



Monday 2nd December 2019

Dear Parents

Christmas is fast approaching and we are all looking forward to a busy and enjoyable run-up to the festive season. We would especially like to thank all parents and children for the hard work and support given to the school throughout the Autumn Term – it is much appreciated.

Christmas Performances for Parents

These are summarised as follows:

Date	Time	Year Group(s)
Tuesday 10 th December 2019	9.15am	Nursery and Reception
Wednesday 11 th December 2019	9.15am	Nursery and Reception
Friday 13 th December 2019	9.15am	Year 3
Monday 16 th December 2019	9.15am AND 2pm	Year 1 and Year 2

In order that we comply with the fire regulations we can only allocate a specific number of seats. In order to avoid disappointment parents are asked to please request seats as soon as possible after letters have been sent home from your child's class teacher.

Whilst there is no charge for the tickets we will be having a retiring collection at the end of each performance in support of our designated charity for this season which is **St. Giles Hospice** – a charity close to all of our hearts.

Additional Diary Dates

Wednesday 4 th December 2019	Flu Vaccinations (Reception-Y6)
Friday 6 th December 2019	PFA Christmas Fair 3.30-6pm
Monday 9 th December 2019	Christingle Assembly
Thursday 12 th December 2019	School closed for polling for General Election
Thursday 12 th December 2019	JTMAT Christmas Concert
Friday 13 th December 2019	Pyjama Day
Wednesday 18 th December 2019	Christmas Dinner
Thursday 19 th December 2020	Chip Shop Lunch
Thursday 19 th December 2019	Visit to Lichfield Garrick for Pantomime
Friday 20 th December 2019	Last Day of Term
Monday 6 th January 2020	School closed to pupils – Inset Day No. 2
Tuesday 7 th January 2020	First day of Spring Term 2020

Photography/Video of Performances

We try to be as accommodating and as fair as we possibly can. As teachers and parents we realise that parents do like to take photographs and videos of their child during performances as a personal memento. However, this can only be allowed if parents follow the strict guidelines which have been agreed by our school community i.e.

- Photographs must not appear on the internet or social websites
- Photographs/videos are used as a personal memento only and cannot be reproduced or shared elsewhere publicly.
- Parents wishing to take videos/photographs are asked to stand in a position which does not detract from the children's performances, and does not restrict the view of other audience members.

Continued overleaf...



Christmas Post Box

The Christmas post box is up and running in the main school entrance area next to the nativity crib scene. **Please remind the children to write names and year groups on the envelopes**, so that the children delivering the post can get them to the correct classrooms and ensure that we do not have any undelivered mail.

PFA Christmas Fair – Friday 6th December 2019 – 3.30 – 6pm

We hope as many of you as possible will come and support our Christmas Fair. On this day the children are invited to come to school wearing a Christmas jumper. In return for this the children in EYFS and KS1 are asked to bring an item of chocolate and the children in KS2 are asked to bring a bottle. Thank you.

Christingle Assembly

Monday 9th December 2019 will be our annual Christingle Assembly day. If you would like to send your child with a Christingle orange (**instructions attached**), please ensure that it arrives in school on the Monday morning. **Please note that due to allergies, instead of using nuts to decorate the cocktail sticks, may we please ask that parents use alternatives such as sweets and dried fruit.**

Christmas Dinner Day – Wednesday 18th December 2019

This year Christmas dinner will be on **Wednesday 18th December 2019**. Christmas dinner details will be sent out on a separate letter.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any other concerns or queries.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Adams
Head Teacher



St. Thomas was made the patron saint of old people – and of children too. In days gone by, old and young were allowed to go round collecting money on 21st December, which is St. Thomas' Day, to buy food for their Christmas dinners. The custom was called a-Thomasing, or else a-mumping or a-gooding!

The children would give a sprig of holly or mistletoe to anyone who put money in their collecting box. St. Thomas' Day was often a school holiday, but if they did have to go to school, children made it a day for tricks against the teacher. Sometimes they would lock him out of school and get up to all kinds of fun and games inside on their own.

Over Two hundred years ago, in 1785, Parson James Woodforde wrote in his diary: "This being St. Thomas' Day, had a great many poor people of the Parish to visit me, I gave to each of them that came, sixpence"

Over 100 years ago, in 1886, the people of Brighton, on the south coast of England, collected money for the old people of the town and held a special ceremony in the police court to distribute it.

A report said "The oldest of them all, the lady of 96, came into the court despite the sharpness of the wind and the frozen roads".

Christmas is still the time to remember and help the very old and the very young. Here are some suggestions:

*Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat,
Please to put a penny in the old man's hat,
If you haven't got a penny a ha'penny will do,
If you haven't got a farthing – God bless you!*

- ❖ Visit anyone elderly or housebound who may need shopping done for them before Christmas.
- ❖ Invite someone who has no family near to share your family Christmas meal.
- ❖ Give to any central collection of tinned foods set up by local social services or charities.
- ❖ Contribute toys, books or money at a special church service.



THE CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

One way to help families with special needs is to take part in a Christingle Service. The ceremony is very old. No-one knows just how far back it goes. There are records of an ancient Welsh 'calenig' service, and the Moravian

Church has held Christingle services for over two hundred years, though they do not believe that the custom began with them. About fifteen years ago, John Penson, of the Church of England's Children's Society in Britain, revived the custom and in 1982 over a thousand services were held in many countries. More than \$100,000 was collected to help handicapped children, those without homes, and families in need. Christingle means Christ-Light, and the service is a celebration of the coming of Christ, the Light, into the world. At the service, gifts of money, collected beforehand are presented and, in turn, Christingles are received. When all the Christingles have been given out, carols are sung by the candlelight.

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MAKING A CHRISTINGLE

You will need:

- ❖ An orange
- ❖ A candle
- ❖ A red band
- ❖ Four cocktail sticks
- ❖ Nuts and fruit or sweets
- ❖ The orange represents the World.
- ❖ The Red Ribbon or band around it represents the blood of Jesus.
- ❖ Dolly mixtures or dried fruits skewered on cocktail sticks pushed into the orange, representing the fruits of the earth and the four seasons.
- ❖ A lit candle pushed into the centre of the orange, representing Jesus Christ as the light of the world.

MAKING A CHRISTINGLE

1. Carefully make a hole for the candle in the top of the orange.
2. Fasten a band of red around the middle of the orange (flame proof crepe paper may be used or red adhesive tape which is sold in cycle shops or ribbon).
3. Place a square of aluminium foil, about 20cm square, round the bottom of the candle. This acts as a shield and catches the grease and candle wax.
4. Put the candle firmly into the hole making sure it is kept upright.
5. Add four cocktail sticks (goose quills were used in old times) on which you have put fruits, such as raisins, glace cherries and nuts (monkey nuts in their shells are easy to pierce) or sweets such as dolly mixtures.

Why not colour this Christingle in after you've made yours

