

LINK ACADEMY TRUST CHRISTMAS 2020 NEWSLETTER



A Merry Christmas to All

FROM NICKY DUNFORD, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I would like to take this opportunity to try and make it clear to everyone just how amazing our schools have been this year against the odds and to thank everyone. All the staff have gone 'over and above' in every way they can, and our brilliant pupils have responded with positivity and empathy. I am so proud of all our schools- you will see just how inventive in providing Covid-safe Christmas cheer they have all been in the school's reports.

We all know how hard this whole year has been in so many ways, for a start, who would have ever thought this time last year that we would have been locked down in our homes and that children would not have been in schools for more than 3 months in some cases. And that was just for starters, without all the anxiety, bereavements, missing social interaction and friendships, etc that have been experienced by so many of our families.

We are lucky here in the South West in that we have access to the most amazing countryside and our schools have excellent grounds which I know Academy Heads and teachers have used as far as possible to deliver outdoor learning. Alongside this we have worked hard to improve the delivery of online learning which we continue to improve over the coming year. One of the positives of this pandemic has been to be increasingly able to put classroom teaching in the home increasingly effectively, children should no longer have to miss learning opportunities when they are poorly or the more recent situation of pupils having to isolate.

Parents and carers have been quick to be both patient and supportive during this time and I thank you for this as we work hard to put into place all the improvements we

can. The response from you, our families and the community to Mr Matthew's Give Back at Christmas appeal just illustrates how generous and thoughtful you all are. I think he may be wrapping presents for weeks to come! I would also like to mention out Trustees and Governors who all do an incredible amount of work for absolutely nothing. Governors volunteer to come into school and support the Academy Heads through listening and challenging and then report their findings to Trustees through the Standards and Curriculum committee where everything is fully discussed. Trustees have a more strategic role and meet a number of times every half term to support the operation of the Trust.

Finally, I would like you all to know that Isabel Cherrett, who has been our Chair of Trustees for over 4 years now, since the Trust was formed, is retiring. She has been meticulous in setting up the policies and protocols that keep our Trust both safe and highly effective. She has established reporting structures and documentation that carefully ensures nothing can fall through the gaps and has given hours and hours of her own time to the Trust. She has built the foundations of our Trust that allows the Academy Heads and Teachers to be able to deliver quality first teaching and wonderful experiences knowing there are safe foundations in place. Cheryl Mathieson will be taking on the Chair of Trustee role and will, I am sure, continue the great work of Isabel and the Board at the start of 2021.

Bearnes Primary School

Preparations for the festive season are well under way at Bearnes with everyone working extremely hard to add those finishing elements. All pupils in KS1 are currently adding the final touches to their Christmas Nativity Show, 'Shine Star Shine', that we will be recording and sending out to parents next week - it is sure to be a wonderful performance. Chestnuts are also taking part in a 'Covid safe' Christmas card exchange with a local care home where the children will make cards to send and will also receive a card in return. And finally, as a school we have also supported 'Save the Children's Christmas Jumper day' - everyone was looking fantastic in their Christmas attire.

From everyone at Bearnes, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas!



Broadhempston Primary School

The Christmas elves have been hard at work at Broadhempston. The tree is up and glistening, carols are being rehearsed (socially distanced outside), Christmas crafts are underway, Class 4 are doing some large scale painting of life sized nativity characters for the local church display and our remote Christmas nativity organised by Miss Canon has been filmed in the our outdoor classroom at the Inn - a real sense of awe and wonder for our children as we retell the story we know so well. Festive joy is a great way to end the term - well done everyone!



Cheriton Bishop Primary School

The staff and children at Cheriton Bishop have loved been back at school during the Autumn term. There has been so much going on! We have had a visit from a dragon, a virtual trip around Europe, visiting authors and hedgehogs, castles and Ancient Greece. The Student Council have done a wonderful job. They organised a virtual bake off and set up a winter trail in the Scout field. Many thanks too, to the PTFA for an excellent pumpkin trail and a great raffle! Please have a look at our Facebook page to find out more about what we have been doing here at Cherry B.

We hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a healthy and happy 2021



Diptford CofE Primary School

What an amazing term this has been! We returned to school in September with such positivity and this has continued throughout the term. Covid hasn't dampened our spirits, in fact, it has made us more determined to have a wonderfully festive season. We are being really creative in finding new and interesting ways around some of the obstacles we have faced and this year's nativity is no exception! It has been a real break from tradition but that hasn't stopped us from making sure our children and families still have a lovely experience. Our 'Wonky Nativity' (to go with the wonky year we have had!) is being filmed and put together by the team around school - we have had great fun creating it and have really embraced the technology to make it happen. Have a look at our website to watch the video.

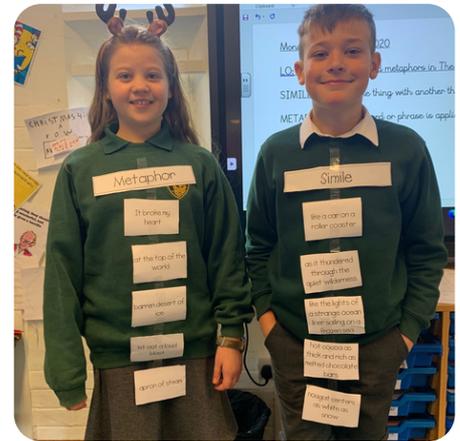
Merry Christmas from everyone at Diptford!



Drake's CofE Primary School

Christmas was definitely NOT cancelled at Drake's School this year. The children and staff have been working hard on their performance - The Christmas Journey. This involved the children acting, singing and performing in front of a camera and not a live audience. The children have embraced the changes and the video is fantastic. Santa is beaming in from his Grotto in Lapland during Christmas Lunch Day and has successfully got presents delivered to the school so they can safely enjoy a gift with their lunch. The PTA made a Christmas Cookbook which families have shared their favourite recipes and delicious dishes.

We hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Harbertonford CofE Primary School

It may have been a difficult year, but at Harbertonford we have been busy spreading some love and cheer this Christmas. Children across the school worked together to create personalised cards to send to the people in our community who are on their own at the moment. They also made unique "button angels" to decorate the Church's outside Christmas tree. They rounded off the term by sharing the Christmas story with their families in an online celebration, then enjoyed a Victorian themed Christmas day, a visit from Santa and a class party all arranged by our absolutely wonderful PTFA.



Hennock Primary School

We're having a super run up to Christmas at Hennock! Our annual Christmas live performance has been replaced by a movie this year and the children are performing "We'll Meet Again", a story about evacuees in World War 2. The children have been involved in all elements of the film: acting, singing, dancing, set & costume design, filming, editing, movie trailer production and poster making - the full works! Our movie premiere is on Thursday 17th December on our website and we're having a Christmas cooking and craft day on the same day to celebrate too, including a visit from a special Christmas Shetland pony as a treat for the children for all their hard work this term.

Merry Christmas everyone!



Ilstington CofE Primary School

What a fantastic start to my time at Ilstington! Despite starting my time as academy head during a pandemic I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute. I am especially proud of the can do approach of the team as we have approached blended learning this term. Together we have come a long way in our use of Teams and of IT generally. Just this week each teacher set themselves and their TAs the challenge of working together to run an online lesson with the teacher at home. A tin of Quality Street was the prize for each class team and it was well deserved.

Happy Christmas everyone!



Landscope CofE Primary School

Christmas at Landscope COVID will not stop the warm glow of Christmas here! Christmas lunch is booked, Wild Woodland Learning with hot chocolate & toasted marshmallows for the last week, Christmas crafts, Christmas jumper day for save the children, as well as our remote trip to Bethlehem - 'Landscape's Christmas Message' -packed with memories for everyone to treasure. Every year as the term comes to an end the teachers wonder whether they "can pull it off" again and every year the children do spectacularly well. I'm so proud of them all!

Brilliant! Have a great Christmas.



Moretonhampstead Primary School

Christmas is not being dampened by Covid at Moretonhampstead. Our younger children are working hard learning all the songs and words for our concert 'A Baby is Born' and there are definitely some budding actors in the making. We will be recording their show and sending it out to our community. Christmas clocks, paper chains and snowflake decorations have kept the children busy and the classrooms are looking festive and colourful. Our school is full of twinkling lights, happy faces and our rainbow themed Christmas tree, decorated by the children, looks wonderful. We have enjoyed a whole school Christmas dress up day and also, of course, Christmas Lunch!



