles. Finally, the children

worked so hard to learn the songs for our 'Boogie Woogie Angels' nativity play and we were very proud of them overcoming their nerves to get up on stage.

Year 1 also enjoyed their 'DT Day' where they got to design and then make their own hand puppet. They put lots of thought into both what their puppet



would look like and how they were going to join the front and the back together. They learnt that stapling it was the easiest and most successful way of doing this (over glue and safety pins) and decided that next time they would make their templates a little bigger so that they could all get their hands inside them!

Year 1 have also enjoyed their Computing sessions this term. They have been learning how to use an online paint program (paintz.app) to create different effects. We have copied artists such as Mondrian and Matisse by using different tools on the program, such as shapes and fill. We also have been learning how to be supportive about

each other's work and thinking of ways that we can help each other.

We wish Adeola class a very happy and restful Christmas.

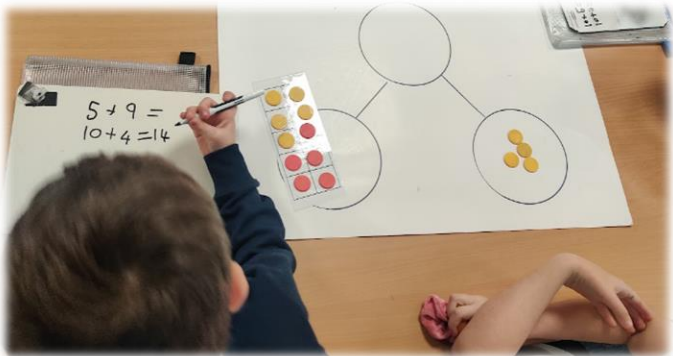
Year 2

Year 2 has been buzzing with activity this term! We had so much fun rehearsing and performing our Boogie Woogie Nativity. A special thank you to everyone who came along to watch and supported us with singing, learning lines, and costumes – it was a truly brilliant event!



In between rehearsals, we dove into the delicious world of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory while exploring materials in Science. Our experiments included testing which materials work best for mixing hot chocolate. Spoiler alert: the fabric spoon (pictured below) didn't quite make the cut!

concepts, particularly adding by making 10. Using tens frames and part-part-whole models, Year 2 showed fantastic perseverance in visualizing and solving these challenging problems. Great work, everyone!



In Maths, we tackled some tricky



Year 3

The children in Year 3 have been amazing this term. They have been incredibly resilient and worked really hard – you are all superstars! Well done!

One of our favourite things this term was designing and making torches. Mr Herlehy did the planning and designing with us, and Miss Cross was lucky enough to help us make our torches. We had to build a circuit with a switch and then fit everything in a bottle. We finally managed to make a brilliant torch together. It certainly was a real WOW moment in our learning!

Year 4

Year 4 have been incredibly busy this term and worked incredibly hard! There is truly nothing they can't put their mind to. We visited the local retirement home and sang Christmas songs, built pavilions, created gymnastic routines and edited photos in computing.

They have shown with resilience, determination and enthusiasm they can achieve anything.



You keep inspiring me with your love of learning and I can't wait to see what next term brings! Have a lovely Christmas and a well-deserved rest!

Year 5

Year 5 have had a fantastic second half term. It has been lovely to see them continue to be so dedicated, resilient and reflective when learning in the classroom. This half term, we have been reading the Strangeworlds travel agency by L. D. Lapinski. We have produced a diary entry and a narrative based on the story of Flick and Jonathan as they use magical suitcases to travel into different universes.

The children enjoyed creating their own stories about where they would visit if they could travel in a magical suitcase and they really focused on including a balance of description, action and dialogue. During our science lessons, we have been looking at forces. We have conducted experiments that look at the effects of water resistance, air resistance and how friction can have an impact on objects. In history, we have been exploring the Viking era. Year 5 re-enacted the first invasion in Lindisfarne in 793. Year 5 have had an amazing end to 2024 and I wish them a restful and enjoyable break. Well done on an amazing term!



Year 6

Another term of Year 6 absolutely smashing it! We are all so proud of the progress they are making and cannot wait to see how much they shine throughout the rest of the year. In English, they have been getting festive with Christmas poems after becoming news reporters and writing their own articles, and Science has seen them explore and play with light to understand the how they see the world.

