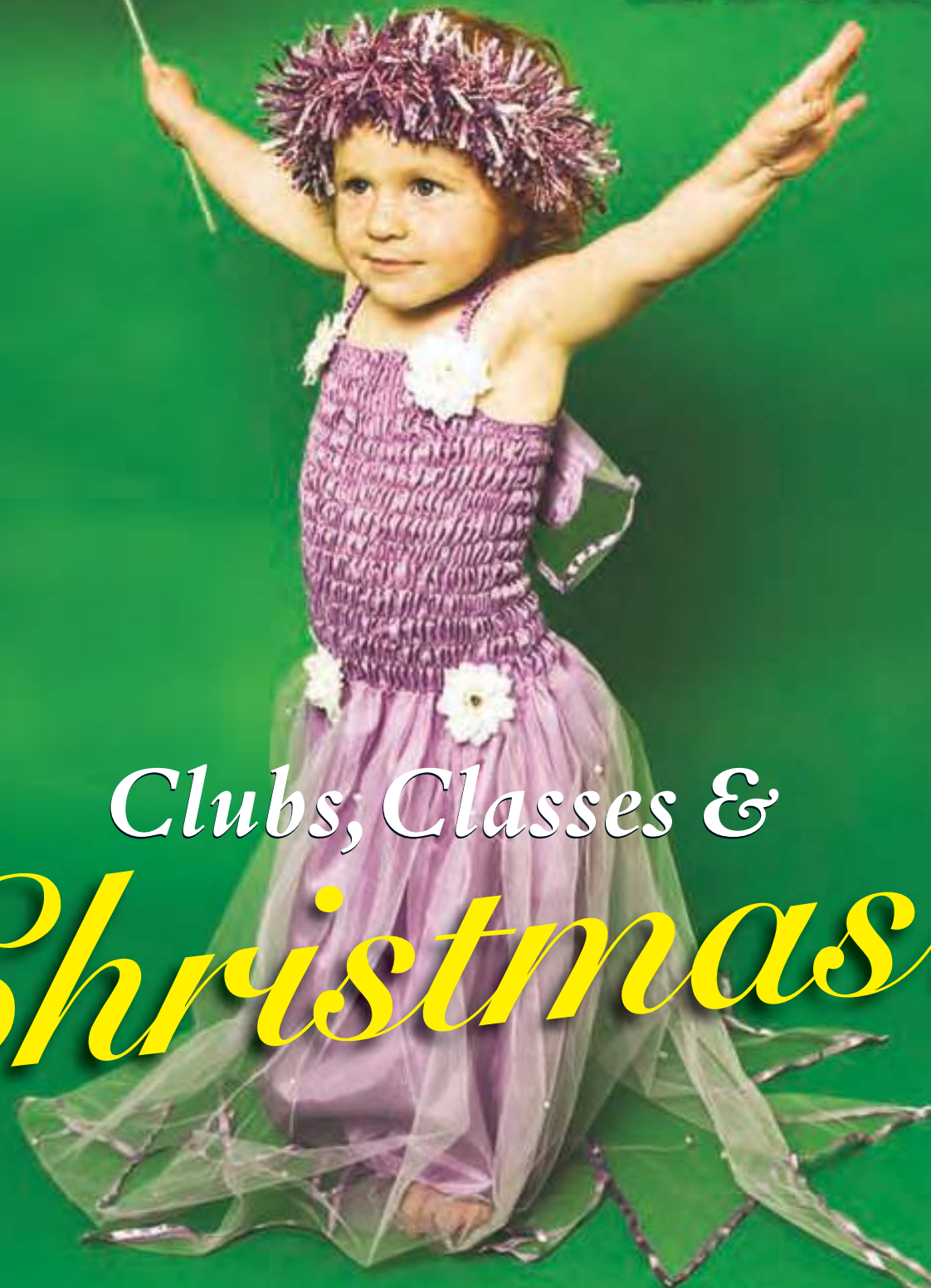


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FRONT COVER:

Our Christmas Fairy is Eliza Butters, as photographed by the wonderful Rachel at the Peacocks & Butterflies Studio in Wakefield.
www.peacocksandbutterflies.co.uk

CIRCULATION: 13,000 copies printed

NEXT DEADLINE:

For our Pregnancy and Birth issue (Jan/Feb 2009) is 12th December.
If you want to advertise then contact our team on adverts@familiesleeds.co.uk

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Welcome

I LOVE making new friends, and since becoming a Mum, my circle of friends has expanded more than my waistline! There's the pals I made during my first antenatal classes, the Mums from my daughters' pre-school and the parents I stand at the school gates with day after day. I'm forever telling my girls that you never know when you'll meet your next best friend.

So let me introduce mine – Families Leeds.

It's reliable – you'll find it in your nursery, school, at your club or in your local health centre every other month. It's knowledgeable – you'll find out the very best things to do and places to go with your children within our 16 pages. And, I hope, it will make you laugh and sometimes cry – like any friend does.

In our launch issue, we've got a list of all the Clubs and Classes on offer across Leeds. From Aikido to Yoga, we've got it all.

And because we're feeling festive you'll also find out about the best pantomimes (pg 15), where to find Santa, when your local lights are being switched on (pg 13), and the must have gifts this Christmas (pg 12). And we have some great giveaways to mark our launch.

So we're generous, reliable, knowledgeable and fun. I hope you'll make Families Leeds – **YOUR new best friend.**

Enjoy,
Sarah Butters
(with Isobel, 5 & Eliza, 2)

Bumps 2 Babies & Beyond
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Sunday 23rd November 2008
10am – 4pm – York Racecourse
Bumps 2 Babies & Beyond Christmas Show
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Families News...

Baby LOVES Disco – on the move...

After two successful Baby Loves Disco events in Leeds, organisers have decided to change venues. Following two parties at Tiger Tiger, the new home of the Sunday afternoon boogie is Chilli White on Assembly Street.

Baby Loves Disco's Yorkshire Organiser Claire Batley says, "This is a superior city centre venue with great access for families."

The next party is 23rd November, and if you haven't tried it yet, take a look at our Baby Loves Disco review and competition on page 9.



Make a Wish

If that wish is for a child free day to do some Christmas shopping, your dreams may have come true.

Transform your little monster into something magical at a Christmas Fairy workshop at St Chad's Church in Headingley on Saturday 13th December.

