



December has truly been magical here at Sacred Heart. Throughout the month, our school has come alive with a hive of activities, from joyous discos and enchanting nativities to festive games and our much-loved Christmas jumper and dinner day. During all this festive fun, our children have embraced the true essence of the Advent season with open hearts, preparing for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. This time of year, is not just one of celebration but also a significant period for reflection, fostering kindness and love within our school community.

We want to express our gratitude to all the parents who kindly provided spare coins for our school Christmas raffle and games. The funds raised will not only support charitable causes but also help equip our children here at Sacred Heart. Your kindness and generosity truly embody the spirit of the Advent season, and we are so grateful for your support.

As we conclude this Advent term, let's take a moment to reflect on the remarkable achievements of our wonderful children. Their hard work is a testament to their determination to learn and grow, just as Jesus inspires us to do.

On behalf of the Staff and Governors here at Sacred Heart, we would like to wish you all a peaceful Christmas together and God's blessings for the coming year.

Alan James God Bless! *MJL*

Advent at Sacred Heart

This Advent, our school community came together in a beautiful whole school mass, where we reflected on the true significance of Christmas. In the spirit of this sacred season, we remembered the journey of Mary and Joseph, and how we too can embark on a journey of hope and love. A highlight of our Advent celebrations was the delightful carol service led by our Year 3 children. In Isaiah 2: 1-5, the prophet shares a vision of peace and hope. He describes a time when people will come together to learn about God and live in harmony. This message is perfect for Christmas, reminding children that kindness and sharing bring joy to the world.



We were delighted to welcome the Travelling Crib as it made its way around the Trust schools. The crib serves as a gentle reminder of the humble beginnings of Jesus' birth and encourages us to think of those who are misplaced in the world today. Our time spent in worship and community has allowed us to deepen our understanding of the season, encouraging us to cherish every moment as we prepare for the birth of Jesus. Let us carry forward the lessons of kindness, compassion, and charity that we have discussed, and keep the spirit of Advent alive in our hearts, sharing joy and goodwill with all. Together, we look forward to a Christmas filled with God's love and blessings for every one of us.





The much-loved Menphys Carol Concert took place at DeMontfort Hall on the 5th December, marking a joyful start to the festive season in Leicestershire. This event truly embodies the spirit of Advent, reminding us all of the importance of community and togetherness during this special time of year. Featuring a delightful mix of traditional and contemporary carols, the concert showcased the exceptional talents of local primary and secondary school students, bringing families and friends together in a heartwarming celebration.

We were especially proud of our own Sacred Heart Menphys choir. Children from Year 5 and 6, alongside the children's choir from St John Fisher, were superb ambassadors for our Trust and whose performances were nothing short of exceptional. This was made possible by the dedication of Mrs Ong, who worked tirelessly in preparing both schools for their solo on the night. Thank you to Mrs Karan, Mrs Noronha and Mrs Sharma who all helped to make it possible for our children to attend rehearsals for the night.

The Menphys Carol Concert provided a platform for our young people to shine, with their performances adding to the uplifting atmosphere of the evening and shine they did!!



Christmas Nativities: EYFS and KS1

We are filled with joy and pride as we reflect on the recent performances of our Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 students, who beautifully retold the Christmas story. Our youngest children displayed remarkable bravery and confidence as they took to the stage, sharing the wonderful message of Jesus' birth with family and friends. Their heartfelt performances were filled with the spirit of Christmas, reminding us all of love, hope, and the joy that this holy season brings.

We extend our thanks to the teachers, staff, and parents who supported our children in preparing for this special event. It was a magical experience that will be cherished by all who attended. Well done to our amazing children!



YMDBoon Foodbank Donation

Heartfelt thanks go to Katie Ford, Anton Wood and all at YMDBOON for their very generous food donation. Being able to distribute food to those families in our school community is especially this Christmas season and as a school we very much appreciate this act of kindness.





Year 3 Christmas Carol Service

Our Year 3 children performed the story of Christmas in a beautiful carol service, delighting both parents and the whole school. The children sang, performed, and read with great enthusiasm, capturing the true meaning of Christmas. We were fortunate to have Fr David and member of our Governing body join us with Fr David offering a special blessing, reminding us of the joy and hope that this season brings. The service was a wonderful celebration of faith, community, and the spirit of giving. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the staff who prepared the children for this memorable event.