Representing Thameside beautifully, Year 6 have had the honour of marking Remembrance Day in Abingdon alongside other members of the community and veterans. A group also took part in the business challenge at Abingdon Boys School to create and promote a festive treat, "The Holly Jolly Snack Box". They received high praise from staff at the event for their engagement and fantastic role model behaviour.

There have been so many individual 'wins' for everyone in Year 6 - the hard work and resilience is definitely paying off and the children should all be proud

of their accomplishments. From all the children and staff in Year 6, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and happy holidays!



Our Acorn Room



We have had so many magical moments in the Acorn Room this term – our first ever full term. We have enjoyed learning about the numbers 1-10; decorating biscuits and enjoying lots of sensory play, alongside some tricky obstacle courses! We have been so impressed with the huge progress the children have made. Well done!



Our stars of the Term!

Reception: Mia
Year 1: Finlay
Year 2: Pixie
Year 3: Matthew
Year 4: Francis
Year 5: Phoebe
Year 6: Peter
Headteacher Star: Flint (Year 6)

We have been so proud of all our stars, readers and writers of the week this term – we cannot wait to see what brilliant things our children achieve next term!

Keep working hard everyone!



TTRockstars and Times Tables at home!
Numbots at home!

It's been another fantastic term with high engagement across both Times Tables Rockstars (TTRs) and Numbots.

A special congratulations to **Henley and Morgan** in Year 6 for joining the elite ranks of Rock Heroes! With their addition, we now have an incredible 21 Rock Heroes at Thameside – a huge achievement!

In KS1, we've been focusing on the exciting Numbot challenges, where students race against the clock to master key Maths skills like subitising and number bonds.

Starting after Christmas, we'll launch a weekly leaderboard for these challenges.

If you're in Year 1 or 2, it's time to test your speed and aim for those trophies!

Remember that you can even challenge a teacher!! Have fun!

If you would like even more Maths practice, the White Rose '1 minute Maths' app is also a great resource – it can be downloaded for free:

[1-minute maths app | White Rose Maths \(whiteroseeducation.com\)](#)



1-Minute Maths (4+)
White Rose Education Services Limited
Designed for iPad
★★★★★ 5.0 • 2 Ratings
Free

Learning at home resources

Please do check out our website which is continuing to grow! We have included lots of new information about our curriculum and resources to help support you at home on the following pages:

[Thameside Primary School - Keeping Safe \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)

[Thameside Primary School - Families and Learning at home \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)

Support links for the Christmas break

Christmas can be challenging for some families – there are lots of websites and contact numbers below if you need any support. Do reach out.

Lifelines and Support Networks

- The NSPCC are here to help 24/7 and children can call their [Childline](#) number on 0800 1111
- [ThinkUKnow](#) – links to various sites
- [Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Shout](#) is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help. Text 85258
- Anna Freud Crisis Messenger – If you need support, you can text **AFC** to **85258**. A free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is feeling overwhelmed or is struggling to cope.
- [Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [Educateagainsthate](#) provides practical advice and support on protecting children from extremism and radicalisation
- [Internet Matters](#) provide age-specific online safety checklists, guides on how to set parental controls, and practical tips to help children get the most out of their digital world
- [Talking to your child about online sexual harassment: A guide for parents](#) – This is the Children's Commissioner's parental

guide on talking to their children about online sexual harassment.

- [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) – Detailed information for anyone being bullied, along with advice for parents and schools. Signposts to various helplines and websites for further support.
- Local children social care: <https://www.gov.uk/report-child-abuse-to-local-council>. If you think a child or young person is at risk or being abused or neglected, contact the children's social care team at their local council. If you do not know where they live, contact your local council's team, the [NSPCC](#) or the Police for advice

Local support

- **Support with Debt and bills and energy**

Vale White Horse Community Hub 01235 422600

communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Vale Community Impact help@vci.org.uk

01235 765348

Better Housing Better Health 08001070044

Help with energy bills and anything else you might be struggling with around health.

Citizens Advice Bureau Abingdon open 9.30-4.30pm can drop in to talk to someone

Abbey House

Abbey Close

Abingdon

Oxfordshire.

OX14 3JD Call us 0808 278 7907 Visit our website

<https://citizensadviceosav.org.uk>

Foodbanks open over Holidays.