They'll spend the day helping Santa's elves get ready for Christmas, making crafts and taking part in festive activities.

If you are interested, contact Make a Wish on 01924 281 365.



EXIT stage left...

The curtain goes down on the City Varieties in the New Year as work gets underway on a multi-million pound refurbishment. The much loved theatre will close it's doors on Sunday 18th January. It's hoped that work will be complete for the 2010 Autumn season. We'll keep you posted!



Charity Toddle

St Agnes Nursery in Headingley was among 45 places in Leeds to take part in the Big Toddle which raises funds for Barnardos. More than £12,000 was raised across the city. Well done to everyone who took part!

WANTED: Maternity Clothes

A Leeds hostel offering shelter to single women, often fleeing domestic violence needs YOUR help. Hollie's Hostel in Far Headingley is appealing for good quality second hand maternity clothes to give to the pregnant women who find themselves under their roof. If you can help, contact Mia Cameron on 0113 274 3858.

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Giveaways...

Boogie Babies

If you find yourself humming along to the theme tune of your little one's favourite TV programme, we have the giveaway for you.



Families Leeds has three copies of the Pop TV Jr Album to give away. Sure to annoy you on many a car journey is Bob the Builder singing Crocodile Rock, the theme from Me Too and many more. Send your name and address to editor@familiesleeds.co.uk by 12th December. It will be my pleasure to give these CDs away as soon as possible!

Fancy a new year trip to Neverland?

Families Leeds has two sets of family tickets to the wonderful Peter Pan at the West Yorkshire Playhouse to give away. Each family ticket is for four people. If you would like to be part of the audience for the 7pm performance on Wednesday 14th January then tell me the name of the fairy in Peter Pan. Send the answers to: editor@familiesleeds.co.uk by 12th December.

Get organised...



If, like me you are a disorganised Mum, we've stumbled on a range of fantastic products which will help you get your home in order.

Designed by Mum of two Sarah Sadler, these family diaries and calendars help you consolidate the commitments of every member of your family. We've got five Home Planners to give away. To win one, email your name and address by the 12th December to:

editor@familiesleeds.co.uk

And if you don't win, you can order yours at:

www.organised-mum.co.uk

MTV (Meerkat TV!)

Tropical World's favourite visitors, the meerkats, can now join you for afternoon tea in the recently re-furbished Explorers Café. A television now beams the latest goings on from the enclosure.



Bumps, Babies & Bags of Shopping

Kick the festive season off with Santa and a spot of shopping at the first Yorkshire Bumps2Babies and Beyond Christmas show.

Organisers promise a host of local businesses at the event which is being held on Sunday 23rd November at York Racecourse. You'll also be helping to support one of our local charities – Martin House Children's Hospice in Boston Spa. Tickets are £5 on the door, but £4 if you buy in advance from www.zakandflo.co.uk or by calling 01904 707 829.

School Open Days

The Grammar School at Leeds:

Tuesday 25th November 2008

Rose Court Nursery and Pre Prep (Age 3-6) based in Headingley
Open Doors from 9am – 12 noon

Junior and Senior School (Age 7+) based at Alwoodley Gates

Open Doors. From 9am – 12 noon
www.gsal.org.uk • 0113 229 1552

Fulneck School:

Friday 14th November 2008

Open Day 9.30am – 12 noon

www.fulneckschool.co.uk • 0113 257 0235





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Clubs & Classes News



BABY BALLET BOOM

Get your tutus ready, because Baby Ballet is heading north. These popular pre-school classes are now running in Wetherby. Baby Ballet's Karen Goodwin says there's been a lot of demand and she hopes the classes will be popular. There's also new classes in Morley and Ilkley and Otley. www.babyballet.co.uk



FLEX YOUR CHILD'S BRAIN MUSCLES

If you look at our Clubs and Classes special, you'd be forgiven for thinking every interest is covered. Not according to Kate Rhodes – a local Mum who wants to introduce Leeds to Flexiphonics. It's a pre-school class which will help prepare your child for nursery or schools, by using brain gym exercises. It's aimed at children aged between 2 and 4 years old. Classes are planned for Horsforth, Pudsey, Shipley and Bingley.

www.flexiphonics.com

BABIES CAN SIGN – CAN YOU?

Are you interested in signing? Have you got the skills to teach? Then Babies Can Sign's Vicki Gilbert would like to hear from you.



"We're looking for people to join our unique licensed teacher programme across Leeds and Bradford."

If you're interested you'll need to be able to sing in tune, have excellent communication skills and your own transport. You'll also need to have, or be prepared to work towards a level 1 British Sign Language qualification.

If you think you've got what it takes, contact Vicki at Babies Can Sign on 07742 296 160 • www.babiescansign.co.uk



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Our guide to the best Clubs & Classes

Whether you're choosing a class for your 6 month old baby, or an after school activity for your 6 year old, it can be an expensive and overwhelming decision. Should you follow YOUR friends or listen to your little one? Families Leeds is here to help.

Classes for under 2s

For many parents, this is an opportunity to socialise and make friends – friends that can often be a life line in the early months of your child's life. But don't start too early. Baby massage aside, you're probably best not investing in weekly classes until your little one is about 6 months old.

Pre-school Classes

This is about keeping an active child, who's often ready for school, busy, busy, busy. Here in Leeds we're incredibly lucky with the choice of classes available. Most will offer you a free taster session so if you're not sure, go along and give it a try.

After School Classes

For some, this is about supplementing the school day. For others, it's about running, dancing or swimming the classroom off. It depends what's right for your child. But remember, don't over commit. It will exhaust you, and your child. And prepare for their interests to change. Just because it worked last year, it doesn't mean it's right for this year.

We've tried to list as many classes as possible. Enjoy!

Elevations Dancers: photo by Maria Allen



ART, CRAFT & COOKING

Kraft Time:

www.kraft-time.co.uk

Toddler craft sessions in Scarcroft and Clifford on Tuesday and Thursday. There are also sessions for older children during school holidays. Contact Judith on 07974 661 078 or info@kraft-time.co.uk

Ickle 'Uns Mucky Pups:

www.ickleuns.co.uk

Sessions on a Wednesday in Morley. Contact Charlotte on 0113 219 5517

Little SmARTies Messy Play:

www.littlesmartiesmessyplay.co.uk

Arts and crafts for under 5s. Classes on Monday and Thursday in Morley. Contact Keeley on 0113 252 9241

Mini Cooks:

www.minicooksinfo.co.uk

Weekly cookery classes for pre-school children on a Monday afternoon in Morley for children from 18 months. Watch out for more classes in January 2009.