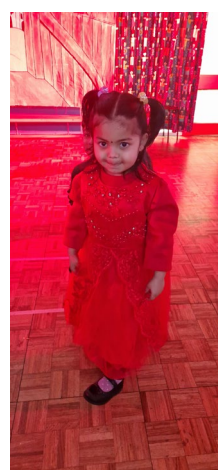




Christmas Disco Day

The highlight of the festivities was undoubtedly the Christmas disco, where children danced and sang their hearts out with friends, creating wonderful memories that will be cherished.

Throughout these celebrations, we felt a deep sense of hope and fulfilment, reflecting our school's mission to nurture not just the mind, but the spirit too.



Thank you to our AMAZING STAFF who made all this happen!!!!



Christmas Jumper and Dinner Day:

This Christmas season, our school was filled with excitement, joy, and laughter as everyone came together to celebrate in a truly festive spirit! The recent Christmas jumper day brought a rainbow of colours and creativity, with students proudly wearing their most cheerful jumpers, spreading warmth and smiles all around. The money raised will be donated to charity!

The dinner hall was alive with the sounds of giggles and chatter, as children tucked into a delightful Christmas dinner. A **MASSIVE THANK YOU** to Sharon and the kitchen staff who prepared and served over 270 children. We would also like to extend our THANKS to Fr David and St Vincent De Paul Society who very generously paid for ALL our children to have a Christmas Dinner. It was a such a kind act and we here at Sacred Heart very much appreciated the gesture!!!!

Thank you to all the staff at Sacred Heart who help make all of this so special for our children; they are super stars!!!





Welcome to our Sensory Friendly Mass & Holy Communion Preparation

Sun 11th January: Sensory Friendly 11.30am Mass at SH Church
Adapted Mass offering an insight for all parishioners at The Baptism of The Lord Feast

11.00am 1st Holy Communion Preparation

11.30am Sensory Friendly Mass

At Sacred Heart School - Mere Close, Leicester, LE5 3AH

Sat 17th January: Welcome to God's Family
Sat 21st February: Lent ~ In the Wilderness
Sat 21st March: Forgiveness ~ Death & Resurrection
with First Reconciliation informally after Mass
Sat 25th April: New Life & Easter
Sat 16th May: Mary's Yes to God

At Sacred Heart Church - 25 Mere Road, Leicester, LE5 3AS

Sat 20th June: God's Greatest Gift of Holy Communion
Sat 4th July: First Holy Communion Day
with a practice before Mass

Dates for the Lent Term:

Monday 5th January – School opens for Lent Term 1.



SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT

Keeping children safe online

Advent Term 2025-2026

Top tips for talking to children about staying safe online

Start with the positives

Online life can be great for learning, creativity, and staying connected. Balance helps children feel confident, not scared.

Pick the right moment

Choose a calm, everyday time i.e. a walk, car journey, or shared activity. Avoid starting the chat during a disagreement or when emotions are high.

Use child-friendly resources

Age-appropriate videos, guides, and tools can make safety messages clearer and more engaging.

Ask about their experiences

Use open questions: "Have you seen anything that made you uncomfortable?" "Who do you chat or play with online?" "Do you know them offline?" "How do certain apps or games make you feel?"

Keep it ongoing

These don't need to be formal, one-off talks. Regular, relaxed check-ins make it easier for children to speak up if something worries them.



Parental Controls

Parental controls allow you to block and filter upsetting or inappropriate content. They work across your WiFi, phone network, individual apps and devices.

Parental controls can help you to:

- Plan what time of day your child can go online and how long for
- Create content filters to block apps that may have inappropriate content
- Manage the content different family members can see

Parental controls can be a helpful tool, but they have limits — so they shouldn't be seen as the whole solution. Even if you've set controls on your home broadband and your child's device, they won't apply if your child connects to other Wi-Fi networks without them. Parental controls work best as one part of a wider approach to keeping your child safe online.



More Top Tips

- **Talk it through:** Explain controls are there to keep them safe, and invite questions about the settings.
- **Use strong passwords:** Add a password so settings can't be changed.
- **Adjust with age:** Ease controls as they grow, at a pace that suits your child, not peer pressure.
- **Filters aren't perfect:** They may still see upsetting content, so keep the conversation open.

