



Headlines

Autumn Term Week 14

www.melthamceschool.co.uk

Date: Friday 18th December

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Good morning

Crikey it's been a whirlwind of a term, and a week!

We've had all the usual stuff going on in school and of course it's been party week too! Each class had their own individual party this year, but the children were a credit to you and the school (and more importantly, had a great time). We also had Santa Zoom into Key Stage 1 from the North Pole and we had Year 1 and Year 2 children sing via Zoom for Greenacres care home this week. It was gorgeous, so thank you to the children, staff and Greenacres for making it happen! It's great to spread a little bit of joy...

This morning for the first time we took out the whole school to sing carols in the playground. We missed seeing you all for the annual chaos of Singing Around the Tree, but we weren't to be defeated. The staff told the story of the Nativity via Zoom then each class filed out class by class to a separate and socially distant part of the playground and we all sang. What's more, it was beautiful! The children were impeccably behaved and it is—unbelievably—the first time since late February (*when we stopped whole school assemblies*), that the whole school community have seen each other. It brought a tear to one or two eyes... I hope to see you all next year for the usual happy Christmas chaos though!! Oh, and please be reassured that every precaution was taken to ensure safety. No bubbles were burst during the festivities!

This week we have also had the results of the *No Need to Speed* competition that children in years 2, 3, 4 and 5 entered (and may have told you about?). I am delighted to say that we had too many winners to mention them all, but a little shout out to Amelia in Year 3 who was the overall winner and to Phoebe in Year 2 who was the Key Stage 1 winner. Lots of children received book tokens and goodies from Read bookshop in Holmfirth and from Rosenbauer (thanks to Kate Buchanan, the Mayor of Meltham and to Towndoor and Rosenbauer for making it happen). If we can play a little part in encouraging everyone to drive sensibly and within the speed limits in the village then it's a good thing to be involved in..

I do hope you've enjoyed the videos we've sent home? Not the same as the real thing with the stage and the music and the laughter, but the next best thing I hope. Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 and 4 all sent links via Google Drive for you to enjoy. Please be patient with the links if they're not behaving; and if you still haven't managed to view it, contact your child's teacher directly and they will help you out.

So lastly, before the messages, please let me say a huge thank you for your continued understanding and support this term. It has been a mammoth effort on the part of the children and the staff, and while it's been tough at times, it's been a pleasure. Stay safe this Christmas—look after yourselves and your families. Thank you also for your kind words of encouragement and thanks, so I'll say good bye for now, happy Christmas and see you next year!

Mr Gibbins (and the staff of Meltham CE Primary)

New Year Reminders

- School reopens for the Spring Term on Monday 4th January.
- Years 3 and 6 now start at 8:50am and finish at 3:15pm. Everyone will use the same doors and all other year groups' timings will remain unchanged.
- Spring Parents Evenings and their format are yet to be confirmed (we'll let you know in the new year)
- Reception and Years 1 and 2 will begin eating their lunches in the hall after Christmas.
- Key Stage 2 will eat warm boxed lunches in class. Remember that the menu is on the school website.
- Next term is often the coldest! Please make sure your children have warm PE kit on their days including waterproof coats.
- Years 3 and 6 will begin Forest Schools on Tuesdays next term—I know how much all of Key Stage 1 have enjoyed it, so I know the older children will too.

Christmas Jumper Day

Thank you for supporting Save the Children's annual Christmas jumper day. With your help, we have raised £474.10 for this most worthy of causes.

Fundraising

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the big PTA raffle, and the virtual Christmas store. So far, between the school and the PSA, we have raised just over £1100. With no discos or Christmas fair this year, the school funds are looking thin, so this boost is both timely and very, very much appreciated! If you would still like to donate to the virtual Christmas Store for the decorations, it will remain open into the new year. Thank you.

Hellos and goodbyes

A warm welcome to the staff of Meltham CE to Gemma Baum who joins us after Christmas. We are employing her through the school's catch-up funding and hope her appointment will improve the support for social and emotional wellbeing as well as academic catch-up.

And a fond farewell to Hazel Sixsmith in the office! Thank you and good luck Hazel... we miss you already.

Contact tracing reminder for the Christmas period

Please remember that should one of your children have a positive Covid test up until 24th December, you will need to inform me on head.meltham@kirkleeseducation.uk so I can contact the parents of other children should it be necessary.

