



CHECKENDON C.E. SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

17th December 2015

Diary for Term 2	
Fri 18 th December	Last day of Term 2 Finish at 2.00pm
Diary for Term 3	
Tues 6 th January	First day of Term 3
Weds 7 th January	Owlet Class visit to Oxford Story Museum

It has been another busy term in school with lots of enthusiastic learning, visits, visitors and events. Children in Owlet Class settled in quickly and made firm friendships, not only with each other, but also with their Year 5 buddies. Pupils have been out and about taking part in a wide range of activities including challenging residential experiences in Pangbourne and Wales, and visits to Bournemouth, Chedworth Villa, Highwood School in Reading and the fire station in Goring. There have been lots of sporting events involving pupils from all classes: not only football, swimming and netball, but also athletics, cross country, quidditch, dodgeball, riding and archery. We all enjoyed several whole school experiences learning together; in mixed age 'house' groups we took part in a drumming workshop, created The Jungle Book play-in-a-day, tackled outdoor maths challenges and explored Boxed -up School Values.

Our charity events have been very well supported: we raised money for migrants stranded in Calais, Children In Need and the British Legion as well as collecting tins for Readifood bank and filling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. The School Association worked hard throughout the term to raise funds for the school; we had a very successful Fireworks Night, sold beautifully designed Christmas Cards and tea towels, set up the Parents' forum and held a number of lively social events.

In the last few weeks, we have had the pleasure of being entertained by The Wonderful Story, watched Tim Peake live as he hurtled through the Earth's atmosphere and enjoyed a delicious Christmas Lunch!

Thank you very much to everyone who has helped to make this term another happy and successful one here at Checkendon. Staff and pupils are looking forward to a well earned rest and we look forward to seeing you all in the New Year!

What have we been learning in school this week?

Owlet Class

This week children in Owlet Class have been very busy performing the nativity. The children learned lots of songs and lines and really enjoyed the experience. Children have also been exploring advent and talking about love, joy, hope and peace.

Owl Class

This week the children practised and performed their fantastic production of "A Wonderful Story". They used this to write about the different Christmas symbols in the nativity story. For RE Day, we looked at the four different themes of advent (peace, hope, joy and love) and created a class book.

Panda Class

Children in Panda Class have been busy preparing for Christmas and enjoying the nativity and Christmas lunch. In class they have been investigating which materials would be best for Santa's boots to keep him safe around electricity. Year 4 children have been preparing for their tableau at the carol service.

Rhino Class

Children in Rhino Class have been preparing to celebrate Christmas by designing snowflakes, using rotational symmetry and repeating patterns and we have also created Christmas tree decorations using felt. We are enjoying listening to Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol.

Thank You!

- Thank you very much to Emma Davies and everyone who attended the recent piano concert in the school hall for their generous donation to school funds. We have used the money to purchase new R.E. resources to support our teaching about the lives of saints including a DVD about the life of St Francis.

- **Thank you Mr Gayford**

Most of you will remember that we said farewell to Rhino Class teacher, Mr Gayford in July. After careful consideration, we have used his farewell gift to purchase a lovely school nativity set and some shin pads. This may seem a strange combination, but we feel confident that he would approve of both choices! We have enjoyed putting together the nativity scene day by day in the run up to Christmas, and we plan to keep a stock of shin pads to lend to footballers as and when they need them. Mr Gayford is happily established in Norfolk now, teaching in a Year 4 class. He keeps in touch with a several members of staff and sends his best wishes for a happy Christmas to everyone.

Parents' Forum

Class reps met with Mrs Seymour last week and it proved to be a very productive meeting. Minutes of the meeting are below:

Quiet places at break times

Prayer Spaces was a great success. We are planning to establish a permanent Prayer Space in the school grounds. Ideas for the location and design for this will be pursued.

School uniform

We have had compliments on how smart our pupils look, but some schools have logos on their school uniform shirts. Options will be investigated for shirts with logos (white and blue).

Book bags

It is difficult to keep the corridors free of clutter as the pegs are positioned close together. The height of pegs outside Rhino Class will be checked to see if there is room for double height rows. When book bags are taken

off the pegs they often catch on the items hanging either side of them. Options for smaller book bags to fit in drawers will be investigated.

Wednesday Workshops and home- school communication

The last Wednesday Workshop was not well attended. A new time for Parents workshops will be trialled from 2.15pm – 3.15pm. Home-school communication is generally good. Colour coding in the newsletter helps identify key information: use of this will be extended.

Reading with your child

Some pupils are making less than expected progress in reading because parents are not reading regularly with their children. Clear expectations about reading (frequency and length of time/ recording) from the class teacher would be helpful. Guidance about how to support independent readers would help.

PE: *Lots of the pupils are keen on taking part in running events. Options will be investigated for a cross country club at lunchtime 12.00pm – 12.40pm - we need volunteers to trial this.*

Themes for Terms 3 and 4

We are looking forward to our exciting new themes for the next two terms:

	Term 3	Term 4
Rhino Class	Vikings	USA
Panda Class	Our fragile Earth	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Owl Class	Into the Unknown	Down Under
Owlet Class	Once Upon a Time	Animals

Outside Break

Each day equipment is available for the children to use during outside break. We plan break time activities carefully to foster active play for all our pupils. Recently an increased number of children have been bringing in their own footballs which interfere with playtime activities. We would therefore ask your child to leave their own footballs at home. Thank you.

End of Term 2 – Beginning of Term 3

Please note that Term 2 ends on Friday 18th December **2.00 pm (not 12 noon)**. Please collect children promptly as there will be no staff on site in the afternoon.

Term 3 starts on **Tuesday 5th January 2016** (there is an inset day on Monday 4th January).

Welcome Evening

A Welcome Evening will be held in school on 20th January. Invitations have been sent to parents of pupils in Y1, Reception and in-year admissions as well as those who responded to our plea for governors. If you would like an invitation, please contact the school office.

School Association News

School Tea Towels

If you would like to purchase a school tea towel, please see Louise Maze or Jo Crook.

End of term drinks at The Highwayman

Please join us for a Christmas drink or two at The Highwayman on Friday from 12.30pm-1.45pm.

School Association Coffee morning

The next coffee morning will be held in the school hall after drop off on Friday 8th January. All welcome so please feel free to join us for coffee & biscuits; It's a good opportunity to catch up with other parents and normally only half an hour or so.

And finally...

Thank you for all your Christmas cards and gifts. We hope that you and your family have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Dates for your Diary

Friday 18th December

12.30pm-1.45pm the Highwayman Inn: Parents Christmas Drinks – organised by School Association

Friday 18th December

Last day of Term 2 ([finish at 2.00pm](#))

Tuesday 5th January

First day of Term 3 (Monday 4th January is an Inset day)