

Newsletter



Newsletter 7

December 6th 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,



What an exciting fortnight! The children have been as helpful and enthusiastic as ever. Everyone has been working hard getting the plays ready to share with you, alongside all of the other Christmas activities and events – details below.

It was a pleasure, as always, to take Year 6 to sing at Poynder's Meadow this week. We were made very welcome and it was lovely to be able to share some traditional and newer carols together. The children also enjoyed the opportunity to chat with their hosts afterwards! Children from KS2 represented the school at a Bowling event at Stevenage, whilst Year 2 attended a Super Hero Festival – both run by Stevenage Sporting Futures. All of them were beautifully behaved and a credit to the school and their families. I was delighted to hear that we are all on Father Christmas' good list, when he dropped by the school on Wednesday evening!

We have a busy fortnight ahead – please read on, to find out more!



Mrs Mansell

The one woman wonder, Mrs Mansell, has decided to retire at Christmas, after a legendary 27 years at Codicote School, despite my best efforts to bribe/blackmail/convince her to stay for a bit longer! During her time here, she has been one of the hardest working, sunniest people we have ever known. As well as being an amazing teaching assistant, she has been on numerous residential trips – looking after everyone with care and kindness - she has even been known to carry Mr Browne's bags for him!

Mrs Mansell has also been a key member of the PTFA – helping at every event; her organisational, tidying and cleaning skills have to be seen to be believed, and we all benefit from her energy and commitment. Life is always more fun when Mrs Mansell is there! We are going to celebrate the happy years we have shared with her on Thursday 30th January, when we will entertain her for the afternoon. We will be collecting for a gift to present her with; if you would like to contribute towards this, please send your donation to school in a labelled envelope.

We will all be sad to wave her off at the end of term, but plan to entice her back for as many events as possible, and do appreciate that she has certainly earned, what we hope will be a long, lovely and happy retirement.



PTFA News

Thank you very much to everyone who helped out, and who supported the Christmas Shopping Evening. We really appreciated all of the help – clearing up afterwards was the best ever! It was also lovely to see so many families, and former pupils too. All of the proceeds will be going towards paying for the pantomime coaches. Particular thanks too, to Charlie for organising the whole event, and to Colin and Keith – loyal supporters of the school, for all of their hard work.



Watches



Whilst you are planning Christmas presents, please give some thought to buying a cheap analogue watch for your child – there are several simple designs available. Whilst many people rely on their phones or smart watches, telling the time is an important life skill, and wearing a watch really does help the children to learn how to do it.



Christmas Disco

The Christmas Disco will be held on Thursday 19th December, from 5.30 to 7.00 p.m. Entry is £3, and payments can be made via the School Gateway in advance, or on the door. Refreshments will be available so children may wish to bring a small amount of money with them. No mobile phones can be used on site by the children; if any ‘phonecalls need to be made on the evening, I will be happy to call from the school phone. All children who attend the school are welcome to come – it promises to be a great evening!



Panto! 17th December

Our whole school visit to see the Peter Pan Pantomime takes place on Tuesday 17th December. We will leave school at 9.00 and expect to be back for a late lunch at 1.00p.m. As lunch is later than usual, please could the children bring a snack with them, to eat during the interval? This could be crisps, fruit or a sandwich and a drink. The whole staff team and regular helpers will be accompanying us so that we have a high ratio of adults to children. I am sure we will have a great time – oh yes we will!



Carol Service

The Carol Service takes place on Monday 16th December at 6.30 p.m. at St. Giles. Doors open at 6.15p.m. The children from Year 2 will be sharing their nativity play as part of the service and some of the Year 6 children will be giving readings. The children from Choir in Years 5 & 6 will also be performing two carols. Children from Year 6 who are not singing or doing readings do not need to attend.



Christmas parties

The dates and times for the Christmas parties are shown in the countdown to Christmas table. We will provide a drink and a snack (catering for individual dietary needs) so will not be requesting any donations of food. Children may bring party clothes to school to change into – Reception and Nursery can wear these to school on their party days.



Christmas Plays

It has been an absolute pleasure to hear and see the children rehearsing their Christmas plays, and I know they are looking forward to performing these for you. Entry is free and tickets are not needed. The PTFA will be running a series of raffles at each event, with all proceeds going towards paying for the new stage lights.

The arrangements for each play are as follows:

Nursery & Reception: Doors will open at 10.15a.m. for a 10.30 a.m. start.

Year 1: Doors will open at 2.15p.m. for a 2.30 p.m. start.