I will check emails to this address up until the 24th, which is the last day schools are required to take part in any contact tracing. After the 24th you will not need to notify me of a positive result for one of the children.

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Reading

With current restrictions over sending books between home and school, you will have seen fewer books coming home this term. To improve this, we are making a massive investment in our stock of banded reading books. These are lovely and shiny new Reading Planet books from three different categories. Rocket Phonics are fully phonically decodable, Comic Street Kids Are 95% decodable and Galaxy are 90% decodable to assist structured progress in reading and there is an incredible range of fiction and non-fiction. You will find helpful notes and tips inside the front cover and talk about questions to follow up at the end. We hope that you will enjoy supporting your children's reading with these new books and politely request that you look after them carefully and return them to school promptly so the next child in class can enjoy them too! Happy reading!

Year 6 Robinwood Trip

We have managed to get the Year 6 children a new date to visit Robinwood's outdoor center from Wednesday 14th July to Friday 16th. By putting it back as far as possible, I hope to allow the visit to continue and not be cancelled as it has for so many other schools. The new price is £240, which I understand is £25 more than the previous booking. Children will travel to the center in Wrexham on two coaches, as two separate bubbles (unless—and fingers crossed—we can all get a little closer by then!?) Whilst I understand that circumstances may have changed over the past months and that Christmas is always an expensive time, I do hope we will be able to proceed with the trip. It's a fantastic experience and one that the children have always enjoyed.

In order that the trip is able to proceed, may I ask that payments of:

- £100 minimum paid by 29th Jan 2021
- £200 minimum paid by 26th March 2021
- Full amount paid by 28th May 2021

If you will find these payments difficult, please contact Mrs. Kinsey in the school office (or me!) and we can discuss it in good time.

Free Vitamins, Christmas Camps and Nature Trails

Mrs. Kinsey in the office sent an email yesterday with various community based posters attached. We won't attach them to Headlines this week so please check yesterday's email for more details. Please return the Robert Ashton questionnaires to school in the new year.

Mac's Bikes

School have been very lucky to receive delivery and installation of both bike and scooter racks in our Key Stage 2 playground! Rachel Mellow, who works across schools in the area delivering the bikability program, has provided them through the Mac's Bikes memorial fund and we are very grateful. When the Covid world releases its grip and allows us to get back to normal, we hope we can return to letting the older children arrive via scooter and that they will help encourage more active travel. Thank you!

COVID-19

Remember that if anyone in your household develops the symptoms of COVID-19 (*a high temperature; a new continuous cough which last more than an hour; or a loss or change to the sense of smell or taste*) then the entire household must isolate and children should not come to school. You should access a COVID test and await the results together in isolation.

How to book a COVID test if you need one?

Tests can be booked online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

You can also contact 119 for advice and local advice (*including locations of mobile testing units in Kirklees*) can be accessed at:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/health-and-well-being/covid19-test-and-trace.aspx>.

Remote learning and isolation

Purple Mash hosts our remote learning which you will need should your children be isolating awaiting the results of a Covid test or in the event of a class bubble closure. It includes a Parent Portal for you to keep track of what your child is asked to do. Follow the link below to access a selection of guides and help videos. We hope these guides for Purple Mash will help make remote learning a lot easier for you. The guides include: Parent Portal, Finding work set, Hand in work from Purple Mash app, Hand in work (Tablet, Phone) and Guide to Mini Mash (For Foundation stage parents.)"

<https://tinyurl.com/Melthguides>

Pupil and parent wellbeing

Please, please, please seek help if you or your children are finding it tough going. I know I put these on each week, but there is some help out there if you need it!

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/looking-after-yourself/coronavirus-and-mental-health/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/looking-after-your-mental-health-at-christmas>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/christmas-and-mental-health/christmas-and-coronavirus>

https://youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents-helpfinder/?utm_source=enewsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=supporting_parents&utm_content=december20

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/how-to-be-happier-with-tal-ben-shahar-tickets-126889801813>

Community

A message from Kate at Uniform exchange:

I still can't believe we've had only 400 requests for free winter coats when there are so many children in need. I'm sure there are families out there that don't like to ask for help but do need it. This is a link to an online form that can be completed on a phone: <https://order.uniform-exchange.org/>