Contact Vicky on 07507 573 387 or 0113 252 7581

Pots of Colour:

A perfect venue for your crafty children. A pottery café tucked away in Wetherby. After-school clubs welcome but you need to book before you turn up.

Contact Jackie on 01937 580 197 or 07960 448 340



DANCE AND DRAMA

Baby Loves Disco:

www.babylovesdisco.co.uk

Boogie away one Sunday afternoon every month with your little one. This 3 hour party takes place at Chilli White in Leeds and you need to buy your ticket beforehand.

For your dancing queen, we L♥VE...

Baby Ballet:

www.babyballet.co.uk

As the name suggests, it's ballet for girls and boys from 6 months. From 2 years there is the option of Tiny Tap and from 4 years, children move into the Academy. Classes across Leeds. New classes in Ilkley, Morley and Wetherby.

Elevations Academy for Dance:

www.elevationsacademyfordance.co.uk

Cheerleading (6+), Breakdancing and Creative Movement (18 months+) Contact Hayley Robinson on 07790 225 385 or elevations@hotmail.com

Garforth Academy of Dance:

www.slpcollege.co.uk

Runs a huge range of dance classes from Tiny Tots ballet and tap (2 years) to Boys Jazz. Extensive timetable on website. Contact 0113 286 8136

Harewood Dance:

Saturday afternoon ballet, tap and jazz classes from 3 years old at Harewood Village Hall. Contact Alison on 07949 095 152

In2 Dance School:

Alwoodley based dance studio for children from 2 years. Specialises in ballet, tap, street dance, jazz and cheerleading. Contact Stacy on 07762 761 291

Ology Performance School:

www.ologyps.com

Performing arts classes for children from 3-5 years old (Little Ology) through to longer classes for 6-10 year olds. Run on a Saturday from The Grammar School at Leeds. Feeds into the recently launched Ology Kids Casting agency. Contact Laura on 0113 347 0121

OnStage Theatre Arts Academy:

www.onstagetheatrearts.co.uk

Courses in performing arts and theatre skills from 5 years old. Classes on a Saturday at The Carriageworks Theatre.

Contact Liz on 0113 262 8033

Shuffles Dance:

www.shuffles.net

Street Dance, Tap and Modern at Scarcroft Village Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for children from 5 years old. Now offering a High School Musical Award.

Contact Jason on 07710 626 226 or info@shuffles.net

Street Dance Classes:

www.streetleveldance.co.uk

Want to stop dancing like your Dad and start dancing like Justin Timberlake? Classes for 6-10 year olds on a Thursday evening in Alwoodley and for 5-10 year olds in Morley.

Contact 0113 217 6873

Wake up, Shake up:

www.yorkshiredance.com

Saturday classes at the city centre Yorkshire Dance Centre range from Parent and Tot dance through to Breakdancing for older children.

Stagecoach (including Early and Mini Stages):

www.stagecoach.co.uk

Performing arts classes for children from 6 months (MiniStages) though to 90 minute weekly workshops for 4-7 year old (Early Stages) to the full Stagecoach experience. Classes across Leeds.

Theatreworks

www.bigredcurtain.com

Performing arts school with classes in Oulton and Boston Spa. Early years classes start from 4 years. Entrance auditions for all ages.

Contact Brenda on 0113 282 2186

BABY SIGNING**Babies Can Sign:****www.babiescansign.co.uk**

Baby signing in Horsforth, Rodley and Yeadon. Taster sessions available.
Contact Vicki on 07742 296160

Sing and Sign:**www.singandsign.com**

Classes across Leeds.
Contact Morag on 0113 216 1313

Tiny Talk:**www.tinytalk.co.uk**

Classes in Crossgates, Roundhay and Wetherby. Early bird discounts and free taster sessions available.
Contact Wendy on 0113 289 3057

Ickle 'Uns Time to Sign:**www.ickleuns.co.uk**

Classes in Morley on a Wednesday.
Contact Charlotte on 0113 219 5517

SPORT**Aikido:****www.leeds.gov.uk**

Classes for 6+ in this Japanese martial art at Aireborough, Garforth and Kirkstall Leisure Centres.

Brazilian Soccer School:**www.icfds.com**

5 a side football for boys and girls from 5 years old. Sessions at Soldiers Field, Roundhay and Garforth Town.

Contact Steve at Garforth Town on 07528 457 866 or Richard at Roundhay on 0113 244 1970

Climbing Yorkshire:**www.adventureoutdooreducation.co.uk**

After school climbing courses in various venues across Leeds and Bradford.

Contact Alex on 07960 215 187

GymMinis:**www.leeds.gov.uk**

Pre-school gym classes in a soft play environment for children aged between 1 and 4. Classes are FREE and operate at most Leeds Leisure centres.

Gymnastics with Elevations Academy:**www.elevationsacademyfordance.co.uk**

Sessions at Chapel Allerton Primary School run on Saturday afternoons.

Contact Hayley on 07790 225 385 or elevations@hotmail.com

For your Power Ranger we L♥VE**Karate:****www.johnsonskarate.com**

Classes in Collingham, Crossgates, Harewood and Wetherby.
07776 201 475

Little Kickers:**www.littlekickers.co.uk**

Pre-school football classes from 18 months. Classes across Leeds.

Contact Debbie on 0113 266 9955

Mini Tennis:**www.leeds.gov.uk**

Classes at Garforth and Rothwell Leisure Centres, and South Leeds Stadium for children aged 4-10.

Socatots:**www.socatots.com**

Soccer based play and ball skills from 6 months. Classes across Leeds.

Contact Catherine on 0113 244 2005 or leeds@socatots.com

DO YOU WANT TO BE A SOCATOT?

Families Leeds and Socatots have got together to offer you a free session at the popular pre-school football classes. All you have to do is email your name and address to: editor@familiesleeds.co.uk Closing date is December 12th.

