



Holy Family Catholic Primary School December 2023 Newsletter



*God in our hearts, Love in our words,
Family in our actions*



*And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger,
because there was no place for them in the inn.*

Luke 2:7

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the final newsletter of 2023. It has been a busy year and, as always, our children and families have astounded me with their work, support, determination and positivity! At this very special time of year it is so important to pause and take time to reflect.

At Christmas time we delight again to hear the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the song of the angels, the surprise of the shepherds, and their joy as they found Jesus in the manger. But lest we forget he was born to poverty, we remember at this season all who are hungry or cold. Lest we forget he became a refugee, we remember now the stranger and the lonely among us. Lest we forget he felt the pain of life and death, we remember now those who are ill, or anxious, or bereaved. And because we know he came for our salvation, let us, in heart and mind, go once again to Bethlehem, to hear the message of the angels and worship a fresh Son of God.

Curriculum and Learning

Year R

During this term, Year R have been spending time embedding our expectations and behaviours for learning. We are becoming amazing at walking in a line, finding our names and getting changed for PE.

In writing, we have been thinking about writing letters and wish lists for Santa - we are so excited for Christmas! We are able to write the sounds we can hear in words and assign meaning to them. We are continuing to work on writing all of our sounds in CVC words in preparation for writing captions!

In maths, we have just finished learning all of our numbers individually to 10. Now that we have this knowledge, we are working on how we can use these numbers to add and subtract. We cannot wait to explore this more in January.

During our foundation learning, we have been exploring different types of malleable materials - we have made salt dough, as well as playdough, and we have used different tools to manipulate them. Additionally, we have been exploring key events in history and in geography we have used the story 'Stickman', by our author of the term - Julia Donaldson, to navigate a map. We even made our own Stickmen!

Finally, we have ended the term with our Christmas performance. Thank you all so much for coming to watch us. From our team in Year R, we wish you a very happy and safe Christmas.

Year 1

In Year 1, we have been working really hard in all of our subjects. We have really enjoyed our writing unit during which an elf came to visit us from the North Pole and left us lots of Christmas decorations. He sent us a letter and told us that he wanted us to decorate the classroom for Christmas. We started completing his mission straight away and then we wrote a letter back to him explaining what we did. We used all of our amazing adjectives and verbs to explain how we decorated the classroom! We really hope he visits us again soon!

As well as the elf visit, we also had a visit from a very special bear – Paddington! In our geography lessons, we have been learning all about our local area and maps and we have used this knowledge to help Paddington get around Millbrook.

Finally, in maths we have been continuing to develop our number knowledge and have recently been learning all about different shapes.

Year 2

It's been an eventful time in Year 2, and we're thrilled to share some highlights of your children's recent learning experiences.

This half term, our little explorers have been immersed in the captivating world of rainforests as part of their geography learning. From understanding the layers of the rainforest to discovering the incredible diversity of flora and fauna, your children have become budding rainforest experts. They've even delved into specific animal habitats, exploring how creatures adapt to the unique conditions of their surroundings.

In writing, our Year 2 students have let their imaginations run wild with a delightful writing project. Each child has crafted a diary entry as a cheeky elf for a day. It's been heartwarming to witness their creativity unfold as they bring these mischievous characters to life. Be prepared for lots of laughter and entertaining stories when your child shares their diary with you!

In maths, our young mathematicians have been sharpening their skills by adding across the next ten. Using interactive activities, games, and real-world problem-solving, they've been mastering this concept with enthusiasm. It's incredible to see their confidence grow as they tackle mathematical challenges with curiosity and a can-do attitude.

In science, we've taken a closer look at how animals adapt to their habitats, particularly those in the rainforest. Through research projects and hands-on activities, the children have explored the remarkable ways in which creatures have evolved to thrive in their environments. Their presentations and displays showcase not only newfound knowledge but also a deep appreciation for the animal kingdom.