Get advice on supporting children if they have seen harmful or upsetting content online

[CLICK HERE](#)

How to start the conversation about online safety and how to navigate tricky topics

[CLICK HERE](#)

23 Schools - 9000 Pupils - One Team





Follow
-US-



CHRISTMAS 2025

The Christmas holidays are nearly upon us and we wanted to send our usual information sheet out to you with some ideas to keep costs down.

Discounted meals

At Morrisons Cafes customers will receive a free children's meal and drink with the purchase of any adult meal costing over £5.

Parents can also take advantage of Morrisons 'Two Adult Meals and Two Refillable Drinks for £15' deal, meaning a family of four can dine out for just £15.

Click on the Fish and Chips below for more cafes and restaurants offering discounts.

CLICK HERE



Things to do

Click on the holly below to learn more about events across the City for families to get involved in. Activities include Christmas crafts, calendar designing, Santa's secret workshop and Meet the Police!

CLICK HERE



More things to do

This Christmas, head out to Forestry England's Stick Man activity trails for a fun, family-friendly woodland walk inspired by Julia Donaldson's story. Kids can follow the trail activities, hunt for clues, and enjoy some fresh air together over the holidays.

Click on the Stickman for more info!

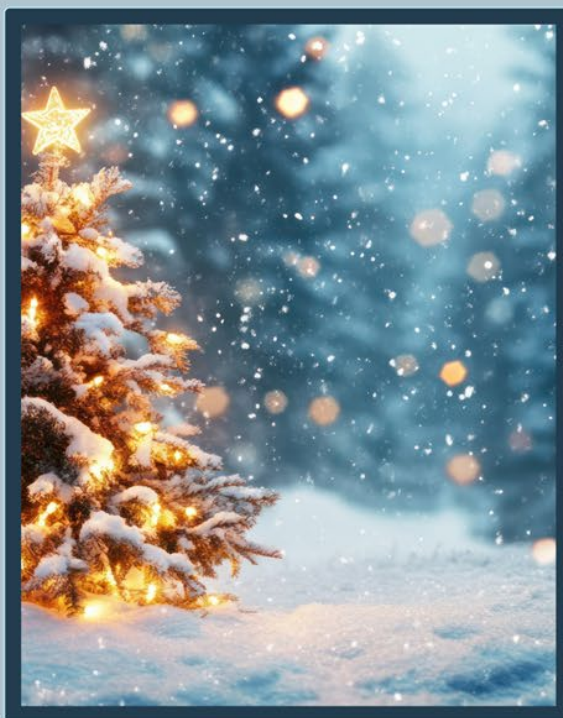
CLICK HERE



Christmas fun at home

Looking for budget-friendly festive ideas? Twinkl's "15 Free Things to Do This Christmas" blog is packed with simple, fun activities for families, from Christmas crafts and scavenger hunts to movie nights and winter walks. It's a great source of inspiration for making magical memories together without spending a penny. Click on the wreath for more information

CLICK HERE



Rutland

There are a whole host of activities in and around Rutland over the Christmas period, although one event that caught our eye was the free After School Disco at Rutland Garden Village. Click on the present below for more details.

CLICK HERE





The Holy Family

COMMUNITIES OF
Sacred Heart & St Margaret Mary,
Our Lady of Good Counsel & St Joseph's



Saturday 20th	6 pm Carols 6.30 pm Mass	St Joseph's Sacred Heart	RIP Gordon Crewe & Bown Family, Michael Collopy, Tom, Gerald, Bernadette & Noreen Naan. GH Cathy Smart. NO MASS TODAY.	Join us on 20th for Carols in the garden at St Joseph's at 6pm with Mass at 6.30pm. Then stay and partake of some refreshments while supporting the Friends of British Southern Cameroons.
Sunday 21st 4th Sunday of Advent (Live-streamed)	9am Mass 10.15am Mass 11.30am Mass	St Joseph's Our Lady's Sacred Heart	NO MASS TODAY. 1st Anniv. Threza Fernandes. RIP Luke Waters, Luciana Linda Vaz, Angela Kelly, Luis & Olga Machado, Agnelo, Savio & Ludavina Machado, Maria Braganza. GH Felix Miranda, Winston Almeida RIP Constancio & Francisca, Zarita D'silva, Mario Rodrigues, Margaret Young, Marcos Lopes, Augustine & Mary Rebelo, Benjamin Rodrigues. GH Celia & Cyril Moraes, Flaviana Brito. GH/B'day Raiyza Rebelo, Ludgero De Brito & Adelina Fernandes.	

We welcome Mateo in Baptism at Sacred Heart this weekend.



