



Bridestowe Primary School – With Respect and Ambition, We Flourish Together

30th November 2020

The Start of Advent

Advent is a time of preparation. Preparation for the birth of Jesus and all the celebrations that go with it. The traditional advent wreath has 5 candles and the first represents Hope. The news of a potential vaccine has certainly brought hope of a return to some normality this week. Some unexpected outcomes of the pandemic have been welcomed however, and we hope to keep them: an increased appreciation for our front-line workers, the increased focus on community and looking after one another. That brings us neatly to the next two weeks' candles – Peace and Love. The fourth candle is for Joy and, of course, the final candle for Jesus' birth. With only 3 weeks of school left, I know we will see so much hope, peace, love and joy from the children at this special time of year.

Staffing – Barn Owls

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Mrs Sarah Reid to the position of class teacher in Barn Owls from January 2021. Mrs Reid is an experienced teacher who is currently completing her National Professional Qualification for Senior Leadership. She has worked as a SEN coordinator and behaviour lead in her previous roles. Mrs Reid's personal interests include walking, running, cycling and gardening – she has recently completed an RHS diploma in horticulture meaning she is certainly suited to our outdoor education ethos.

Mrs Reid will be joining us for events and transition sessions over the next 3 weeks – details to follow.



Staffing – Owlets

Following our announcement last week, we would again like to take this opportunity to send our warmest wishes to Ms Baker and her family on her news that she is expecting a baby in the spring.

A recruitment process has already begun with a maternity cover teacher to be employed from February half term. The Owlets children will have lots of opportunity to discuss and understand the implications of Ms Baker's pregnancy before February.

OCRA Cross Country

On Friday 20th we welcomed sports leaders from OCRA to facilitate a cross country event on the school field. The instructors were able to socially distance at all times whilst the children took part in the races. We look forward to hearing how we compared to the rest of West Devon in due course.



Forest School

It was a real pleasure to see the children engaging in Forest School with Ranger Rob again this week. The priority we place on outdoor education is key to our mental health and wellbeing strategy for our pupils. Ranger Rob's sessions happen entirely outdoors and Covid safety procedures are closely followed. Ranger Rob is back in school on the 9th December to work with Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.

Thank you again to FoBS and the parent helpers who have done a huge amount of work in rejuvenating the Environmental area.

Attendance

Thank you for your continued support in achieving excellent attendance. As a school we have a statutory duty to inform parents when their children's attendance falls below 96%. As a result, we issued 17 attendance letters offering information and support for attendance. At the same time, we issued **38** 100% attendance letters celebrating excellent attendance. If you have any questions or concerns regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to ask.

Christmas Events

Christmas is fast approaching and we have some events carefully planned to ensure we comply with our Covid procedures.

Christmas Cards – The children are welcome to bring Christmas cards to spread messages of goodwill and love on **Mondays and Tuesdays only**. These will then be quarantined for the required 72 hours before being distributed on Friday afternoon.

Owlets and Tawny Owls Christmas Play – We have maintained our tradition of participating in a Christmas play. This year the play will be performed in school and filmed so that parents can view at home. There will be a pre-recorded version added to the website and social media and a live stream which will take place on Wednesday 9th December at 2.30pm.

Christmas Jumper Day – Christmas jumper day will be on Friday 11th December where all children are invited to wear a festive jumper for a £1 donation to Save the Children

Christmas Lunch – This will be on Wednesday 16th December. Lunches will remain in bubbles but the normal festive music and additions of crackers will be available.

Healthy Schools

Please can I remind all parents/carers that the school is committed to healthy lifestyles and we strongly encourage children to bring only healthy morning snacks and a balanced lunch. Children in Owlets and Tawny Owls are offered a fruit snack by the school.

More information can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

We intend to work alongside the children, parents and carers to promote education about healthy lifestyles before implementing a clear expectation of healthy morning snacks only.

Mr A. Hill – Acting Head of School

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Diary

December

- 9th – Forest School for Year 4, 5 and 6
- 9th – Christmas Play live stream – 2.30pm
- 11th – Christmas Jumper Day
- 16th – Christmas Lunch
- 18th – Last day of term

January 2021

- 5th – All children return

Attendance

96.1%

Notices

Jayan in Year 4 is helping to raise funds for people living in Sri Lanka by selling lots of handmade items, such as Christmas wreaths, coasters, and baubles, as well as jars of yummy homemade goodies including jams and chutneys. These are available to purchase from his stall at Thorndon Cross. More details are on Jayan's poster pictured below.

All proceeds will go to support Sri Lankan Aid: <https://gf.me/u/ymxz5s>

Well done Jayan for thinking of others less fortunate around the world.



Okehampton Library News

Book Track is the reading challenge for primary-aged children run by Libraries Unlimited through your local public library. Lots of children enjoy taking part, earning badges and stickers as a reward for reading lots of books and talking about them. Now Libraries Unlimited has received some funding, from Tesco Bags of Help, to create a brand new reading challenge to replace Book Track. This is where you can help. Before making any changes or creating something new, Libraries Unlimited would like to find out what you think. They are interested in the views of all parents and children that are interested in books and reading.

Please follow [this link](#) to a short survey that is designed for children aged 5+ and a parent/carer to complete together. It won't take long to complete, and you could win a fantastic prize. The survey is open until Friday 11th December 2020 and all entries submitted before then will be entered into a prize draw to win a Samsung Galaxy Tablet! (T&Cs apply)