Otterton CofE Primary School

It's CHRISTMASSSSS!!!! There is no way that this year will spoil the plans for a fun-filled festive season at Otterton. The staff have been filming the Nativity and the children have embraced the new challenge of acting and singing. The children have performed and sung brilliantly and should be very proud of their efforts. The final week of term is full of Christmas activities starting off with Christingle Service with a video from Rev Martin followed by craft, films and festive fun. From all the staff and children at Otterton School we wish you a very relaxing Christmas break and a very prosperous New Year.



Stoke Gabriel Primary School

This term the children and staff have worked tirelessly to get back into school despite changes to how we approach elements of our school day. Our brilliant PTFA have found creative ways to raise funds for laptops which will support the increase in online learning that we've explored. MS Teams, virtual teaching and online collaboration spaces have added an exciting new layer to our teaching and learning. We've adapted the usual Christmas celebrations and there has been so much work that this has happened 'behind the scenes'. A huge 'thank you' to all those who have supported us in getting our online production in place... not something I ever envisaged saying!



Tedburn St Mary Primary School

A very busy term heads into Christmas for everyone at Tedburn. The children have been busy putting together our Christmas performance, 'Christmas around the World'. Each class took one country, looked their traditions, and incorporated these into their classes part. The final production was great, with lots of super singing. Well done to everyone. All the children have worked amazingly hard this term, catching up on any learning lost during lockdown and all producing lots of quality work across the curriculum. Our last Christmas week sees lots of exciting activities planned for the children. We are virtually off to the Panto to watch Cinderella, golden time, parties and a Christmas film fill our last week. All the children are highly excited for our Head Teacher for the day experience. All the children have entered our draw to become the headteacher. It will be really interesting to see what rules they choose for their day of being in charge.

We wish everyone a very happy Christmas.

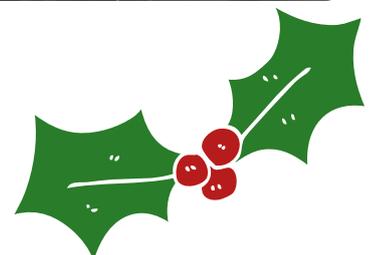


Widcombe-in-the-Moor Primary School

December at Widcombe is full of traditions. Although we have had to get a bit creative this year, we have still had lots of fun. Our youngest children in the Webburn class retold the Nativity story in their RE lesson. Their acting and improvisation skills were excellent! We even had a pantomime baddie with one of our Reception children taking their role as an innkeeper very seriously when not allowing Mary and Joseph to stay in his inn!

We are looking forward to our Christmas Dinner this year, especially as the children have decided that they will support a local charity, Animals in Distress, by hosting our very own Christmas Outfit Day to go with our lunch!

Merry Christmas to you all!!

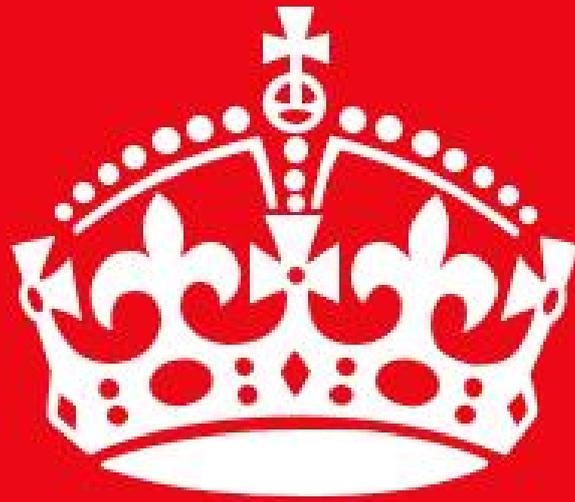


Yeoford Primary School

A very Merry Christmas from Yeoford Primary School.

We have had a wonderful term with lots going on. The school has been buzzing with adventure, challenge, humour and kindness. The children have thoroughly enjoyed being back and have been making great progress in their learning. Highlights include: a mystery parcel from Woody of Toy Story, a waste free Harvest, a whole class steel pan rendition and learning about Diwali! Do have a look at our Facebook page to see how much we have been doing!





**KEEP
CALM**

AND

RELAX...

IT'S CHRISTMAS

*Finally, A Very Merry
Christmas and a Happy
New Year*

