



St Francis Newsletter

'Recognising Christ in Everyone'

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December 2017

Our value this term is



Well, it's happening, Christmas is definitely coming again this year! As you can imagine, the school is a hive of excitement and activity with tinsel, glitter and music in abundance. The next few weeks will go by in a flash of celebrations with the pantomime, Nativity, Christmas Fair and Christingle to name but a few! The many ways in which Christmas is celebrated by different communities will be highlighted in our Nativity this year. These can seem confusing and strange to us – we can't imagine eating Christmas dinner in the heat and sunshine or waiting until January 6th to open presents! But one thing remains constant in all these traditions, we are all celebrating the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amidst all the hustle and bustle of preparations the quiet stillness of the stable scene with Jesus at the centre should remind us all of the true meaning of Christmas. Jesus is a gift to us all.

During this Advent season it is important that we prepare ourselves not just for the festivities but for the coming of Jesus. As each Advent calendar door is opened let us open our hearts to God's presence so that on Christmas morning we can truly say "Welcome!".

Mrs Johnson



FOSF CHRISTMAS FAIR 11 A.M. TO 1.30 P.M. SUNDAY 3rd DECEMBER

The Fair Committee and all their helpers have been working very hard over the last few days to bring together a fantastic festive day for everyone. We look forward to seeing you all at the fair. Please remember to bring along your raffle tickets stubs, money and any unused tickets as there will be many people looking to buy these at the fair, as well as some lovely donations for the cake stall.



REVERSE ADVENT CALENDER FOODBANK COLLECTION For our advent charity we are collecting for those less fortunate within our community. We will be asking each child to make a contribution to the foodbank collection on a nominated day during Advent, between 4th and 15th December. Each class will have their own collection and we will deliver these to the local Trussell Trust Foodbank at the end of term.

Class teachers will let children know what day they should bring in their item. Typical items appreciated are non-perishable goods such as cereal, soup, pasta, rice, pasta sauce, beans, tinned meat, tinned vegetables, tea/coffee, tinned fruit and biscuits. Alongside these, foodbanks also try to provide essential non-food items such as toiletries (deodorant, toilet paper, shower gel, shaving gel, shampoo, soap, toothbrushes, tooth paste, hand wipes) and household goods (laundry liquid detergent, laundry powder, washing up liquid).



You have all given very generously to our charitable causes over the last few weeks. Our Poppy Appeal collection boxes were full to the brim. We were delighted to raise £361.16 for Children in Need and last week FoSF collected £222.40 from the Bags2School collection. It's amazing to see how much can be raised from things that we don't want any more! At this busy and costly time of year, we also appreciate your continued support for our Foodbank Collection through the Reverse Advent Calendar to ensure that everyone in our local community can enjoy a plentiful table this Christmas.

SPECIAL VISITORS We have enjoyed some special visits over the last couple of weeks. Fiona Barker, a local author, gave some inspiring talks to a number of classes about her book 'Amelie and the Great Outdoors'. Year 3 and 5 got an insight into film-making in some workshops with MN Academy and made a short video about the school, which we are looking forward to seeing. We were also very pleased to invite in our Reception class parents to share in some festive forest fun with their children.



WHOLE SCHOOL PANTO TRIP We are excited about our forthcoming trip to the pantomime at South Hill Park on Wednesday 6th December. If you have not already done so, please pay for your child's ticket and coach transport to the theatre on ParentMail. It is essential we know what arrangements you are making for collecting your child/ren from the theatre. The initial Parentmail form for this has now expired, so a new form will be sent out to anyone who has not yet replied – please can you reply by Tuesday morning latest so that lists can collated and provided in good time for staff. If you have any problems online with Parentmail, please speak to school office who will be happy to help.

KS2 CHOIR TRIP TO WINDSOR GREAT PARK As we did last year, we are hoping to arrange a trip to Windsor Great Park for our KS2 choir to sing to customers in the pavilion café and then enjoy a festive treat and trail around the Savill Gardens. This will be offered to pupils as a reward for their commitment to the choir and is planned for Thursday 7th December in the morning. If you are free, you will be most welcome to come along and listen to the choir singing. Our School Governors are kindly funding the cost of the treat and trail and we are just waiting for confirmation of coach transport. A notice will be sent out to KS2 choir parents with details and transport costs on Monday.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH MENU Please can we remind you to choose menu options for your child/ren for our Christmas lunch, which will be on Tuesday 12th December. If your child does not normally have school lunches, they are still to choose this as a one-off order and ParentMail will accept a minimum payment of £2.50 for this via card or paypal, or £5.00 via PayCash or PayPoint. Your child can bring a packed lunch from home if they prefer and still join in with everyone else from their class.



