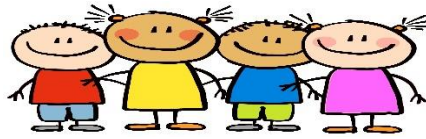




## SEMH TEAM NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the fifth edition of the **SEMH** newsletter of North Primary School & Nursery. We would firstly like to introduce our new Social & Emotional Mental Health Co-ordinator Mrs Khatun who will be working alongside Mrs Patrick here at North. We would both like to wish all our parents/carers and children of North a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

### FIRST SITE

Get making, moving and munching with Holiday Fun at First Site over the school holidays! First Site has creative activities for families which change daily and are available from 10am-2:30pm. Also available are outdoor sports activities for children which is a great way to keep active and have fun. Families can also book into the canteen for a hot, nutritious lunch every day. There is a relaxed dining area available in the canteen. Their Holiday Fun activities are for families facing economic challenges or who require additional support during the school holidays, including those that qualify for benefits-based free school meals. Please visit this <https://firstsite.uk/your-visit/learning-activities/children-families/holiday-fun/> page two weeks before and during the school holidays to book free tickets to canteen and sport sessions. Holiday Fun runs every school holiday and half term.



### THE ZONES OF REGULATION



The **Green Zone**: The **Green Zone** is a key part of the Zones of Regulation, designed to help children recognise, understand and manage their emotions. The **Green Zone** represents the emotional state where we function at our best. When someone is in the **Green Zone**, they feel calm, comfortable and in control. Their body is relaxed, their mind is clear, and they have just the right amount of energy – not too high, not too low. This balanced state makes it easier to focus, learn, make good decisions and interact positively with others. Being in the **Green Zone**, does not mean you must be perfectly happy or completely stress-free. Instead, it means you feel steady enough to handle what is happening around you. Learning to recognise what the **Green Zone** feels like within your body, and understand what helps you stay there – is an important part of emotional well-being. With practice, children can develop strategies that keep them regulated, focused and be prepared to do their best even when challenges arise.



## **CHRISTMAS SENSORY ACTIVITIES**

There are so many sensory Christmas activities that you can do with children and young adults to calm them during the festive season. Here's a list of some Christmas sensory activities for children.

- Play with jingle bells
- Fake snow
- Gingerbread man playdough
- Bake some Christmas cakes
- Grinch slime

### **Jingle bells**

The first idea for exciting sensory Christmas activities is to play with jingle bells. Jingle bells are a key sound you hear throughout Christmas, typically in a song. A good idea for sensory Christmas activities with jingle bells is to ask the child to create an instrument using the bells. They could place the bells in an empty bottle or a box and rattle them to create a sound. Using a couple of different hand-made jingle bell instruments could allow them to create a sort of Christmas jingle, too!

### **Fake Snow**

Fake snow is another great craft idea for sensory Christmas activities. It is really easy to make too, so a child should be able to do it without any difficulty.

Mix equal quantities of cornflour and bicarbonate of soda in a bowl. With a simple 1:1 ratio, you should be able to make as much fake snow as the child wants. Once they've created a pile of fake snow, why not see if they'd like to build a snowman? You could even use small items around you to decorate it.

### **Gingerbread Man Playdough**

Staying on the arts and crafts genre, introducing some playdough to the child or young adult is a good sensory Christmas activity.

Ensure you have some man-shaped cut-outs, and ask your child to roll out some playdough. Once they are happy with how flat it is, they can use the cut out shapes to create their very own 'gingerbread' men to play with. Similar to the fake snow, with other pieces and colours of playdough, they could decorate the gingerbread men to dress them.

This is a perfect Christmas sensory activity. It helps children to focus their minds, potentially calming them down from a spell of anxiety or overexcitement.

### **Bake Some Christmas Cakes**

Our penultimate idea for sensory Christmas activities is to head into the kitchen with the child you are caring for and try some baking. At Christmas time, baking can be so much fun, with colourful decorations, interesting shapes and all kinds of flavours to include.

You could ask your child if they would prefer to bake some cookies or cakes for their friends and family. Either way, introducing them to textures like flour and eggs, or even dough, and kneading and mixing with their hands is a great way of triggering their senses and imagination.

They may even have a skill for it and take a liking to baking, helping them to feel more comfortable. Thus, giving them something to do the next time they feel overwhelmed.

### **Grinch slime**

Our final ideal for sensory Christmas activities involves slime. There have been so many slime products on retail store shelves lately because kids love them! Introduce the child to green-coloured slime and tell them it's from the Grinch. They'll love mixing it in their hands, moulding it into different shapes and playing with it.

This interesting texture can provide a calming effect to a child with complex issues.

### **USEFUL LINKS**

- [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/parents](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/parents)
- [www.place2be.org.uk](http://www.place2be.org.uk)

# HAPPY CHRISTMAS

