



St John's Primary School

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Headteacher: Miss Nicky Hughes

21st December 2018

Dear Parents,

As we come to the end of a long and busy term, I want to thank the staff for all of their hard work planning exciting learning opportunities and providing nurture and support for the children at St John's. Staff have coped really well with the disruption of moving classrooms and having builders on site too. Hopefully they will all enjoy a well deserved rest this Christmas!

Thank you also to all of you who volunteer to help us with our trips, events, clubs and sporting fixtures. We would not be able to provide these experiences for the children without your help, and really do appreciate it.

Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 all enjoyed a themed topic day last Friday. Years 3 and 4 were Ancient Greeks for the day, learning to write in Greek, taste Greek food and take part in some Olympic sports! Years 5 and 6 enjoyed a Victorians Day led by 'History off the Page'. They spent the morning as Victorian school children and in the afternoon, re-created the Music Hall which included a 'flea circus' and acting out 'The 12 days of Christmas' – it was very entertaining! All of the children learnt so much about those periods of history, and looked fantastic in their costumes. Thank you to all parents for supporting by finding the children a costume. Do look at the photographs of both days on the blog.

Year 4 have been having weekly drumming lessons this year with an external Music teacher. The school were treated to a performance from the whole class last week, when they showed how much they had learnt. It was really impressive! We look forward to another performance later in the year.

All of Key Stage 1 visited the Cornerstone Theatre in Didcot to see 'The Pied Piper' last week. They really enjoyed the performance and were a credit to their teachers. Many thanks to everyone who came along to help on the day and to the PTFA for subsidising the trip.

Classes learnt about different winter festivals last week also covering Hannukah, Diwali and Thanksgiving, as well as Christmas. They learnt more about how people from different religions celebrate and listened to stories related to those festivals.

Year 6 have coped really well these last two weeks without Ms Beckett. Mrs Taylor and Mrs Shaw who have been teaching them, have been singing their praises. They kept them working hard all the way to the end of the term! Year 6 also made and sold Christmas cakes, the proceeds of which will be donated to the Food Bank this year.



Our Christmas lunch went really well – well done to the kitchen staff who cooked and served the lovely dinners all within just over an hour and thank you to all of the staff for helping out! It was a lot of fun and the children looked great in all of the various Christmas jumpers and headbands.

We are looking forward to our Christmas Service later on today at Wallingford Baptist Church. Many thanks to Pastor Hudson for hosting us this year. Children will be singing, sharing readings as well as some dramas they have rehearsed with the drama teacher who is working with us this year. It is always a really lovely way to end the year and we are pleased to be able to share it with many of you.

Sadly today we say goodbye to two valued members of staff. Cat Stockley, who has been a teaching assistant in Year 1 and also lunchtime supervisor, leaves us to take up a position outside of school. We will all miss her, as will the children. Cat is always so cheerful - and has been such a flexible and supportive member of the team. When I asked the children about Cat they said she was 'funny and kind'! We wish her well in her new job.

We are also saying goodbye to Katie Hannaford who has been with us for a year and a half, teaching Year 4. The children have really benefited from Katie's creativity and care. She has planned lots of exciting learning opportunities, shown real dedication to the children in her class, and will be greatly missed. Katie has also been a super colleague, contributing to the wider life of the school leading initiatives and clubs. We have all really enjoyed working with her. We are sad to say goodbye, but wish Katie well for the future.

We have recruited a new teacher to start mid January in Year 4 and are also in the process of finalising the replacement for Cat Stockley.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, we are trying now to post photographs of events on our blog, which can be found by clicking on the tab on our website. Do have a look to see more of what has been going on. It is still in its early stages but we hope to keep developing it further.

Teachers have been busy planning next term's topics, including trips and visitors and we will send the new topic plans out in the first week of term. Monday 7th January is an INSET day for us and we look forward to welcoming everyone back for the new term on Tuesday 8th January.

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas break!

Kind regards,

Nicky Hughes