KS 2:

- 6.30p.m.: Main office door opens – Years 3 and 4 go to their classrooms to get changed. Year 5 and 6 children whose parents are watching the Year 3/4 play can go to their classrooms to wait. Audience members take their seats in the hall from 6.30.
- 7.00p.m.: Year 3 & 4 play starts.
- 7.30p.m.: Year 5 & 6 children arrive to get into their costumes. Entry is through the double doors next to 326. Audience members for the play are welcome to wait in the Year 1 classroom.
- 7.45p.m. (approx.): 1st Raffle will be drawn. Year 3 and 4 children will go back to their classrooms to get changed, and will meet their parents in the courtyard outside the new building. If they are joining their parents to watch older siblings, they can come back into school through the double doors.
- 7.50p.m.(approx.): Years 5 & 6 play starts.
- End of evening: 2nd raffle drawn. Year 5 & 6 children go to their classroom to get changed and then return to the hall to meet up with their parents.

We are happy for photographs and videos to be taken; we appreciate how precious these memories are. However, any images taken cannot be shared on social media sites; there are a number of children for whom appearing on the internet could compromise their safety. I am sure that you will understand this, and share the message with any other friends and relatives attending. Thank you for your support.



Christmas tree Festival

On Sunday 15th December, the choir will be singing at the switching on of the Lights at the Hitchin Christmas Tree Festival. This takes place at Holy Saviour Church. Please come along and vote for our tree – ‘The Geogratree’ - there are decorations made by all of the children in the school based on the world.

At the foot of this newsletter, there is a poster with further information.



Smart Phones update

Thank you to everyone who responded regarding the recent information shared on smartphones. There is a documentary being shown next week which may be of interest: [Channel 4 orders two-part special, Swiped: The School that Banned Smartphones, from BOLDPRINT Studios with Matt and Emma Willis | Channel 4](#)



Countdown to Christmas!

Monday 9 th Dec	Tuesday 10 th Dec	Wednesday 11 th Dec	Thursday 12 th Dec	Friday 13 th Dec	Saturday 14 th Dec	Sunday 15 th Dec
	<p>Christmas jumpers may be worn.</p> <p>Christmas Lunch</p> <p>Chocolate for foodbank</p>	Play dress rehearsals	<p>10.30 a.m.: Reception Play</p> <p>2.30 p.m.: Year 1 Play</p> <p>7p.m.: Year 3 & 4 Play</p> <p>7.50 p.m.: Year 5 & 6 Play</p>	<p>10.30 a.m.: Nursery Play</p> <p>7 p.m.: Year 3 & 4 Play</p> <p>7.50p.m.: Year 5 & 6 Play</p>		<p>Christmas Tree Festival – Holy Saviour Church Hitchin Choir singing Arrival at 11.45 – singing at 12.00</p>
Monday 16 th Dec	Tuesday 17 th Dec	Wednesday 18 th Dec	Thursday 19 th Dec	Friday 20 th Dec		
<p>9.30a.m.: School Carol Service – St. Giles</p> <p>a.m. Reception Party</p> <p>6.30p.m.: Year 2, 6 & parents Carol Service at St. Giles.</p>	<p>9.00 a.m. Whole School Pantomime Visit</p>	<p>KS1 Party p.m.</p>	<p>KS2 Party p.m.</p> <p>5.30 – 7.00 p.m. PTFA children's disco</p>	<p>Christmas jumpers may be worn.</p> <p>a.m. Nursery Party</p> <p>Term Finishes at 1.15p.m.</p>		



Hold the date!

There will be a literacy evening for Reception and Nursery parents on how we develop literacy skills, and ways you can support your child at home, on Wednesday 15th January, at 7.00p.m. We hope you can come!

Please remember that I am always happy to discuss any issues with you. Thank you for reading this newsletter.

Yours sincerely,

Liz Pollard
HEADTEACHER



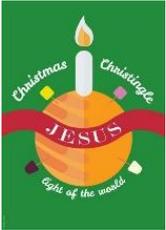
Community News

Please read on for news of the Christingle Service at St. Giles and the Hitchin Christmas Tree Festival.



Music Concert

Some of our children who play the piano will be performing at a concert on 10th December, 5.30p.m. at the Nobel School Auditorium (Stevenage Music Centre). Entry is free – there will be a collection in aid of Great Ormond Street Children's charity.



Christingle Service – 8th December, 2024 4.00 p.m.

Come along to St Giles Church at 4pm when we will be making Christingles. There will be craft activities for the children, some singing and refreshments available. Donations at this service will go towards the work of The Children's Society.

For more information about the services at St. Giles over the Christmas period, please see the flyer attached to this newsletter. Everyone is welcome!

**The Hitchin
Christmas Tree
Festival 2024**

Holy Saviour Church
Radcliffe Road Hitchin SG5 1QG

Friday, 13th December
2.30 - 6pm

Saturday, 14th December
Sunday, 15th December
12 noon - 6pm

Admission £5
Accompanied children FREE

Lunch and teas
available

www.holysaviourhitchin.org.uk
Facebook: HitchinChristmasTreeFestival