Christmas Eve Confessions 24th Dec SJ's 9am-10.30am. OL's 10.30am-12 noon. SH 12 noon-1.30pm.

Monday 22nd Advent FERIA	10am Mass	SMM	GH Luis & Shaniyana Noronha, Mary Thomas.
Tuesday 23rd Advent FERIA	9am Holy Hour 10am Mass 11.30 Mass	<i>Parish Int.</i> Sacred Heart St Joseph's	<i>For Peace in the hearts of all this Christmas.</i> RIP Sirvila Maria Fernandes DeSouza. RIP Patrick Commins.
Wednesday 24th The Nativity of the Lord Christmas Day (Live-streamed)	4.30pm Family Mass 6.30pm Vigil Mass 6.30pm Vigil Mass 9.30pm Carols & 10pm Mass 11.30pm Carols Midnight Mass 11.30pm Carols Midnight Mass	St Joseph's Our Lady's Sacred Heart St Joseph's Our Lady's Sacred Heart	RIP James Stones, Gerard Hirst, Ron Parkin. GH/B'day Gabriella Rozario. RIP Meliza Joseph D'Sa GH Joaquim Brito & Family & Fatima Fernandes. RIP Nelson Fernandes. GH Johnson Sandes & Fam. GH Belino Mendonca. RIP Maria Jesus Mendonca & Dec'd Mendonca Fam. Int Louise Phillip, Bemice Teague & Theo. GH Orson Noronha & Family, Dominic & Vilma Rocha & Adrian & Erica Rocha, Zulema Remedios & Fam.
Thursday 25th The Nativity of the Lord Christmas Day (Live-streamed)	9am Mass 10:15am Mass 11.30am Mass	St Joseph's Our Lady's Sacred Heart	GH The Murphy Family. RIP Eileen Martinez, Francisco Xavier Cardoza, Milagros L Canapi & Rufino P Canapi. RIP Alex & Nelson Fernandes, Jimmie, Sheila, James Mannix & Jean Phillips, Ancy Dourado. GH Bridget Harrigan & Nora & John.
Friday 26th St Stephen	10am Mass NO MASS AT OUR LADY'S	Sacred Heart	RIP Alex Fernandes. GH Muzella Miranda. In Thanksgiving.

Sanctuary Lamps:

SH GH Graduates & post Graduates of De Montfort University & Leicester University.

Prayer & Events in our Parishes

Jesus Youth Mondays 6.30pm in SH Parish hall.

Good Shepherd Prayer Group

Tuesdays 6-7.30pm in the Sacred Heart Club. Last meeting before Christmas 16th December, returning on 13th January.

Special Thanksgiving

Adoration 30th December 8pm-10pm in St Joseph's Blessed Sacrament Chapel. All welcome.

Monthly Rosary Rally 1.30pm on Sunday 4th January outside Sports Direct in the City Centre.

Journeying with the Scriptures in a Time of Grief through Lectio Divina

Tuesday 23rd December **at 10.15am** led by Sarah in St Joseph's Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Followed by Mass at 11.30 and then lunch at The Olive Branch.

St Joseph's Blessed Sacrament Chapel Open daily 9am to 4pm.

Jesus Youth Teens Every Thursday (in term time) from 6pm to 7pm in St Joseph's Church Hall.

The Holy Family Churches: St Joseph's, 12 Goodwood Road, Leicester LE5 6SG

Our Lady of Good Counsel, 15, Peebles Way, Rushey Mead LE4 7ZB

Sacred Heart, 25, Mere Road, Leicester LE5 3HS

Parish Priest: Fr David Cain **Assistant Priest:** Fr Vitalis Akandu **Parish Deacon:** Rev Séamus O'Looskan

Retired Priest in the Parish: Fr John Tavares **Safeguarding Coordinator:** Mrs Mary Hirst

Safeguarding Reps: SH Martina Guedes 07513 725549 **OLGC** Skeeter DaCosta 07513 725402 **SJ** Julie Spencer 07513 725514.

Parish Office Manager & holyfamilyleicester@dioceseofnottingham.uk

Contact: Anne Cartwright or 0116 251 1437

Website: www.holyfamily-leicester.rcdon.uk **Facebook, YouTube & Instagram:** sacredheartparishleicester

Live-stream from SH 11.30am on Facebook & YouTube & other services as announced.

