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Toftwood Infant and Junior School Federation

Executive Headteacher – Mrs Joanna Pedlow

Newsletter 5 December 2024

Christmas Performances

We shared the Christmas performance dates with you in September, but just in case you missed them, here they are again.

For Christmas performances please be aware that it will be two adults per child, and no younger siblings. If you have no one to watch a younger sibling we may be able to support you in coming to a rehearsal so please contact your class teacher via the usual methods.

We are very limited for space, so please be aware we do need to stick to these restrictions, with seven performances taking place and hundreds of children!

Please also remember phones must be switched off and there is no filming or photography during the performances, but you are welcome to take photos of your own child at the end.

Date	Infant School	Junior School
Monday 9th December	**Year 1** Christmas performance 9:15-10:15 **at Junior School**	
Tuesday 10th December	**Year 2** Christmas performance 9:15-10:15 **at Junior School**	
Wednesday 11th December		**Year 3** Christmas Performance 9:15-10:15
Thursday 12th December		**Year 4** Christmas Performance 9:15-10:15
Friday 13th December		**Year 5** Christmas Performance 9:15-10:15
Monday 16th December		**Year 6** Christmas Performance 9:15-10:15
Tuesday 17th December	**Reception** Christmas performance **at the Infant school**	

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The rehearsals have sounded great and the children are working exceptionally hard and we are sure you will all enjoy their performances.

Christmas Parties

Please see below for our Christmas party dates. Year groups will send further information on dojo or tapestry.

Date	Infant School	Junior School
Monday 16th December	Year 2	Years 3 and 6
Tuesday 17th December	Year 1	Years 4 and 5
Thursday 19th December	Reception	

Assemblies for Empathy

As we shared recently, we have been doing assemblies at Juniors that develop our Federation value of empathy in terms of understanding others with different conditions.
Today we looked at Tourette's and what that is and how it affects children and how we can support them.
If you wish to watch the videos you can see them here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9yj_FXD2Qc&ab_channel=BBCNewsround
https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/shows/appeal-show-2/appeal-show-2023-stories/shays-story/

Year 5 Viking day

Year 5 had an interesting Viking day to extend their learning on this historical topic.
On Friday 22nd November, Year 5 enjoyed a Viking day. Our Viking visitor, called Thor's Wolf – Son of the Hammer, welcomed us in traditional Viking Language.
He proudly showed us his colourful trousers that he told us displayed his wealth, because they were made with six metres of fabric, which was expensive, because of the amount of time taken in spinning the flax and weaving the cloth. He also proudly displayed a comb on his belt, made from reindeer antler – very expensive too.
We learnt about how the Vikings came across in their longships to raid monasteries before returning to Scandinavia. However, due to the long and wintry journeys, some decided to stay and settle in a fenced campsite. Because they were known as "Drakkar" (meaning dragon ships) they were thought to have had dragon heads on the stern and bow ends, very ornately carved and decorated.
The children also read lots of information boards, to answer questions in a quiz; they enjoyed learning extra facts, with some independence.
They also enjoyed playing a board game called "Fox and Geese" where they developed strategies for the fox to eat (jump over) geese or for the geese to surround and trap the fox on the gaming board.
The children had valuable opportunities to learn about and handle replica artefacts. Through clever questioning, they had chances to use their prior learning, to work out what some of the more puzzling artefacts were used for. We saw a drinking horn, a bowl made from horn, a comb, a pan, a wooden cup and objects used to smooth cloth like an iron.
Using a die, wedged into a tree stump, he made some coins, by punching a pattern of a long-ship and a face onto both sides of a blank disc. A Viking coin was worth around £25. If you wanted to spend less, you cut it in half, or a quarter (four-thing/farthing).
He then brought out his scales, to explain how the Vikings traded and bartered.
We listened to him speaking some olde English and Viking language and we tried to guess what he was saying, so we could get an idea of how our language has developed from Saxon and Viking languages.
We then had an opportunity to see him dressed in replica chainmail and a helmet and demonstrate how to use a long spear, a bearded axe, a broad sword and shield. He showed us how vicious the Vikings could be, by slicing a melon in half! Did you know the Viking word for goat was gart and market was Wick, so Gartwick (now an airport) was once a goat market!
You can see photos on our website here:
https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/year-groups/year-5/year-5-viking-day/

Punctuality

Can we remind you please that children need to be in the gates by 8.55am or they are marked as late on the registers. A small number of children are arriving late on more than one occasion, and this means they miss the beginning of the lessons which can be unsettling. Please do ensure they arrive on time to get through the gates. Please remember the staff car parks are not for parents' use.