Striker 9:**www.leeds.gov.uk**

Football awards scheme for 5-16 year olds. Classes at selected Leeds Sports Centres. Contact Aireborough (01943 877 131), Fearnville (0113 240 2233) and South Leeds Stadium (0113 245 7549)

**MUSIC AND MOVEMENT****For your little drummer boy we L♥VE****Jo Jingles:****www.jojingles.com**

Themed music classes from 6 months old – 5 years. Classes in Adel, Boston Spa, Garforth, Guiseley, Menston, Morley, Horsforth, Otley, Sherburn, Wetherby and Yeadon.

Contact Paula on 01977 650 455 or Caroline on 0113 239 1154

Bee Sharp:**www.beesharp.co.uk**

Music and movement for 1-7 year olds. Classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Roundhay and Headingley.

Contact Heather Pawley on 0113 266 2151

Caterpillar Music:**www.caterpillarmusic.com**

NEW Music classes in Garforth on a Friday for young babies to 4 years old. First class free.

Contact Lynne on 01924 897 119

For newborns we L♥VE...**Gymboree:****www.gymboree-uk.com**

Age specific music, gym and art classes from newborn operating in Rawdon and Moortown on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Contact Rachel on 07702 048 391

Boogie Babies:**www.ickleuns.co.uk**

A musical workout for babies from 12 weeks to 18 months. Classes run in Morley on a Wednesday morning.

Contact Charlotte on 0113 219 5517

Musical Express:

Classes for children from under 2 in Ben Rhydding on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

Contact Clare on 01943 602 329 or clare@benrhydding.co.uk

Rhythm Time:**www.rtfg.co.uk**

Music classes from newborn.

Contact Elizabeth Hawkhead (Leeds) on 0113 264 9371 and Lynne O'Malley (Wharfe Valley) on 07789 895 894

Tumble Tots:**www.tumbletots.com/Leeds-Bradford**

Active play from 6 months (GymBabes) through walking (Tumble Tots) up to 7 years old (GymBobs). Classes across Leeds.

Contact Janine and Ian on 01423 780 367

**HORSE RIDING****Back Lane Stables: 0113 255 6615****Follifoot Riding School:****www.horseridingcentre.co.uk**

Half hour 'nursery' lesson for children from 4 years old between Wetherby and Harrogate.
Contact 01423 870 372

Hillcroft Farm Riding Stables:

Lessons for children from 6 years old in Wetherby.

Contact 01937 582 262

Newthorpe Equestrian Centre:**www.newthorpeequestriancentre.com**

Lessons in South Milford.

Contact on 07917 3030 000

LEARNING A LANGUAGE**La Jolie Ronde:****www.lajolieronde.co.uk**

Spanish and French for children from 3 years old. Classes running across Leeds.

SWIMMING

Baby Swimmers:

www.babyswimmers.co.uk

Sessions at Oakwood and Meanwood (Friday) and Quarry Hill (Saturday).
Contact 01757 229 880

Bubbles Swim School:

Sessions at Moorlands School on Sunday morning.

Contact Glenn on 0113 2252 460 or glenn.bevons@ntlworld.com

Neptunes:

Classes at The Grammar School at Leeds and Moorlands School.

Contact Gareth on 0113 226 9521

Pisces Swimming School:

www.piscesswimschool.co.uk

Classes at The Grammar School at Leeds on a Saturday afternoon.

Contact Jackie on 01977 671 755

Swimbabes:

www.swimbabes.co.uk

Classes at the De Vere Hotel, Oulton and Chevin Country Park Hotel.

Contact 01484 683 570

Splash School:

Classes at Woodhouse Grove School, Apperley Bridge.

Contact 0113 232 3894

Swimsafe:

Classes at Moorlands School.

Contact Nick on 07870 562 365



For your Little Mermaid we L♥VE Waterbabies:

www.waterbabies.co.uk

Underwater swimming and water confidence from 6 weeks old. Babies MUST be under 1 year when they begin these classes.

Contact Janine/Arran on 01943 872 556

YOGA FOR YOUR LITTLE ONES

Yoga for Kids:

Based in Roundhay

Contact Treasa on 0113 298 9790

Ickle 'Uns Baby Yoga:

www.ickleuns.co.uk

Wednesday class in Morley.

Contact Charlotte on 0113 219 5517

A BOOGIE WONDERLAND...

We review Leeds' first Baby Loves Disco event.

If you spend most of your Sundays herding the kids around Homebase, an afternoon with a bottle of beer and the sounds of the Bee Gees does sound like an attractive alternative. Leeds' first Baby Loves Disco event attracted a big crowd with big expectations. At £8 a ticket, this is not a cheap afternoon out, but it is an unusual one. Down in the basement of Tiger Tiger, the usually dark disco is sea of balloons and babies, bopping to hits like "BabyLove" and "Daddy Cool".

And in the DJ booth, is one cool Leeds Daddy – Stephen Pinder. Along with his 4 year old son Rhys, they're bringing the 70's to a whole new audience. Stephen says, "Everyone is getting into it and Rhys is loving it."

When you're all danced out there are two 'chill out' areas to choose from. There's a baby changing station and table upon table of healthy snacks. If you missed out on this one, you can catch the next Baby Loves Disco at a new venue – Chilli White on Assembly Street – on Sunday 23rd November. Book your tickets at:

www.babylovesdisco.co.uk

Families Leeds has 3 copies of the Baby Loves Disco album to give away to get you dancing in your own home.

To win one just send your name and address to

editor@familiesleeds.co.uk

Closing date is Friday 12th December.



ELEVATIONS ACADEMY

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* BRAND NEW Private Gymnastics Club *
3 Gymnastic Classes Available with our fully Qualified Club Coach

Watch out for Families Leeds' Pregnancy & Birth issue.

It's out in January and will have more ideas of classes to do with your baby. If you run an ante or post natal class then tell us about it at: news@familiesleeds.co.uk

Organising busy lives with style

Organised Mum specialise in creating clever, stylish products to organise the busiest homes and lives. With lots of added features such as tear-out shopping and to-do lists, menu planners, grid formats for families and fun stickers to highlight important dates.

The start of the new school term is the perfect time to get your life in order - our products start in September and last until the following December. To view our full product range or place an order please drop by online or call us on 0845 644 7507.



www.organisedmum.co.uk

Calendars | Diaries | Stationery | Planners | Stickers

Where can you and your children learn and have fun together in a warm, friendly atmosphere?



Working all week? Dad or other family members want to be involved? Want to bring 2 siblings together?
Then try our Saturday classes!



At Gymboree!