St Margaret Mary Community Mass

at St Paul's Polish Church, Wakerley Rd, LE5 4WE

Lectionary Cycle: A2

YouTube

Please take this newsletter home with you.

Christmas Dates & Times

20th Dec Carols 6pm at St Joseph's Church followed by Mass. *No Evening Mass at Sacred Heart & No morning Mass at St Joseph's on Sun 21st Dec.*

22nd Dec All Altar Servers Practice 11am to 1.30pm at St Joseph's Church, followed by Buffet Lunch.

24th Dec Confessions

9am to 10.30am St Joseph's

10.30am to 12 noon Our Lady's

12 noon to 1.30pm Sacred Heart



24th Dec Christmas Masses

St Joseph's - 4.30pm Family Mass and 9.30pm Carols followed by 10pm Night Mass.

Our Lady's - 6.30pm Vigil Mass and 11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass.

Sacred Heart - 6.30pm Vigil Mass and 11.30pm Carols followed by Midnight Mass.

25th Dec Christmas Day Masses

9am St Joseph's, 10.15am Our Lady's, 11.30am Sacred Heart.

26th Dec Feast of St Stephen /Boxing Day Mass

10am at Sacred Heart Church.

New Year Masses

31st Dec 11pm Holy Hour followed by Midnight Mass at Our Lady's.

1st Jan 10am Mass at Sacred Heart.

Christmas Mass Intentions & Christmas Office Closure

Mass Intentions for 24th December to 9th January need to be received by the office by the end of the day on Monday 22nd December in order to be printed in the newsletter.

The newsletters for Christmas, New Year and up to 9th January will all be printed early on 23rd December. Mass intentions not on the newsletter can still be given to the Priest at Mass.

The Parish Office will be closed from 2pm on 23rd December until Monday 5th January.

Please collect your Christmas Offerings envelope. Available in all churches for your offering to our Priests. If you want your offering to go directly to our priests, please do put it into an envelope. Thank you!

Our Crib Collection in all churches this year is for Intercare, a local charity founded in 1974 and supported by Bishop Patrick. Their mission is to save lives and alleviate suffering by providing surplus medical resources to their partners in sub-Saharan Africa. Find out more at: <https://intercare.org.uk/>



Blessed Sacrament & St Peter's Parish Pilgrimage to Rome 15 to 20 February, 2026: A place on this pilgrimage has become available due to a cancellation. The approximate cost is £265 (bed, breakfast & travel to London City Airport). Flights, travel insurance, entrance fees & travel in Rome and to Assisi are extra. If interested, please contact Angela Bailey as soon as possible. E: angelab1066@yahoo.ie

Sacred Heart Christmas Market

raised over £1600 and received a generous donation of £1000 from the Zimbabwean Community who are great supporters of Sacred Heart Church. Our thanks goes out to everyone who helped with organising the event or running a stall and to everyone who attended.

The markets were wonderful events in all three of our churches. Thank you!

St Joseph's Church - External Renovation Thank you to the kind sponsors of the extensive woodwork repairs and painting at the front of St Joseph's Church which is hugely appreciated. You might also notice that the previously headless stone apostle has been renovated too, which is terrific! Thank you to the workers on this project who have produced wonders. It was getting into a really poor state so it was essential that we addressed this. If you see something in any of our churches that looks in a poor state and you'd like to sponsor the repair or renovation - please do contact Fr David.

The Great Awakening Convention run by the AFCM, Anointing Fire

Catholic Ministries. 24th January 2026 at Bethel Convention Centre, West Bromwich B70 7JW. From 9am to 4.30pm. Holy Mass, confessions, praise and worship, adoration, talks, spiritual sharing and children's sessions. All are warmly invited to attend. Bus available from Holy Cross Church. Please contact Arun on 07392928576 for more information.

Living Faith Prayer Books

January to March available in all churches, £1 each.

The Olive Branch Café

will be closed over the Christmas period from 24th December, reopening on Monday 5th January.

Choral Evensong Choir of Leicester Cathedral

Wesley Hall Methodist Church
Hartington Road, Leicester LE2 0GN
Sunday 11th January at 4pm. All welcome! Refreshments available after the performance.

Upcoming Good Shepherd Prayer Group Events

Thanksgiving Adoration - 30th December
8pm to 10pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at St Joseph's Church.
Retreat Day - Saturday 17th January
11am to 3.30pm at Our Lady's Church.

