

Woodchester Endowed Church of England (VA) Primary School News

Our church school community seeks to inspire children and adults to love, learn and flourish together so we may become everything God has created us to be.

Christian Value—THANKFULNESS

Friday 15th December 2023

'Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many' (1 Corinthians 12; 14-16)

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we near the end of term, the school is alive with the sound of carols, tinsel and a few festive jokes! We definitely have some excited children in our midst. A quick reminder that school will finish on **Wednesday 20th December at 3:15**.

This week, the whole school enjoyed a visit to the pantomime, courtesy of FOWES and the support that you all provide. Children and adults alike laughed at the jokes, sang and thoroughly enjoyed this British tradition. On behalf of our school, thank you for this lovely Christmas treat.

Over the next week, we have Christmas parties to look forward to. Children are invited to come in sensible party clothes on the day and teachers will send out more information. We also look forward to celebrating the KS2 carol service on Monday evening at 6pm in St.Mary's Woodchester. All are welcome to attend and celebrate this special time with us.



On behalf of all the staff at school, may we take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for all of your support this year.

Finally, FOWES have been busy organising a 'Jingle Mingle' for this Sunday, so if you are free why don't you pop down and enjoy some festive cheer whilst supporting FOWES in their fundraising efforts.

Have a lovely weekend.

Mrs Loomes, Mrs Pennington and Peggy.

£3 PP
ENTRY

FOWES PRESENTS

UNDER 2'S
GO FREE

JINGLE MINGLE

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER 3-5PM
WOODCHESTER ENDOWED SCHOOL HALL

DATES

17.12.23—Jingle Mingle at Woodchester School

18.12.23—KS2 Carol Service 6pm, KS1 Christmas Parties

19.12.23—KS2 Christmas Parties

20.12.23—12pm Christmas Lunch; Willow Swimming; Last day of Term 2 (3:15pm finish)

21.12.23—STAFF INSET and 22.12.23—STAFF INSET

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Monday 25th December 2023—Friday 7th January 2024 (inclusive)

08.01.24—Term begins

10.01.24—Swimming (Juniper Class)

12.01.24—Young Voices Trip to Birmingham

17.01.24—Messy Church 3:30pm

22.01.23—Y5 Parents' Meeting re Viney Hill Residential 5pm

09.02.24—Term 3 Ends (3:15pm finish)

HALF TERM HOLIDAY

Monday 12th February 2024—Friday 16th January 2024 (inclusive)

19.02.24—Term 4 Begins

LUNCH WITH FRIENDS

Over the last few weeks, Juniper class have been rehearsing frantically with Mrs Latham to prepare some festive singing. On Friday afternoon, they headed over to church to sing some Christmas carols whilst some of the older members of our parish enjoyed a festive lunch. Juniper sang beautifully before handing out Christmas cards from KS2 and gifts from the lunch club. So many people commented on the children's performance saying that they valued the children coming to sing for them and with them.

Thank you to Mrs Latham and Juniper class for all your hard work!



LEARNING ABOUT HINDUISM

This term, Hawthorn and Juniper classes have been studying Hinduism in Religious Education (RE). To celebrate the learning, both classes took part in an Indian culture inspired day, where children were able to take part in a selection of activities.

Children tried out Bollywood and Bhangra dancing; listened to and composed some Bhangra music; created their own Rangoli inspired designs and tasted a selection of savoury and sweet Indian food. It was a great way for both classes to consolidate their learning about Hinduism.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE GOVERNORS

We have been delighted to welcome three new governors this half-term: Jenny Warner (Foundation Governor and resident of North Woodchester), Rachael Merrett (Parent Governor) and Mrs Rosie Birch (Foundation Governor and parent). New governors bring new ideas, new challenges, new skills and new enthusiasm and we are very grateful to them all for the willingness to serve the school and community. Governors have been busy this term completing interviews with subject leaders, undertaking some pupil voice (linked to developments in RE), lesson and worship visits, training and attending meetings. All new governors attend excellent induction training provided by Gloucester Council who also provide regular termly update sessions for Chairs of Governors. As a church school, we have access to useful training provided by the diocese.

After the important routine monitoring visits, it is a particular pleasure to come into school to share the children's celebrations. The KS1 Nativity was impressive as ever this year. I have to remind myself that some of the children performing so confidently are still only four and have been in school a matter of weeks. They delivered lines with confidence and threw themselves into dancing routines with enthusiasm and impressive concentration. The dancing star, performing on the tabletop made a particular impression on me. The weeks of work by staff and children produced a performance to be much enjoyed by participants and audience. Well done everyone!

After last year's cancellation, it will be a pleasure to join the school for the Carol Concert on Monday evening. We hope to be joined by parents and children in a packed church to share in the joy of the Christmas story

Governors wish all our children, parents, carers and staff a happy, restful and joyful Christmas and share best wishes for good health and happiness in 2024.



BOOKS FOR BUGS VIRTUAL FAIR

Thank you to everyone who put orders in through the Books for Bugs Virtual Book Fair. We managed to get 38 free books for school, which we're thrilled with! As well as this, we were able to purchase lots of new chapter books which children from both KS1 and KS2 will be able to enjoy. Thank you to the Selsley School Trust who have made this possible with their generous donation to support reading at Woodchester.



KEY STAGE 1 ENDBALL COMPETITION

Year 2 made their way to Archway School for a morning of Endball organised by our PE provider, Atlas Sports. We hadn't played this game before but we quickly picked up the rules. We got to play lots of matches against different schools and worked hard to get as many players as possible into the 'end zone'. There was lots of catching and throwing and excellent teamwork skills!