- Tuesday and Friday 11am-1pm Christchurch, Northcourt road, Abingdon
- Wednesday 1-2.30pm Preston Road Community Centre
- Closed Christmas Eve (North food bank)
- Closed Christmas day (South foodbank)
- Abingdon Community Fridge: free fresh food donated by businesses.
- Hadland Road Community Centre, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, Vale, OX14 3YH

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/abingdoncommunityfridge/>

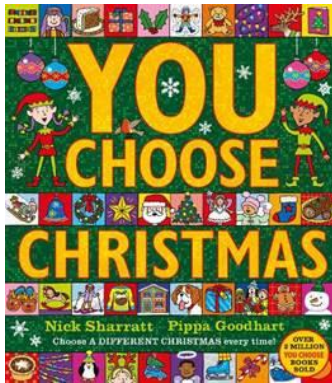
Opening times:

- Monday 4pm - 4.30 pm
- Thursday 1pm - 2pm
- Saturday 10.30am - 11.30 am

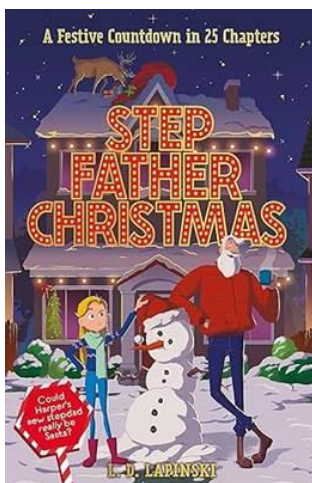
Library Corner

Christmas Reading Ideas!

Books make an amazing Christmas present for children. Here are a few of our festive favourites for inspiration 😊 We'd also highly recommend visiting 'Mostly Books' on Stert Street or 'The Bookstore' on Bury Street – staff there are always happy to help you find the perfect book from their stock.



'You Choose: Christmas' by Nick Sharratt has loads of wonderful Christmassy scenes to look at and talk about. Definitely a great book for supporting your child to learn new words and develop their imagination. The book also includes fascinating facts about how Christmas is celebrated across the world, including Jamaica's Grand Market and the boat-shaped lanterns in the Gambia.



'Step Father Christmas' by L. D. Lapinski is a fun and festive mystery: why have strange, Christmassy things started to happen after Mum's new boyfriend comes to stay for the holidays? Great for older readers to read independently or as a read-aloud for younger children. The sometimes-tricky feelings around suddenly gaining a step-parent are sensitively handled and the whole story has a wonderful sense of magic!

Find further book recommendations here: [Christmas books for younger readers \(6-11\) | BookTrust](#)



ACCELERATED READER CELEBRATIONS!



Huge congratulations to the following pupils who have been working hard on their independent reading since September:

Most Words Read

Year 3 – Imogen
Year 4 – Evan
Year 5 – Ophelia
Year 6 – Sarika

Most Quizzes Passed

Year 3 – Saharsh
Year 4 – Hasham
Year 5 – Estrela
Year 6 – Ronja

Accelerated Progress

Y3 - Eddie
Y4 - Filip
Y5 - Harper
Y6 - Layla

You can quiz from home over the Christmas holidays using this link: [Renaissance Learning Login](#) We'll be celebrating more AR successes in the new year 😊

The website below also includes some top tips for how parents can continue to support and motivate children with reading during holidays



[Reading in the holidays | Oxford Owl](#)

Pay it Forward - £2 or £5 for our new library?

If you'd like to support our new library, there's now a '**pay it forward**' option on our brilliant 'Mostly Books' website (scroll to the end – link below). You can donate £2 or £5 towards a new book. Every little counts, so please do consider helping our amazing school in this way. Maybe skip a coffee at Costa or Starbucks this week and give us the money instead! Thank you 😊
Thameside Primary School Archives - Mostly Books (mostly-books.co.uk)

Key Diary dates for next term

[Thameside Primary School - Term Dates \(thamesideschool.co.uk\)](http://thamesideschool.co.uk)

We will add new dates to the online calendar on our website as well – so please do check regularly.

- Term starts - Monday January 6th 2024
- Thursday 9th – Year 3 swimming starts
- Tuesday 21st January – Reception and Year 6 weighing and measuring
- Tuesday 11th February – Internet Safety Day
- Friday 14th February – end of term

**Thank you Thameside
for my new name!**



**I'm called Bonnie. Come
and find me at Abingdon
Library.**



Top Tips for... MANAGING SCREEN TIME

According to the latest stats, people aged between 8 and 17 spend four hours on digital devices during an average day. Obviously, a new year is ideal for fresh starts and renewed efforts – so lots of families are trying to cut down their combined screen time right now, creating more moments to connect with each other and relying less on gadgets to have fun. Our top tips on reducing screen time are for everyone, so you can get your whole family involved in turning over a new leaf this year!

