



Message from the Head

Dear Parents/ Carers,

A beautiful winter week for weather as children have been enjoying the untouched frost on the school field. Please do remind your child to bring their coat every day, along with **named** hats, scarves and gloves. Several parents have also mentioned that the roads surrounding school are becoming hazaredess. Please do be careful when travelling. If you are going to be late due to road conditions this is no problem, we would rather all children arrive safely. When children do arrive into school late, they must be signed into the red book by the school office. This is an essential record for safeguarding.

This week we had a visit from Dr Tiffen, from New Hall School. He brought with him advent calendars for each class to countdown to Christmas. It was also an excellent opportunity to discuss the extra provision we receive through the partnership and how this is working. We are very grateful for their ongoing support with PE, Swimming and Spanish. After Christmas, it will be Kingfisher Class who will swim each week on Friday morning. Please ensure your child has all they need for this and all items are clearly labelled. More information will be shared by Mrs Southgate.

Links with the local community are very important to us as a school, and we have been fortunate enough to have had support from Oaksbrook Retreat in the village. This has enabled us to continue developing provision specifically focussed on wellbeing with a group of children in Key Stage 2. Children have been engaged with hands-on activities including grooming and handling the horses, as well as den and bridge building. It's been fantastic to see the confidence of the group flourish, and has also been great for staff wellbeing too. Thank you to Mrs Lewis and Jane at Oaksbrook for facilitating these sessions.

Very best wishes,
Mrs Charlotte Brown

Parent Plate Plea

As many of you are already aware, last year we switched from the plastic trays at lunchtime to crockery. This has had a brilliant impact and children shared their views of how this made lunch times feel much calmer. Comments included how it has slowed children down to eat their food, and one child thought it was so fancy that it felt like eating in a restaurant! However, as our pupil numbers have grown and we have had a few breakages (mainly by staff transporting them across to the hall each day), we are now short on both plates and bowls.

If you have any old plates or bowls at home, please remember us as we are able to give them a loving home. There are sometimes plates in charity shops, and our staff are very good at finding most of these, but we may have missed some on our travels.

Word of the week

sashay- verb | sa-shay

To sashay is to proudly walk in a slow, confident way that is meant to attract attention. *Sashay* can also mean simply "to walk, glide, or go" or "to proceed or move in a diagonal or sideways manner." In contexts involving dance, *sashay* means "to make a chasse," which is a dance step in which a slide on one foot is followed closely by a slide on the other foot.

Governors

The second LGB meeting of the year took place on 28th November. At this meeting we discussed and agreed a new schedule for conducting monitoring visits within school. Monitoring visits are a vital tool for understanding the school, how it works, hearing pupil voice and ensuring governors are a seen and accessible part of the school community and we are looking forward to our first "Governor Day" next year.

As well as this, we ratified a number of new and revised policies - these will all be accessible on the schools website. We received finance and health and safety reports from the governors responsible for monitoring those areas. We also assessed the results of a skills audit and identified areas of strength, as well as areas for growth, within the governing body. We are very pleased welcome Janice Tonge as a new community governor, and look forward to her joining us at our next meeting in March.

As we move into December, we are looking forward to seeing the KS1 nativity and all the other festive fun planned for the children over the next few weeks and would like to wish all the children, families and staff a very Happy Christmas and New Year.





Christmas Library Plans

We are very blessed that we have 2 super parents who volunteer each week as librarians. This has allowed us to really maximise our usage of the library space and ensure all children are able to enjoy a range of books.

As we enter into the Christmas spirit, we have been thinking about how we can continue to share our school love of books. In Iceland, Jolabokafloð, 'book flood', is celebrated on Christmas Eve and revolves around giving and receiving new books, often accompanied by delicious treats like hot chocolate. We are going to create our own festive book flood where children select a library book for a friend, based on their interests. These will be wrapped by the children and presented for an afternoon of cosy reading in classes, accompanied by hot chocolate.

This is scheduled for our penultimate day of term, Tuesday 19th December. There is nothing required from parents, but the Christmas Reading Challenge launched by Miss Snodgrass will be based on this.

Please ensure all current library books are returned asap as your child will be able to enjoy their specially selected book over the Christmas holiday.

"I do believe something magical can happen when you read a book."
J.K. Rowling



CELEBRATE
Jolabokafloð



School Panta

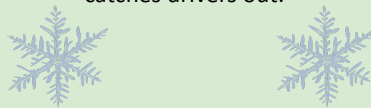
We are very fortunate that once again, the PTFA are funding a travelling pantomime again this year. This is a fantastic opportunity for children to experience live acting and singing performances.

To make this feel really special, we are going to be using the village hall as the venue rather than the school hall like last year. The PTFA are kindly decorating the space for us to give it the 'wow factor'.

The performance is in the afternoon, 2-3 and so we will be a little late arriving back to school for pick-up. Please be patient with us as we walk all children back to school to collect their belongings. This is the safest way of ensuring all of the children are where they need to be. We aim to be ready for pick-up at 3:30pm

Ice

Please be very mindful as the weather has turned that the smaller roads around Messing are incredibly icy. In particular, the junction from Tiptree by the Maypole often has black ice that catches drivers out.



Christmas Lunch

Earlier this week the menus were sent out for Christmas Dinner on Wednesday 13th December.

Please do complete the form and return it to the school office. This is essential so that we can ensure we have enough for all children. Mrs Owen's does a fantastic job in the kitchen and it is important that we are able to support her with the preparations.

Autumn Term Diary Dates

Tues 5th Dec- Nativity dress rehearsal

Weds 6th (2pm)/ Thurs 7th (6pm) Dec- Nativity performance (parents invited)

Fri 8th Dec- Whole school visiting pantomime & Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day

Tues 12th Dec- Whole school Christingle service 9.45am at All Saints Church (parents invited)

Weds 13th Dec- Christmas lunch

Thurs 14th Dec- PTFA Christmas gift shop

Fri 15th Dec- Christmas Fair (all invited)

Mon 18th Dec- Community Carols (for Grandparents, residents of Tottham Lodge Care Home and senior residents in the village)

Tues 19th Dec- Festive book flood afternoon

Weds 20th Dec- Last day of term

Thurs 4th Jan- Term starts