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Toftwood Infant and Junior School Federation
Executive Headteacher - Mrs Joanna Pedlow

Newsletter 6 December 2022

What a busy term!

This term has been so busy. It has seen a welcome return to our community events, such as Harvest and Christmas activity sessions, performances for families and workshops. We do hope you have enjoyed coming in for those events and will join us over the coming Year for more!

As we finish this term, a huge thankyou goes out to all of our community for their support and understanding this term, as always.

The children have worked exceptionally hard. When showing visitors round, they all comment on the hard working atmosphere in the schools and how well the children join in with the learning. It is a pleasure and a privilege to go in and see the work taking place in the classes. Well done to all of our children for all they have achieved, not only academically but in terms of friendship, supporting others in tricky times, managing their own emotions and feelings, navigating difficult times and working together as one school community.

Thank you to the parents and carers also. We know some of you have faced tremendous difficulties in so many ways this year, and we are always here to help and support. Mrs Bates has supported many families with financial, housing and home concerns as we all know parenting is not an easy job! If you need any support, or a listening ear, please do contact us. We may not be able to help directly, but we will know who can. Thankyou also for your support in so many ways, including supporting our charity collections, supporting with learning at home and also for the kind thoughts and words so many of you have shared about this term. That is all much appreciated.

Thank you also to the staff. We have had high levels of illness absence this term, but the staff have pulled together to ensure the children do not miss out at all. They have supported children not only academically, but also through difficult times, such as bereavement, homelessness and so much more. By working so hard behind the scenes, they have ensured school has continued to run smoothly and efficiently! The extra work they put in above and beyond their role is so appreciated and without all of them we would not have had our Christmas events, so thank you to all of them. Thank you also for the very kind thought of gifts and cards also sent in.

Thank you also to our Governors, a small but distinguished group of volunteers who continue to work hard for the benefit of all of our children.

We have spoken today in our Junior assembly about the holiday being a time to spend with people we love and care for, and remembering those no longer with us.

We also spoke about the dangers of playing on frozen ponds/water, following the tragic deaths of the children in Solihull earlier this month. Our thoughts are with those families. Some of the children said their parents had already spoken to them about not playing on frozen ponds, but it is worth reinforcing that message with your child over the holidays if you have not already.

There is excellent information available here to share with your child:

<https://www.rlss.org.uk/news/royal-life-saving-society-uk-issues-winter-water-safety-advice>

Christmas Lunch

Thank you to all of the staff who cooked, served and washed up following the Christmas lunches this year. It is a tremendous task and all went very well and was much appreciated by all.

Babies!

As you know we have five staff who were expecting babies between now and the beginning of February! Mrs Jessop, one of our TAs, was due to have her baby on 30th December, but baby Ezra decided he wanted to be here for Christmas and arrived early this week! Both are doing well. Congratulations to Mr and Mrs Jessop as they now become a family of five!

We still await news of the arrival of baby Rathie who is due any day now!

Mrs Kim and Miss Briggs both leave today for their maternity leave, being due to have their babies soon. We wish them well for their leave and their new arrivals and look forward to sharing the news of their arrivals in the new term. Best wishes to all of them!

Goodbye and Hello!

Mrs Pawley takes over for two terms to cover Miss Briggs. She has been in regularly to work with the children this term so they already know her well. The class in January will be known as SP4.

Mrs Smith, one of our Year 5 teachers, also leaves us today. She has been here since 2008, and has been an excellent teacher, always wanting the best for her children and always celebrating their successes. She will be much missed, and she says it was not an easy decision to make, but is moving closer to home for a new role. We wish her well in her new job, and know she will be an asset to them.

Mrs Sarah Gale will be Mrs Hodges new partner in teaching the class. She has already been in to meet the children and had a handover with Mrs Hodges. She will be with us until the end of the summer term. This class will be known as HG5 in the new Year.

We will also be welcoming two new MSAs to our Infant team, Mrs Cushley and Mrs Donnachie in the new term.

Good luck to all of those moving on or leaving to have a baby, and welcome to all new staff members.

Check this out!

Our website, as always, has lots of events and things to celebrate. Here are just a few.

We had oral history club, where Mrs Askham, one of our volunteers and a Great grandmother of two of our pupils, came in to talk about Christmas in her childhood.

<https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/news/curriculum-news/oral-history/>

We have been learning about the local area and beyond in Geography, including a trip to the Christmas postbox to post a very special letter in reception

<https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/news/curriculum-news/geography-autumn-2-2022/>

Year 2 have been doing some amazing writing, including writing about Tim Peake!

<https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/news/curriculum-news/year-2-autumn-2/>

Some children from Years 1 and 2 took part in a gymnastics event at Easton gymnastics Club. They represented us very well.

<https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/news/sports-competitions/ks1-gymnastics-trip-december-2022/>

Sugar for Shelters

Thankyou for your donations of sugar into schools. These have now been collected and will make a huge difference to those who are homeless this year.

Help with Living Costs

Just remember there is help available for support with living costs if things are difficult for you.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/campaigns/help-with-living-costs>

<https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/parents/parenting-support/>

<https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/23170180.cost-living-breckland-childrens-clothes-bank-launched/>

If you need any support in the New Year to find financial support, please contact us.

School Council

The Federation School Council had a meeting in early December and decided to create Christmas cards to send to our local community. Each school council member hand made a card with a festive picture and our secretary wrote a message to go inside.

The recent frosty, slippery paths have made delivering our special cards a bit of a challenge, but after some patient waiting we were able to go out and spread some Christmas cheer to our neighbours and our friends at Little Owls Nursery. One year 2 member of our school council added a little bit of carol singing for a couple of the residents that we met along the way.



Dereham Theatre Community Christmas Pantomime

Some of our children are taking part in the panto this year, which runs from 27th December to 1st January at the memorial Hall. Do go along and watch if you can! Good luck to Dylan, Wren and Orson for the shows.



We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and a restful break with family and friends.

School reopens for children on the 4th January 2023.