High energy, fun classes designed to develop the key skills your child is working on!

Colourful, stimulating environment and a guaranteed warm welcome!

Classes in 6 age levels suitable for newborn babies up to children ages 4!

High quality bespoke parties also available!

Call us NOW on 0770 204 8391!
leeds@gymboree-uk.com

Are YOU surviving *big* School?

They've stopped screaming at the school gates and you no longer have to peel your four year old off your leg when you say goodbye.

But how are YOU coping with your little ones move into the world of full time education?

Families Leeds Editor Sarah Butters offers some advice to the grown ups...



“

It's about the expansion of your child's social world – Brian Cheeseman, Leeds Child Psychologist

”

When my daughter stopped stamping her feet and began enjoying the 9 – 3.30 routine, I thought my troubles were behind me. She was making friends, enjoying the educational challenges and thriving on the social interaction provided. We breathed a huge sigh of relief when the first half term arrived and we had all survived.

It was then the challenges suddenly changed. My largely obedient daughter turned devil, handing out backchat and tantrums in equal measure. Meanwhile at the school gates, a campaign of parental terror began – whose offspring was the brightest, sportiest, naughtiest? And then we had the child from hell to tea. So what are the main hurdles and how do you best cope?

“I’M TIRED”

It’s easy to underestimate just how tired a full week of school will make your child. During the day they’re being faced with new friendships, experiences and challenges with very little time to stop and think. So when they get home, they deteriorate rapidly, especially towards the end of the week.

“Children experience a change in their routine when they start school,” says Kate Mulherin, Assistant Head at Chapel Allerton Primary School.

“There is so much to experience and play with and they’re more physically and mentally active than they are at home.”

Try not to exhaust your little one further with a raft of after school activities. There’s plenty of time for all that – reception year is about establishing the school routine.

THE BIG DEBATE

You’ve asked your four year old to help tidy up the playroom – you’ve not seen the floor for a few days and fancy checking it’s still there. The response?

“But why do I have to do it? I didn’t make all the mess!”

And that is how it starts. A half hour cross examination of my motivation for asking her to clear up a bit of her own mess. It usually ends up in raised voices and tears (both mine).

“It’s all about the expansion of your child’s social world. Your child is faced with a class of 30 kids with 30 different ways of behaving and they’ll pick up on how everyone behaves, and not everyone behaves in the same way as your child,” says Brian Cheeseman, a Leeds based Child Psychologist.

The cocktail of tired Mum, a long day at school and siblings to consider often



Impressing their peers becomes important and when they kick back, it’s at the person they’re closest to – Sally Clegg, Mum to Maisie, 4



makes for inconsistent discipline. Combine that with your child’s need to push the pre-school boundaries and the after school hours can be a big challenge.

Sally Clegg’s daughter Maisie has just started in reception at school in Burley-in-Wharfedale. She says the change in behaviour is understandable.

“We expect them to go from being at home with Mum, to the discipline and routine of a school day and to know exactly how to behave – and they don’t. Impressing their peers becomes important and when they kick back it’s directed at the person they’re closest to.”

“CAN THOMAS COME TO TEA?”

It’s great when your child begins making friends and even better when they identify a friend they want to invite home.

“During the first few weeks of term, I asked every night if Tom had made any new friends. It broke my heart when he kept saying ‘no’. So when he asked me if a friend could come to tea I was delighted,” says Debbie Dettmar, Mum to Tom and Euan from Moortown.

The trouble begins when they ‘don’t like that ham’ or ‘never eat pasta’ and you’ve spent the best part of an afternoon with an Annabel Karmel cookbook rustling up spaghetti Bolognaise with 25 hidden vegetables.

“Take comfort from the fact that your child will often gravitate to children who are different to themselves,” says Brian Cheeseman.

“If they’re quiet, they’ll be attracted to the noisy element. If you’ve been in charge of your child’s circle of friends until now, this may be the first time they’ve chosen their own friends.”

Be firm with your visitor and let them know the rules of your home. It’s important your child doesn’t witness you making NEW rules for the guest. And prior to the visit, ask your child’s friend what their favourite dish is. That way, you’ve got half a chance of avoiding a confrontation.

GETTING TO KNOW THE CLASS TEACHER

It’s the end of the school day and as you approach the door to your child’s classroom, you know all is not well.

“May I have a quick word with you Mrs Butters?”

You’re then told a tale of playground fisticuffs that culminated in, “and I’m going to have to use the words attempted strangulation Mrs Butters.”

Wish as you might, the ground won’t open up, so you grab your violent offspring and go.

“To hear someone you don’t know particularly well talk about YOUR child, it’s a strange experience. But it’s probably the only place you’re going to get constructive criticism,” says Sally Clegg.

You’ve got to view your relationship with your child’s school as a partnership. But it’s hard not to feel defensive if your little one is in the firing line. Brian Cheeseman says there’s nothing to be gained from a ‘head in the sand’ approach.

“What every parent must recognise is, much as they love their kids, they’re not perfect. Deal with the problem quickly and move on.”

MEETING THE MONSTER MUM

Depending on my mood, the competitive parent can be a thoroughly entertaining creature to observe. Whether it’s the abject disappointment at sports day when little Molly doesn’t manage to get all 8 beanbags in the bucket, or the horror at finding out your angelic daughter isn’t going to be Mary in the Nativity. Pushy parents are EVERYWHERE.

There is no silver lining here. If Mum is a monster in reception, imagine what they’ll be like by the time you come to choose your secondary school.

“Practice some playground avoidance,” says Child Psychologist Brian Cheeseman. “They’ll soon get the message.”

But, if you fancy a laugh, tell them your son is off to after school Mandarin classes.



The survivor's guide to buying the ideal Christmas present

As adults, we all whinge about how much easier it was in our day, when life was simpler and money was scarce writes Alison Berry from idealpresent.co.uk

Kids are way more savvy now, and the traditional letter to Santa includes reminders about where to buy the item, what it costs and a warning that there won't be so much as a mince pie for the bearded one if he turns up with the XC4605 instead of the XC4606A model. According to idealpresent.co.uk we will part with an astonishing £1.4bn this Christmas. That's up 7% on last year, even though the economy isn't sharing in our festive fun!