RECEPTION/KS1 NATIVITY TICKETS Thank you for providing your preferences for attending the Nativity performances on Monday 11th and Wednesday 13th December. We will try as much as possible to provide what you have asked for. Tickets will be sent home this coming week. We will send emails to those of you who have asked to confirm if we have been able to fulfil extra tickets.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS The schedule for next term's after school clubs will be published this coming week. Clubs will start week commencing 8th January and will run for 10 weeks. One of the new clubs on offer will be a film-making club with MN Academy, who came in last week to run some video workshops. This club will be open to KS2 and your child should have brought home a leaflet about this last Friday. MN Academy will administer the club, so if your child would like to join this, please register their interest with MN Academy directly, as detailed on the leaflet, so that they can assess if there will be enough children to run the club.



SAFEGUARDING

THE 12 WAYS THAT CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS CAN KEEP CHILDREN AND DATA SAFE WHEN BUYING SMART TOYS AND DEVICES (ICO)

Have you started your Christmas shopping yet? Planning to spend a couple of hours in a Christmas Market or even on Amazon? This Christmas there will be more tech toys than ever before, and many of them will use bluetooth or wifi to link to apps and the wider internet. Some of these toys will have cameras and microphones recording the environment and the child's play. The Information Commissioner recently published an article looking at the risks of using smart toys and it is well-worth reading.

<https://iconewsblog.org.uk/2017/11/23/the-12-ways-that-christmas-shoppers-can-keep-children-and-data-safe-when-buying-smart-toys-and-devices/>

SAFETY ALERT: SEE HOW EASY IT IS FOR ALMOST ANYONE TO HACK YOUR CHILD'S CONNECTED TOYS (WHICH?)

Which? Magazine have also surveyed many connected toys and found that, without appropriate safety features, they can also pose a big risk to your child's safety. The Which video below shows just how easy it is for anyone to take over the voice control of a popular connected toy, and speak directly to children. Which? found that it is easy enough for almost anyone to do, not only skilled hackers.



<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2017/11/safety-alert-see-how-easy-it-is-for-almost-anyone-to-hack-your-childs-connected-toys/>

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL It is essential we know where each child is when the morning registers are taken. If your child is unwell, please phone or email the school office before 9.30 a.m. to give reasons and do this EACH DAY to keep us informed of any absence from school. We must follow strict Government regulations regarding a pupil's absence from school. For any reason other than illness, an absence request form should be fully completed and handed to the school office. Authorised absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances so please speak to Mrs Johnson if you feel you have such a situation. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>



DIARY DATES

Please see below key activities next week 4th – 8th December

MONDAY *Budgens Colouring Competition - last collection before 9 a.m. please*
09:00 Collection Worship - Launch of Reverse Advent Calendar

TUESDAY

08:20 Year 6 Maths Booster with Mrs Johnson
PM Rock&Pop Guitar/Drums with Travis DuPlooy
PM Yr 3 Music - Maestros Brass with Mark Lowe (last one this term)
Children may take home their instrument, if hired, over the Christmas holiday.
The first session next term will be Tuesday 9th January.

WEDNESDAY

AM Maestros Piano Lessons with Philip Dimitrovski
09:30 Reception/KS1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal to Pre-School
11:00-12:15 Reconciliation Year 4 and Year 5
12:15-12:45 Yr3/4 Maths Booster with St Mary's
13:15-16:15 **Whole School Trip to South Hill Park Pantomime**
Please collect from South Hill Park at 16:15 as arranged

THURSDAY

AM Maestros Violin Lessons with Jan Jackman
AM KS2 School Choir performance at The Savill Garden
(to be confirmed – please look out for separate ParentMail)
09:00 School Council
09:00 Collective Worship - Hymns (CDu/CB)
12:15-13:15 School Choir KS1/KS2
PM KS2 Inter House Rugby Competition
14:00 Reconciliation Year 5
15:30 Year 6 Netball Club Match at the Marist – vs Holy Trinity

FRIDAY

AM Pre-School Nativity
13:30 Reception/KS1 Nativity Performance to whole school
(Parents with babies/young siblings invited to watch)

Looking ahead to the last week of term

Sun 10/12 Closing date for St Francis Church First Holy Communion applications
Mon 11/12 Reception/KS1 Nativity Performance 13:30
Tues 12/12 Christmas Lunch
 Yr 5/6 Charters Basketball Tournament 15:30
Weds 13/12 Reconciliation Year 6
 Reception/KS1 Nativity Performance 13:30
Thurs 14/12 Christingle 14:00 at St Francis Church – all welcome
Please provide your child with an orange and sweets/dried fruits to decorate. The school will provide a candle and red tape. Your class teacher will let you know if these are to be made in school or at home.
Fri 15/12 Collective Worship – Advent Foodbank Collection
Term Ends 13:30 (no Get Active)



Magpies are running a 3 day holiday activity camp at Holy Trinity School Sunningdale on 20th to 22nd December. Please see the attached leaflet for details or go to their website to book.
<http://www.magpiesinthecommunity.org/>