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'Learning For Life'

January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year!

I hope you're well and you had a good festive break.

Although it was good to have some time off, it certainly wasn't the Christmas we all had planned. Like most people, it was difficult not to be able to see family in person. Zoom and Facetime have been a fairly standard form of communication in our house - I imagine the same is true with you all.

This has been such an unsettling 12 months and so many people have suffered. I hope that you are coping okay and staying safe. I have to say that no-one is looking forward to the prospect of home-learning again but, as I said in my letter, we are all better equipped this time around and we can get through this together. We must, however, have some hope and optimism and it appears that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Let's hope the new restrictions and the vaccine roll out mean that we can return to some level of normality as soon as possible.

This is a very different newsletter to the one I had originally written which was full of planning and events for the term ahead. However, there is a nice reflection of what we did achieve last term and some other relevant bits of news.

This issue contains:

- COVID 19 update
- New Class 1 teacher
- Christmas
- Willoughby Award Winners
- Online resources
- Challenge Yourself
- Finally...

### **COVID 19 update**

The news over Christmas about the spread and the new strain of the virus has been stark and has therefore resulted in the new National Lockdown and the message to, once again, stay at home.

We have sent out 2 weeks' worth of work, all printed off in booklets for you and ready to go. All year groups from Year 1-6 will have daily contact with their teacher which we will build on as the children get used to their new style of learning. Reception children will be contacted weekly. This is not an easy process from any perspective and we would kindly ask that time is given for the initial shock of the situation to calm down and for everyone to get organised.

Staffing arrangements at school have been re-organised to allow for teachers to have time to do on-line sessions, key-worker children to be looked after, office work and phones to be managed and the school to be run whilst not mixing too many personnel in case an infection occurs. School will be open with a key member of staff on hand to answer any questions and deal with any on-going issues. If you have any concerns at all there will be someone there to try and help out.

### New Class 1 teacher

We all heartily welcome Mrs Alison Barker to our teaching team this term. Mrs Barker will usually be teaching Class 1 on Thursdays and Fridays. Mrs Barker is a very experienced teacher having taught at Nottingham High School, as well as providing supply cover for many Primary Schools in West Bridgford. Mrs Barker has said she is looking forward to teaching this wonderful class and meeting all of the parents at the gate. I am sure we will all give her a give her a Willoughby welcome and time to settle in to her new role.

The job share role for Class 1 now looks like this:

Monday to Wednesday - Mrs Smith

Thursday and Friday - Mrs Barker

### Christmas

I would like to thank everyone for the extra special effort that went into making sure Christmas was celebrated in the most 'normal' way possible last term.

The Christmas Fair was a huge success. Games were made and played by all of the children in their bubbles. Freddie in Year 5 said, "Although there weren't as many people around it didn't matter. It just meant there was more room and we got to go on everybody's games."

FOWs also ran a couple of very popular competitions- How 'Christmassy' is your pet? and Santa's Sleigh design. I was so impressed with the creativity and ingenuity of the entries! Thank you FOWs for organising this as well as prizes and certificates for all involved.

School Council promoted and ran a Christmas Jumper Day in support of Save the Children which raised £42.

The hampers proved extremely popular! The Fortnum and Mason hamper raised £280 on its own! Thank you to everyone who donated items for them, and a particular thanks to Mrs Ledward and Mrs Lambton for dealing with all the organisation (and folding of tickets!) and to Mrs Dornan who put them all together so well.

The Nativity also went ahead and was filmed for you all to enjoy. Of course we all missed the special atmosphere that the Church brings on a cold December evening but, thanks to Jake (from Drumming), we were still able to watch the children perform and the children still had the joys of dressing up, learning parts and performing to others. Mrs Marshall will also have a lasting reminder of her last Nativity too.

The whole school entered a Christmas card design competition run by Ruth Edwards MP and Harry in Year 3 came runner up! He had a personal visit by her to his house to congratulate him. The rest of the cards were used to post a card through every door in Willoughby to spread a little Christmas cheer during this turbulent time. The Class 2 children all wrote a quiz question and Class 1 all contributed a joke and these were slipped into the cards for all to enjoy. FOWs were on hand, as usual, to deliver the cards through the post boxes.

As well as all that, the children also enjoyed the traditional Christmas dinner (with personalised placemats!) and had a wonderful day playing traditional party games with party food as usual.

There was even an extra special visit from Father Christmas who appeared via a video message with a greeting just for Willoughby School as well as a present for everyone. How wonderful!

### Willoughby Award Winners

Congratulations to our recent winners of the Willoughby Award, awarded for effort in work, behaviour and other aspects of school life:

4/12 Jessica (Y2)

11/12 Tabitha (Y2)

## Online Resources

As with last lockdown there are plenty of resources on line which you can use to support your children through this period of home learning. It can often be overwhelming and a bit daunting to plough through them all, although I am sure by now you have some 'go-to' favourite sites.

From Monday daily lessons will broadcast on CBBC and BBC Two for Primary aged pupils which is excellent. Also, [Blue Peter on YouTube](#) has launched its live programme on CBBC at 5.00pm every week, or on BBC iPlayer.

We will continue to signpost you to the most useful site for your children and the weekly timetables for your child's year group will be put onto the school website with relevant links on to 'click and go' to.

## Challenge Yourself

Once again we will be running a whole school topic throughout the term. The theme is 'Challenge Yourself' and will run throughout this Spring Term alongside other subjects. Every week will have an activity and/or task which will hopefully be fun and challenging at the same time (some of these challenges will be adapted for different age groups).

Week	Theme	Activity
Wk 1	New Year- new resolve!	Everyone make a New Year's resolution.
Wk 2	Challenge Yourself card	10 challenges to have a go at. Challenge card to be completed over the term. Make a challenge up for yourself as well.
Wk 3	Challenge yourself to learn the order of the Planets	Can you learn & remember the order of the planets in our Solar System? (Extension - learn 2 facts about each planet)
Wk 4	Challenge Yourself to try 2 new foods	Try 2 new foods- one savoury and one sweet. What do you think? Write down what they were.
Wk 5	Challenge Yourself- to write a story	Roll a Story- write a story by using the characters, settings, genres etc that you roll
Wk 6	Half-Term Challenge- make something out of a cardboard box	Half-Term Challenge Whole school design challenge. What can you turn a cardboard box into? Get creative and see what you can make!
	Half	Term
Wk 7	Challenge yourself to learn to say 'hello' in as many languages as you can!	How many languages can you say 'hello' in? Challenge yourself to do as many as possible!
Wk 8	Challenge Yourself- how many in a minute?	Time yourself to do some challenges. Fun challenges to do in a minute. Fill in the card & record how you get on!
Wk 9	Challenge Yourself- capital cities	Complete your capital cities sheet and learn as many as you can off by heart!
Wk 10	Red Nose Day Challenge- Learn a joke off by heart	Learn a joke and practice performing it. Be ready to say it our loud in class on Red Nose Day!
Wk 11	Challenge Yourself- to write with your 'wrong' hand	Write your name and/or a simple sentence and practice writing it with the opposite hand to which you usually use. How neat can you be?
Wk 12	Challenge Yourself review	What have you succeeded at? Complete your own challenge.

**Finally ...**

Thank you for all of you who have been in touch with offers of help-your ongoing support for all that we do as a school in this community is always welcome.

Stay home, stay safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B. M. Smith".

Beatrice Smith  
Head Teacher