Buying gifts that the children want is one way of making sure that at least you haven't wasted your money. So, take a look at our Christmas Gift Guide, compiled by idealpresent.co.uk – an online gift advice service. It's packed full of ideas for children of all ages, from the latest 'must have' toys, to presents that'll be classics in your family for years to come!

How to have the ideal Christmas with children:

Imaginative toys which involve mental energy and preferably other children are always better than solitary games.

- Remember! Children value our time and energy spent with them far more than their presents. Find a game for all the family to play together this holiday season.
- Something that can be taken apart and put back together will provide more fun than a static doll or toy.
- If you must buy electronically, then making sure kids save up for accessories and games themselves will at least leave them with some lessons on the value of money.
- Take the toys out of their boxes before wrapping them, removing all the plastic wrapping and ties, putting them back in the box with their batteries safely installed. It saves scrabbling around with Philips screwdrivers on Christmas Day morning.
- Don't give all the children's presents on Christmas Day – give them over the whole period between Christmas and New Year. This saves on present overload for little kids and brings a sense of excitement and anticipation every day!
- Make sure the kids get some decent periods of time at home to play with and enjoy their presents. There's nothing more frustrating than having to go off to another relative's house when you really want to make a Lego model!



BOYS	What's Hot!	A Classic	Stocking Filler	GIRLS	What's Hot	A Classic	Stocking Filler
UNDER ONE	Playskool Step Start Walk 'n' Ride £20	Small Wheely Bug (Hippy Chick) £49	Stacking Cups £5	UNDER ONE	Fisher Price Crawl 'n' Cruise Musical Jungle £65	Spinning Top from £8	Buggy Book £4 £65
1-2	Little People Racing Ramps Garage £30	Wooden Trike from £20	Mr Potato Head £5	1-2	In the Night Garden Upsy Daisy and Her Bed £35	Fisher Price Two Tone Musical TV £15	My Name Mug £5
3-4	Leap Frog Tag Reading System £40 Moon Sand Adventure Island £25	Thomas Wooden train track set (various) from £15	Magnetic letters numbers £5	3-4	Dream Town Cherry Blossom Stores £60	Playmobil My Take Along Doll's House £15	Magnetic Drawing (travel size) £5 or under
5-6	Horrid Henry Scary Sounds Machine £13	Playmobil Pirate Ship £50	Transformers Animated Activators £5	5-6	GloE Clap & Glo Bear £20	Dolls pushchair/pram from £10	Echo Microphone £5
7-8	Ready Bed Star Wars Clone £30	Trampoline From £100	Zeebeez £3	7-8	High School Musical Cheerleader Costume £15	All Surface Swingball £20	Uno £6
9-10	Magnext I-Coaster £80	Retro Space Hopper £15	'Why Eating Bogeys is Good for you' book £5	9-10	The Simpsons 20Q £15	Beanbag from £15	High School Musical Key Ring £5



we L♥VE...
Maths Wrap
Price: £4.99

Created by a Leeds Kumon instructor, this ipod style device helps your little ones get to grips with their times tables. Simon Deacon built the prototype in his shed in Cookridge. We love it and we think your children will too – and they won't know they're learning while they're playing. Families Leeds has 6 Maths Wraps to give away – they're the perfect stocking filler. All you have to do is send your name and address to editor@familiesleeds.co.uk by 12th December. If you're not lucky enough to win, order yours at www.mathswrap.co.uk



What's on this Christmas...

When you've got children, Christmas is magical. Yes, it arrives too early these days but I'm grateful I can begin threatening that "Santa won't visit unless you behave" shortly after the summer birthdays are out of the way.

Here at Families Leeds, we've put together all the festive information you'll need to have some fun over Christmas. If you want to know where to find Santa, or when your local lights are being

switched on, you'll find out here. Some of our ideas are free, some are on your doorstep, others are a little further a field, but all of them will help you have a very Merry Christmas.

We've done our best to make sure it's all correct, but things can change. Use the contact details we've provided to check before you go.

1st November-15th December

Eating Creepy Crawlies LEEDS CITY MUSEUM

www.leeds.gov.uk/citymuseum
The first exhibition at this recently opened museum. Explore how creepy crawlies are eaten across the world. Definitely one for the boys!
0113 224 3732

10th November

Light Switch On with Fireworks WHITE ROSE CENTRE

The lights will be switched on at 7pm with a firework display from the roof of the shopping centre at 8pm (weather permitting).

14th November

Pudsey Christmas Lights Switch On LEISURE CENTRE

www.festiveleeds.com

14th-16th November

The Baby Show MANCHESTER CENTRAL

www.thebabyshow.co.uk
After a stint at Earls Court, The Baby Show heads north to Manchester. Tickets available online.

14th November-21st December

Christkindelmarket



German Christmas Market MILLENNIUM SQUARE

www.festiveleeds.com
One of the largest markets of its kind in the UK. As well as the Beer festival for Dad, there are funfair rides for the little ones and some euro-shopping for Mum.

15th November

Charity Cello Concert ST MATTHEWS CHURCH

Cellist Miriam Roycroft joins the orchestra and choir from the Alcuin School in Chapel Allerton for this concert.
office@alcuinschool.co.uk or 07762 761 291

15th November-11th January



we LOVE...

THE CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE STOCKELD PARK

www.thechristmasadventure.co.uk
When Bing Crosby sang about a Winter Wonderland, he must have been thinking about Stockeld Park near Wetherby. It's a magical outing for the whole family. This year is bigger and better – the enchanted wood, the maze, the Nordic skiing trail, an expanded ice rink and a Santa's Grotto open every day until Christmas. My tip is to visit at dusk falls – the children will be captivated.
01937 586 101

20th November

Morley Christmas Lights Switch On TOWN HALL

www.festiveleeds.com

21st November

Rothwell Christmas Lights Switch On ROTHWELL HIGH STREET

www.festiveleeds.com

23rd November

We LOVE

Baby Loves Disco CHILLI WHITE

www.babylovesdisco.co.uk/locations/leeds
Baby Loves Disco moves to its new home at Chilli White on Assembly Street in Leeds for the third event this year. Tickets available through the website.

