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IN GOD’S LIGHT

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4th January 2018

**DECEMBER UPDATE**

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome back and Happy New Year! I trust that you all had a wonderful Christmas and managed to enjoy some family time.

What a fabulous December we had! The Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 performance of ‘Midwife Crisis’ was laugh out loud funny and what a fantastic job Isla did singing her starlit solo, Georgie did remember all those lines and Steve the donkey’s comedic timing!

The choir’s beautiful singing at Towcester Tesco was a resounding success as usual and a fitting end to the service Mrs Weston has provided over the past 14 years.

Our Snow Day was as exciting for the staff as it was for the children. Many thanks to Geoff Brand – our Chair of Governors – and to George, for clearing the site so that we could open for learning on the Tuesday.

The Christmas Extravaganza was a resounding success! I felt an overwhelming sense of pride as we sang together on the playground and when the Year 5 and 6 children led the most beautiful Christingle Service. The Winter Festival was also a resounding success! A whirlwind couple of hours, but what a great buzz throughout the school.

Our final day of pantomime and parties was a wonderful way to bring the end of a relentless term to a close: even if Mrs Green and I did find ourselves on stage with Coronation Street’s Nick Cochrane!

**Reading and Homework:**

I will be collecting in a random sample of Homework books this month to celebrate the children’s progress in their reading.

**Communication:**

Please do feel free to catch me on the playground, pop in or make an appointment with the office if you wish to discuss anything in more depth. Some of you have emailed in too – which is absolutely fine, however it may take me a while to respond as over 300 emails drop into my inbox in a week.

Parent’s Evenings will be held on Tuesday 6th March between 4.30pm and 7.00pm and on Thursday 8th March between 4.00pm and 6.30pm. At this meeting, you will receive an interim report that will detail your children’s current attainment and progress. The teachers will explain it more detail at your meeting, so please do make an appointment. If you’re unable to attend, do let us know so that we can accommodate you.

The children are only in school 52% of the year. It is vital that we work together in order to ensure that your child gets the very best start in life.

**Church of England School:**

As a church school, we value our community and would love to share our worship with you. On Mondays at 10:55am we are lucky enough to have John Atkin, Rev Doug, Rev Richard and Richard from the Lighthouse Trust continuing to lead our worship. If you are able to attend, we would love to see you there.

Just a reminder that each class teacher has chosen a symbol to display in the class’ reflective area / ‘Book Nook’. The children will be learning more about their symbol as the year progresses, as well as the symbols of other faiths and symbols that are found in more than one religion. If you have any resources to suppor the development of these areas, please do let us know.

Reception – The Cross

Year 1 – The fish

Year 2 – The Star

Year 3 – Light (candle)

Year 4 – The Crossed Keys

Year 5 – The Dove

Year 6 – The Trinity

**Growth Mindset:**

We continue to use the language of Growth Mindset in school. For more information on Growth Mindset, please have a look at: <https://www.mindsetworks.com/science/> There’s even a mindset quiz you can take to see what your own mindset is like. The interim report you will receive in March will comment on your child’s Growth Mindset.

**Mindfulness:**

Mindfulness goes hand in hand with Growth Mindset. When you practice Mindfulness, the prefrontal cortex physically grows; grey matter forms in the hippocampus (the memory hub in the brain) making recall easier; and neural pathways bypass the amygdala (the prehistoric brain that serves your fight/flight/freeze responses: i.e: your fixed mindset voice).

Mindfulness is now being prescribed by GPs for depression, anxiety and anger as a result of the neuroscience behind it.

**Engaging in extended periods of screen time is the opposite of mindfulness: it hinders brain development.**

If you're interested, I can recommend: **"Sitting Still Like a Frog"** - great for bedtime routines.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/aw/d/1611800587/ref=mp\_s\_a\_1\_1…](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/aw/d/1611800587/ref%3Dmp_s_a_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1506715788&sr=8-1&pi=AC_SX236_SY340_FMwebp_QL65&keywords=sitting+still+like+a+frog&dpPl=1&dpID=418v-S99S%2BL&ref=plSrch)

**Presentation:**

Presentation is still high priority. Tucked in shirts, buttoned up cardigans and shiny shoes put us all in the right mindset. Thank you for your on-going support. Another project I am exploring is the rejuvenation of the classrooms: many need painting and new furniture. If you’d like to make a donation, or offer some time to help decorate, do let me know so I can organise a working party.

Also, as an early notification: we are changing to red gingham summer dresses from the light blue. Please do note that blue dresses will be acceptable until the end of this academic year. Thank you.

**Behaviour:**

Our new Behaviour Policy is in its first draft and has been shared with staff and children. It will take another 5 terms to roll out in full; however, some changes will be seen in the near future. The new policy will be on our website as soon as it has been ratified by the Governing Body. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

**Community:**

Please can I ask that we all consider the local residents by not parking across driveways, on bends, narrow pavements or yellow lines: if we can car share where possible or walk to school, I would be most grateful. As a village school in the heart of the community, we all need to work together to ensure each other’s safety.

**Healthy Schools:**

Please send in snacks separately, as children will not be able to go in their lunch boxes before lunch. Thank you.

**Staffing:**

We are welcoming:

* Miss Charlotte Spuffard to the team to work as a Teaching Assistant in Year 6
* Mrs Rachael Hayward to the Office Team as Administrator
* Mr Brian Curtis (yes – THE Mr Brian Curtis!!) to the Site Management Team as Caretaker

Many thanks for all your kind comments and on-going support. If you have any questions – do come and ask me face-to-face: always happy to help as we’re all in this together.

Here’s to fun and festive December!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs E. McLean