Year 3

This term, during our writing lessons, we have been looking at the text, *Guess who's coming for dinner?* This has inspired us to write our own invitation to persuade guests to come to our luxurious mansion. We also used this as inspiration for our next write which was a recount from two different characters' perspectives. Lastly, we are finishing up the term by writing a magical snowy setting description using *The Snowman* as our inspiration.

In maths, we have been learning the grid method to help us multiply larger numbers together. This has built on our learning of our multiplication tables, and a conceptual understanding of multiplication. We have been applying our understanding of multiplication in deep and advancing tasks where we made links between repeated addition, multiplication and division. The children have also challenged themselves to learn their times tables and recall them as rapidly as possible with a particular focus on the 3, 4 and 8 times tables.

Year 4

This half term year 4 have been super busy!

In writing, we have been looking at how to show emotions, rather than tell our readers how a character feels, through retelling a chapter of 'My Brother Is A Superhero.' We have used powerful verbs and adverbs to describe actions and we even got to pretend to be a superhero saving a bus that was out of control.

Maths has seen us focusing on multiplication and division. We have discussed the commutativity of the times tables and explored how different questions can have different interpretations.

In history, we have been learning all about what the Romans did for us, how Boudicca was a powerful woman and leader during this time and what made Britain such a popular place to invade.

Electricity has been our focus in science, we have made working circuits, explored insulators and conductors and discussed how to keep ourselves and others safe from the dangers of electricity.

Year 5

In Year 5 this half term we have written persuasive speeches about being stewards of our world and protecting the oceans. The children were very passionate about encouraging people to care for our planet! We have also designed a new version of Santa's sleigh with some modern luxuries and they have written an explanation text to accompany this.

In maths, we have worked on multiplication, and then area and perimeter of shapes. Many children now have a secure understanding of their times tables and strategies for multiplication, which has helped them to be successful. This will also benefit them in our upcoming division and fractions unit.

In history, we have been looking at the image of Elizabeth I and her role in defeating the Spanish Armada, and in Science, the children have been completely engaged in trying to understand the solar system, coming up with some really deep questions about the universe. Next term, we will be studying the Victorians in history and in science, plant reproduction and animal life cycles. During R.E., our focus has been on the deeper meaning of advent and the role of John the Baptist. They have had a fantastic half-term and we wish you a restful and peaceful Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Year 6

This half term, the children have been working on applying their understanding of the four operations in relation to their fractions unit. The pupils were encouraged to be independent learners through using different strategies to be efficient mathematicians.

In English, we have used our history knowledge of WW2 to create a newspaper article on a significant event which included: Dunkirk, Battle of Britain and Operation Dynamo. Our year group book which we have delved deep into has been "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio. The children have explored important themes such as friendship, acceptance and celebrating differences. We can't wait to see what spring term has in store for us in growing our knowledge.



Christmas Fair

Wow! What a fantastic time we had for our Christmas Fair. We hope everyone enjoyed the festive treats on offer, from the children's crafts to yummy cakes, to fun games and even glitter tattoos! We had an amazing raffle with so many fantastic prizes kindly donated by local businesses, with the grand prize being four VIP tickets to see 'Take That' in London! Congratulations to those of you who were lucky enough to win a prize. A special thank you to our parent volunteers who worked so hard rallying around finding donations for the raffle, selling tickets outside in the playground, organising games and spending their own time helping the school hold such a wonderful event. The Christmas fair really would not have been possible without them! I am very pleased to announce the grand total raised was **£1310.87!** This is an incredible amount of money which will be used to fund a whole school event later in the school year, chosen by the school council, as well as a donation to a local charity. Thank you again to everyone who came and helped make this such a successful event.



Christmas nativity Performances

We were delighted to welcome so many of our parents into school to watch the children in their Christmas performances. I think you will all agree each and every pupil shone in their own special way. A big thank you to all the staff that spent weeks organising and helping the children rehearse to make it a spectacular show for us all to enjoy!

