



Newsletter

Advent

Advent will be here this weekend and Bishop Draine will be here over the weekend to celebrate mass in our parish. I know that many parents will be at the Christmas Eve or Christmas morning mass to celebrate Christmas, but I would urge you to begin your Advent preparation by going to mass at the start of Advent as a family. I can think of no better preparation for this important time in the year. The children who go to the liturgy on the Sunday morning will be given an Advent calendar to help them count down the days to Christmas. Each of the classes will have their 'travelling crib' to take home for one child in the class each night.

Building Work

I know many of you will have seen the ongoing building work in school at the moment. We are having the entrance and the main office altered and refurbished. I apologise for the inconvenience this may have caused, but it will be worth it in the end. The builders are due to finish on December 18th so hopefully when everyone returns after Christmas we will be looking a lot smarter.

Chickens!

Some parents have noticed the building work on the school field at the moment. The School council have been working with Mr Barber to convince us to get our own chicken run! After Christmas we will be joined by our collection of chickens. Each class will have their own chicken to look after and if they do 'eggcellent' work they will bring an egg or two home. Hopefully, the chickens will be joining us in January or February. We must be mad!

New Staff

Mrs Ayre joins us in the office as an Office Administrator. She is very experienced and I am sure she will keep us right and make sure we keep our new office tidy.

We also welcome Mrs Ibbotson and Miss Payne who will be working in our after school club.

Epraise and Marvellous Me

Some parents have said that they can't log in to these applications. We will look into this and it might be a case of issuing new passwords and logins. If you are having difficulty please let your child's teacher know. We are reviewing the prizes and rewards on our Epraise system. The school council are going to look into this – that should be interesting after their chicken suggestion!

Sports

A huge well done to all of our sports teams, who seem to be going from strength to strength. All of the teams: football, rugby and athletics have performed extremely well in their local district competitions and are now representing their districts in the region finals. Amazing! I know we are very lucky to have Mrs Holtby, who works very hard to make sure our children enjoy these competitions and encourages them to play in the right spirit.



Parents Evening

Thank you to the many parents who came to the recent Parents Evening in school. It says so much about you that you want to come to find out how your children are doing and to show an interest in them. I know the staff enjoyed meeting you and working with you.

Nativity Plays

Please see the attached letter giving you the dates for the nativity plays. I will have to apologise in advance as it is not always possible to get the best view during the performances as we do not have a stage in school. The reason for this is quite simple: we don't have any storage space whatsoever. Staff would like to find a way to have a portable stage, which we could store somewhere. We will look into this and see if we can find something for future years.

Can I remind you that you may photograph your child during the play, but please do not place these on Facebook etc as sometimes the photo includes other children, whose parents do not wish to be on such sites. **If this is ignored by parents I will simply insist that in the future no photographs are taken at all.**

New Governors

I am delighted to inform you that we have two new Parent Governors: Mrs Bullwinkel and Mr Conlin. I am sure both will bring much to the school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for giving of their time to attend meetings and to visit the school to help the governing body in its important work.

Remembrance Service

The recent Remembrance Service held at Thornaby cenotaph was supported by a huge number of pupils and parents. Thank you so much for giving the example to your children to show respect to those who gave so much in such dreadful weather. Thank you.

Story Teller

We have our Christmas story teller in on Tuesday to share his talents and entertain the children.

Finances

I am sure many of you will have read in the news about the financial pressures that schools will be put under in the coming years. Basically, school budgets have remained the same so there is no cut directly, however the new increase in National Insurance contributions by the employer will hit budgets extremely hard. I know some schools are extremely concerned. As a school, we have always worked hard to always ask for as little as possible from parents, especially for school trips etc. We will try to do this, but inevitably it will not be possible to be as generous as we have been.

Fortunately, the school is in a strong financial position, mainly due to the work of our excellent governors. It will be a time for us to be prudent and to manage our finances cautiously, which I am sure we will do.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a peaceful and rewarding Advent with your families.

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