BUY MILK

GET OUT AND ABOUT

If the weather's decent, spend some time in the garden or go for a walk. Even a stroll to the local shop would do; the main thing is getting some fresh air and a break from your screen.

TRY A TIMED TRIAL

When you're taking a screen break to do a different activity or a chore, turn it into a game by setting yourself a timer. Can you complete your task before the alarm goes off?

GO DIGITAL DETOX

Challenge yourself and your family to take time off from screens, finding other things to do. You could start off with half a day, then build up to a full day or even an entire weekend.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let your family see you successfully managing your own screen time. You'll be showing them the way, and it might stop some of those grumbles when you do want to go online.

AGREE TECH-FREE ZONES

Nominate some spots at home where devices aren't allowed. Anywhere your family gathers together, like at the table or in the living room, could become a 'no phone zone'.

HOLD A SCREEN TIME AMNESTY

As a family, agree specific windows when it's OK to use devices. This should help everyone to balance time on phones or gaming with enjoying quality moments together.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

Stay aware of how long you've been on your device for. Controlling how much time you spend in potentially stressful areas of the internet – like social media platforms – can also boost your wellbeing.

'PARK' PHONES OVERNIGHT

Set up an overnight charging station for everyone's devices – preferably away from bedrooms. That means less temptation for late-night scrolling.

SWITCH ON DND

Research shows that micro-distractions like message alerts and push notifications can chip away at our concentration levels. Put devices on 'do not disturb' until you're less busy.

TAKE A FAMILY TECH BREAK

Set aside certain times when the whole family puts their gadgets away and enjoys an activity together: playing a board game, going for a walk or just having a chat.

SOCIALISE WITHOUT SCREENS

When you're with friends, try not to automatically involve phones, TVs or other tech. Having company can be loads more fun if your attention isn't being split.

WIND DOWN PROPERLY

Try staying off phones, consoles, tablets and so on just before you go to sleep. Reading or just getting comfy in bed for a while can give you a much more restful night.

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. They also provide training and support to education organisations and local authorities – empowering school leaders and staff with the knowledge and tools to shape their settings into inclusive communities where the mental health of pupils and personnel is prioritised.



DEVICE BOX

The National College



National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

@natonlinesafety

/NationalOnlineSafety

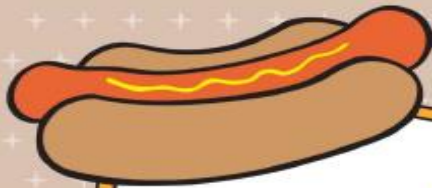
@nationalonlinesafety

@national_online_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 03.01.2024

16th JANUARY

KIDS CHOICE MENU



KID APPROVED

Hotdog or
Veggie Hotdog

Chips

Veg of the Day

Vanilla Sprinkle Sponge



edwards and ward
a recipe for success

Safety checks for toy shopping

Know who you are buying from

Wherever you are shopping, remember reputation matters. Is the seller widely recognised for safe and reliable toys?

Get as much information on the seller as you can, especially if you're buying from an online marketplace.

Not everything sold on an online platform is supplied by them. If the actual supplier is not based in the UK, you may face heightened risks.

Always read the warnings and instructions

Toys must be clearly marked with age restrictions, which are based on risks such as choking hazards. Always follow the age recommendations.



Consider special needs

Children with special needs might be more vulnerable, so keep this in mind when shopping.



Avoid toys with small parts

They can be a choking hazard.



Look out for strangulation hazards

Loose ribbons on toys and costumes can pose risks to young children.



Check the toys are for kids

Magnets can look like toys. Keep them away from children.



Compare the sellers

Bargains may be too good to be true. Compare the toy's price with other sellers. If it's a fraction of the cost, it's likely to be counterfeit.



Check for button batteries

Ensure that any button batteries in a toy are safely behind a screwed down flap.



Check for product recalls

See if the toy you're buying has been recalled at productrecallcampaign.gov.uk



Check before you wrap

Toys must be clearly marked with age restrictions, which are based on risks such as choking hazards. Always follow the age recommendations.