Well done, Year 2!



WOODCHESTER PARISH CHURCH

CRIB SERVICE

We warmly invite **everyone** to our All-Age Crib Service which will be held on **Christmas Eve at 3pm**. This will be a short service in which the last hymn will be sung by candlelight. We invite youngsters to dress up as shepherds (tea towel), kings (crown), angels or an animal (animal mask). We also have lots of dressing up clothes in church.

Please stay after the service for refreshments.

Liz Hale



FISH TANK LUXURY

Our fish tank has been a much loved feature of school life and in recent years we have been very fortunate that Ali, one of our mums, has taken the lead in looking after the fish and tank. Ali kindly gives up her time to ensure the tank is clean and well stocked with a variety of interesting fish. Ali is also very proactive in seeking support from our generous community.

Last week, local resident Dan, an avid and very skilled fish keeper offered to come to Woodchester to share his expertise and advice. Ali and Dan spent a whole afternoon draining the tank and setting up a new environment with fresh ornaments and plants. They discussed their work with a small group of children who were fascinated to learn more about the fish and how the eco system thrives within the tank.

Dan contacted fellow fish enthusiasts and many people and businesses helped by donating food, posters and stickers, water treatments, fertilizers and notepads. We also received free plants which are looking fantastic and give our fish lots of hiding places. Enormous thank to Dan from Earl Scapes and Aquaria www.earlscapesandaquaria.co.uk and the following companies for their kind donations too, including:

- Bluewave Aquatics
- Moss.co.uk
- The Aquatic Habbitat
- Aquadip
- Byrkley aquatics (Burton on trent)

Our fish tank is thriving and we look forward to even more fish being added next week! Thanks so much, everyone.



STROUD GOODWILL

What a lovely event the Stroud Goodwill evening was! Mrs Holmes arrived early in town as she was singing with Rock Choir (Mrs Lusty has footage, which will not be shared)!

It was lovely to see a whole host of Woodchester parents and pupils gathering outside the Sub rooms, with their lanterns, to take part in the parade. The children (and the adults) were so excited to be part of this and waited eagerly for the start of the procession. A huge whale shark appeared and everyone walked behind, holding their lanterns high and parading the streets.

Mrs Holmes watched the Woodchester Endowed Church of England Primary School banner go past and said "I was so proud of being part of such a warm and generous community of people. It was so special to see our pupils and parents coming together for such a delightful purpose."

Many thanks to Angela Smith and her team of happy parents, who helped make the lanterns and brought everything together so beautifully.



LIGHTS, CAMEL, ACTION—THE NATIVITY

What a treat we experienced last week as our Infant children shared the special story of Christmas with our families and community. This year, the Nativity story received an interesting 'Strictly' twist giving our budding actors plenty of opportunity to show off their fine acting talents.

During Advent, Christians around the world remember and prepare for the birth of Jesus and with beautiful singing and lots of dancing, our children reminded us of the story of this special news.

After two wonderful and enchanting performances there is no doubt that everyone left feeling a little more Christmassy than when they arrived!

Well done and congratulations to all our performers, singers and dancers!

You were magnificent!



PARENT RESOURCES

Free access to the Lumi Nova app

Although Christmas is a happy time for most of us, some children will still have worries and anxieties that affect their daily lives. All children in Gloucestershire are entitled to free access to the Lumi Nova app. Lumi Nova: Tales of Courage is an engaging child-led, parent/guardian supported therapeutic intervention that can be used on most smartphones or tablets. It facilitates graded exposures (the active ingredient of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) with psychoeducation to empower 7-12 year olds with mild to moderate needs to learn to self-manage fears, worries and anxiety. You can find out more information about Lumi Nova here - <http://luminova.app/glos>



Staying safe online

There are lots of helpful toolkits for parents to use to help keep children safe online. If you are unsure about what parental features are available on your child's device, Internet Matters and Tesco have put together a tailored toolkit. This can be accessed here: <https://www.internetmatters.org/little-digital-helps-toolkit/>. With Christmas just around the corner, we thought this might provide useful information.

BEECH CLASS VISITOR

Beech Class have been learning about how to stay healthy in science this term and we were very lucky to have a Nutritional Therapist come and visit us. We learnt about bacteria and we had lots of questions! We wanted to know, 'Are they smaller than ants?' and 'Can we see them with our eyes?'. We also learnt about how food is digested and tracked how food moves through our bodies.

A huge thank you to Seb's mum for taking the time to visit us. We are always on the look out for any grown ups who are happy to come and talk to the children about their jobs, their hobbies or anything you think the children would find interesting!



WHOLE SCHOOL TRIP TO MOTHER GOOSE!

A big thank you to all those who have supported FOWES in their fundraising efforts this year. Thanks to the generosity of all involved, FOWES organised for the whole school to attend the pantomime 'Mother Goose', starring local icon Tweedy the Clown.

The air of excitement built throughout the morning, and once Mrs Loomes had locked the school we set off in a convoy of three coaches for the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham. The children were impeccably behaved and navigated the Christmas shoppers with ease before being shown to our seats. The lights dimmed and the panto had begun.

The children laughed, they sang and they shouted 'Oh no it isn't' with gusto throughout the performance. A huge thank you to all the parent volunteers and staff who gave up their time on a long afternoon to allow the children to enjoy this festive British tradition. Torsten said "I really liked Tweedy the Clown—he was very funny. It was a good way to celebrate and our seats were very comfy!"