Bump, Baby and Beyond YORK RACECOURSE

www.bumps2babiesandbeyond.co.uk
A parenting show packed with some Christmas shopping opportunities. Part of the proceeds go to a really good cause – Martin House Hospice in Boston Spa. Opens 10am – 4pm.
01904 707 829

28th-30th November

Christmas Gift Fair HAREWOOD HOUSE

www.harewood.org
Held in the Courtyard, it's a beautiful setting to begin your Christmas shopping. Plus you can bribe the kids with an hour on the adventure playground when your money has run out
0113 218 1010

Garforth Christmas Lights Switch On www.festiveleeds.com

29th-30th November

Santa's Steam Trains KEIGHLEY AND WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY

www.kwvr.co.uk
The Santa Steam Specials have been running for 40 years and they're still hugely popular. Trains from Oxenhope, Haworth, or Keighley. Booking essential.
01535 645 214

29th November

Santa's Cruise on the Black Prince THWAITE MILLS

www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills
Come along to the Mills for an hour long cruise in Winter Wonderland. You'll be able to write a letter to Santa and then meet him. Booking essential.
0113 276 2887

Yeadon Christmas Lights Switch On TOWN HALL

www.festiveleeds.com

Ilkley Christmas Lights Switch On ILKLEY BANDSTAND

www.visitbradford.com
5pm with the Guiseley Brass Band





1st December

**Choirs of Leeds Cathedral
and Leeds Parish Church
LEEDS TOWN HALL**
www.leedsconcertseason.com
Free lunchtime carol concert.
0113 247 8336

6th December

**Victorian Christmas Fair
MEANWOOD VALLEY FARM**
www.mvuf.org.uk
0113 262 9759

**Playtime: Christmas
LOTHERTON HALL**
www.leeds.gov.uk/lothertonhall
Come along and make your Christmas
decorations before visiting the birds at
the famous Bird Garden.
0113 281 3259

6th-7th December

**Santa Trains
MIDDLETON RAILWAY**
www.middletonrailway.org.uk
Take a ride on the famous steam train and
meet Santa every Saturday and Sunday
until the 21st December, and again on
Christmas Eve. Trains leave from Moor Road
Station every 40 minutes from 11am.
Booking recommended.
0113 271 0320

**Santa's Steam Trains
KEIGHLEY AND WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**
www.kwvr.co.uk
01535 645 214

**Santa's Cruise on the Black Prince
THWAITE MILLS**
www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills
0113 276 2887

**Christmas Craft Fair
NOSTELL PRIORY**
www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Scenic opportunity to do some Christmas
shopping in the grounds of this stately
home near Wakefield.
01924 863 892

**Victorian Christmas Grotto and Choir
EAST RIDDLEDEN HALL**
www.nationaltrust.org.uk
Visits to Santa's grotto, along with storytelling
and a carol concert by Bradford Girls Cathedral
Choir. Booking essential for the grotto.
01535 607 075

13th December

Christmas Fairy Workshop
www.makeawishentertainment.co.uk
Run at St Chad's Church, Headingley,
these workshops are hugely popular so
book early. Better your little one is a fairy
while you do some last minute Xmas
shopping, than a little devil!
01924 281 365

Gymboree Christmas Party
www.gymboree-uk.com
10 – 11.30 at St Chad's
Parish Centre, Headingley.
Numbers limited.
Tickets to be purchased in advance from:
leeds@gymboree-uk.com

13th-14th December

**Family Carols
LOTHERTON HALL**
www.leeds.gov.uk/lothertonhall
The first in a series of five early evening
concerts of traditional family carols.
6pm start. Booking essential.
0113 281 3259

**Santa's Cruise on the Black Prince
THWAITE MILLS**
www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills
0113 276 2887

**Santa's Steam Trains
KEIGHLEY AND WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**
www.kwvr.co.uk
01535 645 214

**Santa Trains
MIDDLETON RAILWAY**
www.middletonrailway.org.uk
0113 271 0320

13th-20th December

**Victorian Christmas Week
TEMPLE NEWSAM**
www.leeds.gov.uk/templenewsamhouse
A celebration of all things festive and Victorian.
The week begins with a festive farm and house
opening between 5pm and 8pm on Saturday
13th and the chance to meet Santa.
0113 264 5535

16th December

**The Nativity
MEANWOOD VALLEY URBAN FARM**
www.mvuf.org.uk
An evening nativity with carols amongst
the animals at this popular farm.
0113 262 9759

18th December

**Lord Mayor's Carol Concert
LEEDS TOWN HALL**
www.leedsconcertseason.com
The City's annual family carol concert.
6.30pm start
0113 247 8336

19th-21st December

**Family Carols
LOTHERTON HALL**
www.leeds.gov.uk/lothertonhall

19th-23rd December

**we L♥VE... Totally Tropical Christmas
TROPICAL WORLD**
www.roundhaypark.org.uk
If you've never been, you have to go.
An evening event which takes you away
from a winter wonderland and gets you
feeling 'hot, hot, hot'! A steel drum band
play carols as you wish the famous meerkats
a merry Christmas. It's become a very
un-traditional tradition in our household.
0113 214 5715

20th-21st December

**Santa's Steam Trains
KEIGHLEY AND WORTH VALLEY RAILWAY**
www.kwvr.co.uk
01535 645 214

**Santa's Cruise on the Black Prince
THWAITE MILLS**
www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills
0113 276 2887

**Santa Trains
MIDDLETON RAILWAY**
www.middletonrailway.org.uk
0113 271 0320

22nd-24th December

**Christmas Painting Workshops
POTS OF COLOUR**
Drop your child at this Wetherby pottery
café while you nip and do some last minute
shopping. The 1½ hour supervised pottery
painting sessions for over 5s run at 10.30 and
2.30. A drink and a snack is included all for £12.
Booking essential: contact Jackie on
01937 580197 07960 448 340

23rd December

**Family Fun Afternoon
ABBEY HOUSE MUSEUM**
www.leeds.gov.uk/abbeyhousemuseum
Activities from 1pm – 3pm to take
everyone's mind off the big day.
0113 230 5492

24th December

**Christmas Party
CRAZY TYKES**
www.crazytykes.co.uk
Join in the celebrations at the Wetherby soft
play centre from 12pm – 4pm. Pre-book your
tickets as there are only a limited number.
01937 541 007

**Santa Trains
MIDDLETON RAILWAY**
www.middletonrailway.org.uk
0113 271 0320

**Santa's Cruise on the Black Prince
THWAITE MILLS**
www.leeds.gov.uk/thwaitemills
0113 276 2887

26th December-Boxing Day

**Come Racing
WETHERBY RACES**
www.wetherbyracing.co.uk
The first of two days of racing here. If you're
feeling the need to escape from the house
after a day of overindulgence, let the
Wetherby wind blow the cobwebs away.
01937 582 035