Christmas Pantomime

Lots of Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 children had a truly magical time visiting The Mayflower theatre to watch this year's pantomime, 'Snow White and the seven Dwarves'. All the children were really well behaved and absolutely loved the show. It is such a special trip and a really lovely way to end the term. Not to be left out, Year R, 1 and 2 had a visit from The Littlest Christmas Elf who put on a wonderfully enjoyable performance for the children, in the run up to Christmas.

Christmas Dinner

A huge thank you to Sarah and her team of wonderful cooks for creating lovely fresh food every day for our children and staff! Christmas dinner was delicious this year, as always! All the staff and children had a wonderful time eating their delicious Christmas lunch, on our final day of term.

Christmas Jumper Day

All of the children and staff looked wonderful in their festive jumpers on Christmas Jumper day on 15th December. Thank you to all the families who sent in a donation for the local food bank, your continued support is very much appreciated.



School start time and gate closing time reminder

As you are aware, the school start time is 8.30am. For clarity, this means that children are registered at 8.30am with lessons beginning promptly afterwards. It is imperative that children are in class, ready to learn by 8.30am.

With this in mind, all of the external school gates will be locked at 8.35am. Any families that are late will have to enter the school via the main office.

A Polite Reminder – P.E kits

Whilst the majority of parents make sure that their children have bought in their P.E. kits, there have still been a number of children that have not bought them into school. During P.E. and after school clubs it is very important (for reasons of hygiene and safety) that children have a change of clothing. We wouldn't want any of our children to miss out on the fun.

The P.E. days for each year group are as follows:

Monday: Year 1

Tuesday: Year 5

Wednesday: Year 6

Thursday: Year 3 & 4

Friday: Years R and 2

Pupils are required to bring plimsoles or trainers and a pair of navy blue or black shorts or black tracksuit bottoms to school in a drawstring bag, clearly marked with their name on. With regards to P.E. t-shirts, children are encouraged to wear their house colours:

St Joseph – Yellow
St John – Green

Our Lady – Blue
Sacred Heart - Red

As with all school uniform, it is essential children have the correct clothing to ensure it is fit for purpose as well as smart. Thank you for your continued support.

Good Luck and Welcome.

As some of you may already know, Mrs Haynes will be starting her maternity leave at the end of this term. We would like to say a huge thank you and wish her all the very best of luck, we can't wait to meet the new addition to Holy Family. We are wishing a very warm welcome to Mrs Gale who will be teaching in 1H whilst Mrs Haynes is away.

After School Clubs

Clubs will be running throughout the academic year on a termly basis. The spring term after school clubs will begin Monday 8th January 2023. We will allocate every child a space within one or more chosen clubs following submission of the form. We will try our best to provide an opportunity for all children to take part in a club, with a minimum of one child's choice in order to be fair. We will also organise a waiting list for oversubscribed clubs.

Please sign your children up if they wish to attend as we have limited spaces. We have sent out the sign-up forms and the Google Form link. Please come into the school office if you require assistance with booking your child into clubs and we will be more than happy to help.

Dates for your Diary

- **Friday, 15th December - Break up for Christmas holidays**
- **Tuesday, 2nd January – Back to school**
- **Thursday, 4th January – Coffee morning**
- **Monday, 8th January – Ephiany Mass**
- **Monday, 15th January – Deadline for Year R applications**
- **Thursday, 25th January – Year 4 Mass (year 4 parents welcome)**
- **Wednesday 31st January - Teddy Bear Hospital Workshop - Year R**
- **Thursday, 8th February – Year 3 Mass (year 3 parents welcome)**
- **Monday 12th February - Friday 16th February - Half term**




- **Monday 8th - Friday 12th July - Skern Lodge Residential - Year 6.**

And finally...

I am so proud of every member of our school community. There has been so much hard work and joy this term. Our children have been absolutely wonderful to work with. It has been a privilege to lead our hardworking, dedicated school family.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas holiday and a wonderful New Year!



Gerida Montague
Executive Headteacher



Sarah Hendricks
Head of School