Year 5 letters to Eckling Grange

Year 5 have written letters to the Eckling Grange Care Home in Dereham, asking them questions about their Christmas memories and sharing traditions of their ow, This activity should hopefully prompt some happy memories for the residents. The children also used their lino-printing to make them some Christmas cards, in pop-art style.

To see photos check out the website here:

https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/year-groups/year-5/year-5-letters/

Junior Cross Country Trip

On Thursday 24th October, pupils from Years 3 to 6 took part in a KS2 Cross Country competition with over 20 other schools in the West Norwich and Dereham PE Partnership.

Girls and boys in Year 6 and then in Year 5 had to be resilient to run a distance of 1,500m up a gentle hill – including in the cold weather! The children were fantastic and persevered, with some of our children finishing in the top 20.

Then, Year 3 and 4 girls and boys also had separate races, running a total distance of 1,100m. They had to not give up and try and best their own personal best. All of our children achieved incredibly well and we were proud of their resilience, determination and perseverance. We are also proud to share that Ollie Davison (LM3) qualified for the finals on November 28th, after coming in the top 10 (7th place!) in the Year 3 boys race. We wish him lots of luck!

You can see photos on our website here: https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/news/pe-events/ks2-cross-country-trip-2024/

Children in Need 2024

On Friday 15th November, we celebrated and raised money for Children in Need. Each year, the children look forward to this event, and this year was no different – especially with the introduction of our 'Design a Spotacular eye mask for Pudsey' competition!

To begin with, we had a special assembly to discuss the important work of the Children in Need charity. The children were very engaged and listening respectfully, following our school values, as they learned about why Children in Need carry out all of the wonderful work they do. At the Juniors site, our PE leads Mr Barnard and Miss Wicks also led an exciting spotty-themed exercise assembly with a live Darcy Dance session! At lunchtime, we were particularly impressed with some of the children organising a Pudsey bear face out of leaves!

Our Spotacular competition garnered much enthusiasm this year! The children were tasked with designing a new spotty-themed eye mask for Pudsey to wear. Across both schools, we had some fabulous entries – our team of Councillors had a tough job picking a winner! After some deliberation, the School Council decided that the competition winner at Infants was Aubrey (RP2) and at Juniors it was Maisy (EW5) – well done to them! The winner's classes will each receive a reward of their choice.

Some members of our School Council, led by our excellent Treasurer Dominic, had the important job of collecting and counting the money donated. We raised an amazing £429.00! As always, a huge thank you to everyone who donated and helped our school raise such a wonderful amount for Children in Need.

See some photos here:

https://www.toftwoodfederation.co.uk/special-events/children-in-need-2024/

Lost Property

Please can you make sure all uniform, bags, lunchboxes, bottles, etc are named as the lost property boxes seem to be overflowing more than ever. The lost property will be on display at the performances and we would love to reunite it with its owners. All named items have been handed out already.

Primary Science Quality Mark

We are proud to announce that we have been awarded the second highest PSQM award for our commitment to science teaching and learning in both of our schools.

PSQM reviewers noted: "There is no doubt that a variety of good practice has long been established at Toftwood, and that science is held in high regard in both schools. You seem to have a clear vison for the teaching of science, with practical learning and enquiry at its heart."

Our Science subject leaders Miss Jacobs and Miss Goddard are so pleased that the Federation's commitment to science and the quality of teaching and learning had been recognised. There has been lots going on behind the scenes for science over the last few years and we are proud that the hard work carried out by staff has been highlighted'.
The Primary Science Quality Mark programme is a comprehensive evidence-based professional development programme that effectively develops science leadership, ensuring teachers have the knowledge, capability and support they need to transform science education and shape future generations.
The Primary Science Quality Mark is led by the University of Hertfordshire, School of Education in collaboration with the Primary Science Teaching Trust.
"Schools that have achieved a Primary Science Quality Mark have demonstrated a significant commitment to science leadership, teaching and learning and the profile and quality of science in each accredited school is very high." - Helen Sizer, PSQM Co-Director.
Well done to all of the staff and the children for receiving this award.

Change of Menu

On the first day back after Christmas, there will be a change of menu due to deliveries being restricted. The packed lunch menu will be cheese sandwiches.



SRB Planning Exhibition

Please remember our DRB planning exhibition is on Tuesday 3rd December from 3.30 – 5.30 in the main hall at the Junior School. Please do feel free to drop in and see the plans and ask any questions about the build you may have.

Parent Consultations

Thank you to everyone for attending our parent Consultations, it was good to catch up with you and have a focused and confidential discussion. We hope you found them useful.

Winter Wonderland

If you are visiting Winter Wonderland, here is some info and a discount code that may help:
CODE: WWNR2F
This discount code can be redeemed on their website, giving families the chance to enjoy a day filled with festive fun at a reduced price.

Best wishes, Joanna Pedlow