Second Collection THIS Week for Local Hospices

Following the Assisted Dying Bill, this 2nd collection has been introduced to support Hospices across the Diocese to provide valuable palliative care to those who need it.
Donations can be made by card machine.

OLGC Collection 14th December
Loose & Envelopes £362.65
Standing Orders £118.31
Contactless £10.00
Total £490.65

SH Collection 13th / 14th December
Loose & Envelopes £544.42
Standing Orders £476.85
Contactless £15.00
Total £1036.27

SJ Collections 14th December
Loose & Envelopes £331.50
Standing Orders £444.23
Contactless £55.00
Total £830.73

Please make the most of the card machines in all of our churches to give your weekly donation.

With Gift Aid, a £10 donation gives the church £12.50. A £20 donation gives £25!



Parish Bank Account Details: **SH:** Sacred Heart Leicester RCP Account number: 00949284 Sort Code: 30-15-97 **OLGC:** Our Lady of Good Counsel Leicester RCP Account number: 51819560 Sort Code: 30-94-97. **SJ:** St Joseph's Leicester RCP Account number: 51763560 Sort Code: 30-94-97. **Please put a reference detailing the nature of your payment when paying into our Parish accounts.**



Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Trustees – Company Number 7151646 Charity Number 1134449
Registered Office: St Hugh's House, 1 Castle Quay, Castle Boulevard, Nottingham, NG7 1FW.



Leicester, Leicestershire
and Rutland



Staying well this winter

With the colder, winter months leading to more of us suffering from coughs, colds, flu and other illnesses, it's important to know when and where to get the right treatment for any member of your family.

Here you can find a wide range of resources to help you and your family stay well this winter and over the festive period.

Need help fast?

Need help fast
and it isn't life threatening?
Get the right NHS care
in two simple steps



The NHS in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland has issued new advice to help you get the right NHS care when you need it quickly and recommends just two simple steps for situations when it isn't life threatening-including at Christmas and New Year.

Step 1: Try to manage the problem yourself or get help from a local pharmacy, NHS 111 online, or the NHS App.

Step 2: If that doesn't work or the problem is more serious, contact your GP practice or NHS 111 (when your GP practice is closed). They will help arrange the right appointment.

[Click here to access the 'Need help fast?' information, as well as details of what's open and when during the festive holidays](#)



Health for Kids!

Winter wellness hub

To help support you and your family stay well this winter, on [Health for Kids: Grownups](#) you can access an [online winter hub](#) with advice around flu, local vaccination clinics, fevers, stomach bugs as well as general winter health and safety advice.

The hub contains information for all the family, with CBBC's Operation Ouch team on hand with videos on head injuries and fevers for children to enjoy, while grownups can discover how to look after a member of the family with norovirus.

[Click here to access the winter hub](#)





Leicester, Leicestershire
and Rutland

DID YOU KNOW....

Children's 'super bodies' are designed to fight off many common illnesses, without the need for antibiotics?

Most children will recover in the same amount of time with or without antibiotics.

Get the latest winter updates



For the latest advice, support and information throughout winter, we recommend following these local accounts on Instagram:

- [Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board \(@nhslfr\)](#)
- [Leicester's Hospitals \(@leicestershospitals\)](#)
- [Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust \(@lptnhs\)](#)
- [East Midlands Ambulance \(@emasnhstrust\)](#)

Discover how some simple home-based self-care could save you from hours in a busy hospital waiting room or GP surgery.

[Click here to access University Hospitals of Leicester's 'Stay home, stay well guide'](#)



111

NHS 111



111.nhs.uk

NHS 111 can help if you have an urgent medical problem and you're not sure what to do. They offer help 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and can:

Tell you where to get help for your symptoms

Direct you to appropriate local services for your medical condition and help arrange an appointment

Direct you to where to get emergency medical prescriptions

Provide general health information and advice

For life-threatening illnesses or injuries, you should always dial 999.

Flu is already affecting our communities with high numbers of people already needing hospital treatment.

Protect your child, family and any vulnerable people around you this winter by ensuring your child has their nasal flu vaccine either at school or children aged 2-3 can have the vaccine at their GP practice or selected pharmacies.

Click for
vaccination
information:

[For pre-school](#)
[For school age](#)

Vaccinations are the best way to protect yourself from serious illness.

Make sure you and your family are up-to-date with all the vaccines you are eligible for to stay well through the winter months and beyond.

DID YOU KNOW....