**Mince Pie Special
EMBSAY STEAM TRAIN**
www.emsabayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk
Escape the festive mayhem and enjoy a
Mince Pie on this famous steam train.
Timetable begins at 10.30.
01756 710 614

27th December-4th January

we L♥VE... Boxing Days! EUREKA
www.eureka.org.uk
Has your child ever opened a present and
spent the day playing with the box? Bring the
box, and the child along to Eureka and prepare
to make something special. A great way to
get rid of your rubbish after Santa's visit.
01422 330 069

29th December-2nd January

**Christmas Painting Workshops
POTS OF COLOUR**
These 90 minute supervised pottery painting
sessions at the new Wetherby studio are a
great escape for your little ones.
01937 580 197 or 07960 448 340

At the Theatre



Pantomimes

CINDERELLA

Alhambra Theatre

www.bradford-theatres.co.uk

Opens 12th December until 1st January

01274 432 000

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

City Varieties

www.cityvarieties.co.uk

Opens 5th December until 11th January

08456 441 881

we L♥VE...

ALADDIN

Carriageworks Theatre

www.carriageworkstheatre.org.uk

Opens 4th December until 3rd January

0113 224 3801

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

Grand Opera House, York

www.grandoperahouseyork.org.uk

Opens 12th December until 4th January

08448 472 322

CINDERELLA

Harrogate Theatre

www.harrogatetheatre.co.uk

Opens 28th November until 11th January

01423 502 710

DICK TURPIN

York Theatre Royal

www.yorktheatroyal.co.uk

Opens 11th December until 31st December

01904 623 568

Other Christmas treats:

THE NUTCRACKER (pictured)

The Grand, Leeds

www.leedsgrandtheatre.com

Northern Ballet Production

Opens 17th December until 31st December

0113 222 6222

THE WIZARD OF OZ

City Varieties

www.cityvarieties.co.uk

Opens 18th Nov – 22nd Nov

08456 441 881

SNOW QUEEN

West Yorkshire Playhouse

www.wyplayhouse.com

Courtyard Theatre

Opens 5th December until 10th January

0113 213 7700



Where's Santa?



15th November–11th January

Santa's Grotto at THE CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE, STOCKELD PARK

www.thechristmasadventure.co.uk

Weekends from 15th November–21st December

Santa's Grotto at SAVILLES GARDEN CENTRE at GARFORTH CLIFF

Father Christmas arrives at the Selby Road garden centre on the Rio Grande railway.

0113 286 2183

Weekends from 22nd November–21st December

Going Underground with Santa at NATIONAL COAL MINING MUSEUM

www.ncm.org.uk

Travel 140 metres underground to visit Santa and his reindeers in a special grotto.

01924 848 806

Weekends from the 29th November–21st December

Santa's Grotto at STRIKES GARDEN CENTRE, WELLINGTON HILL

www.klondyke.co.uk

Father Christmas visits his grotto at Red Hall Lane.

0113 265 7839

1st–23rd December

Journey to the North Pole – EUREKA

www.eureka.org.uk

Take a trip to see Father Christmas in his grotto in the North Pole. All you need is some imagination!

01422 330 069

6th December

Santa's Grotto at The Victorian Christmas Fair, MEANWOOD VALLEY FARM

www.mvuf.org.uk

Santa will be paying the animals a visits between 11 – 2.30.

0113 262 9759

Weekends from 6th December–21st December

Santa's Grotto at STEPHEN SMITH GARDEN CENTRE

www.shrubs.co.uk

Open every weekend until Christmas. Call ahead for times.

01943 850 050

Weekends from 6th December–21st December then

22nd–24th December.

Santa's Grotto at SNOZONE

www.snozone.co.uk

Visit Santa in the snow at Castleford's famous Snozone. Each visit costs £5 and for that you'll leave with a present and a balloon.

0871 222 5671

Every Sunday from 7th December until Christmas

Santa visits ABBEY HOUSE MUSEUM

www.leeds.gov.uk/abbeyhouse

0113 230 5492

CALLING ALL PIRATES!

Fancy walking the plank? The cast of Peter Pan at the West Yorkshire Playhouse certainly hope so. They're asking their Friday night audiences to come along dressed as a pirate. Whether you come along as Captain Jack Sparrow, or Captain Pugwash it's hoped the mini pirates will give Captain Hook a run for his money.

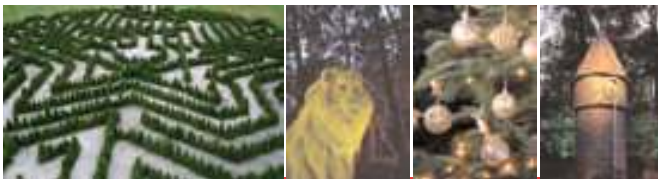
www.wyplayhouse.com

Opens 22nd November until 31st January in the Quarry Theatre.

Box Office:

0113 213 7700





The Christmas Adventure

from 24 October to 11 January
Free entry & parking, pay by activity

Enchanted Wood
Outdoor Skating Rink
Nordic Ski Trail
Giant Snowflake Maze
Santa's Grotto
Gift Shop & Café

Spectacular illuminations from dusk

Fireworks 4 and 7 November @ 6.30pm

www.thechristmasadventure.com

Stockeld Park can be found on the A661 nr Wetherby



Christmas at Eureka!

Enjoy a magical journey to the North Pole in the Eureka! Christmas Grotto (various dates in December) or bring your family to create your own masterpiece (27 Dec-4 Jan). For more information call 01422 330069

EUREKA!
www.eureka.org.uk

the
carriageworks

THUR 4 DEC 2008 –
SAT 3 JAN 2009

A TOUCH OF FROST
JOHN LYONS
ABANAZAR

WEST END STAR
SIMON HOWE
WIDOW TWANKY

INTRODUCING
JAMES COHEN
AS

MIDSOMER MURDERS
TONY HOWES
WISHEE WASHEE

NATALIE TULLOCH
PRINCESS JASMINE

Aladdin

The most magical of all family pantomimes

PHA

Box Office: 0113 224 3801
www.carriageworkstheatre.org.uk

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paulajridley@dsl.pipex.com

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