

The Beacon

Academic Year 2016/17

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Headteacher News

It's nearly Christmas. It's that special time of year. Children are becoming excited and parents are making preparations. Interestingly though, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, chose this time to express his concern over the pressure to spend at Christmas and how this puts families under too much strain. He stated that '*It puts pressure on relationships because when you're short of money you argue. You get cross with your kids more easily, it spoils life.*' He suggests that the 'absurd and ridiculous pressure' to have a perfect Christmas puts relationships under strain, that consumerism over the festive period is now so 'over the top' that couples are left arguing over money and children are shouted at. He said that he would like to tell people to stop giving gifts altogether but accepts no one would listen. Instead, he urged families to show love and affection rather than trying to buy it. Figures last year suggested the average household spent around £1,000 on Christmas. He attempted to bring people back to the origin of the Christian celebration - God giving his only son, Jesus Christ. He stated that giving at Christmas is meant to reflect that generosity of God and for us to be generous in a way that *shows* love and affection rather than *buys* love and affection. His advice was to '*Share love and affection with reasonable gifts that demonstrate you really care for someone. That makes for the best Christmas you could ever have.*' Very sensible words!

The true reason why Christians celebrate Christmas is a message we always communicate to children at this time. I really appreciate the pressures upon parents to purchase the next newest and best thing for their children. However, I would always advise restraint and take comfort from the words of children because, deep down, they do know what it's all about. I remembered reading an old CBBC Newsround Blog. They invited children to comment on 'What does Christmas mean to you?' I managed to find that forum and have copied a handful of the remarks from it that reflect the overall messages communicated by all the children who posted comments.

"*I think that Christmas is more giving than getting and being around people who love you and who you love.*" Melissa (9)

"*I think Christmas is about love, being kind and respectful to other people.*" Leila (10).

"*I think Christmas is a time for getting together with your friends and family and remembering why we celebrate December the 25th. I do like to enjoy opening presents and having a delicious meal, but some people forget what the meaning of Christmas is.*" Fleur (10).

"*The true meaning of Christmas is the birth of Jesus but Christmas to me means everybody is happy and you spend more time with your family.*" Mollie (11).

"*Nowadays, most children think that Christmas is just a time where their parents give them presents and forget that it's really a religious festival. But even though I'm not religious, for me Christmas is a time where people can relax, share and have fun.*" Leila (12).

"*I think that not only is Christmas about being with family but it is a time for giving and not only to your family and friends but to the less fortunate people in third world countries. Christmas is also about realising when Jesus was born and that he died for us.*" Phoebe (13).

"***Bringing all your family together, having a laugh, giving presents and eating some delicious foods. YUM! YUM!***" Nancy (12).

What message do I draw from these children's thoughts? Well, there are common threads here. Yes, presents feature in what they say but the more powerful message to me is summed up by the words: giving, love, kindness, respect, happiness, friends, family and food. And it's the family part that really stands out for me. It resonates with the piece I wrote back in October ('15 Small Things Parents Should Do To Their Children Every Day To Make Them Feel Loved') about how children really value their parents spending time with them. Something which costs nothing at all but means so much to them (their words, not mine). My message possibly comes a little late for some shoppers but it's still worth saying. For children, Christmas is very much about family and seeing more of mum and dad. Life is so busy, time spent together has become a highly prized, precious commodity. Please try to give it freely and generously this Christmas.

I sincerely hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.



Foundation News

The children have all had a busy fun-filled **Wed 4th Jan 2016** week and are very excited about Christmas. They ended the week going for a Christmas wellie walk and making Christmas collages from natural materials. We would like to thank you for your support this term and wish you all a very HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Year 1 News

WELL DONE YEAR ONE!! What an amazing performance! We were all so proud of them on Tuesday and know that you were too! The children have been superb throughout this term and have taken on any challenge with great enthusiasm. We cannot wait to get stuck into our exciting new topic in January but feel like we could all do with a little rest before then! The Year 1 team would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas enjoying all the special little things that make it so magical. As the last line in the performance said: 'The biggest gift was love!' - Happy Christmas

Year 2 News

School is always magical at this time of year and year 2 has been no exception. We have had a fantastically festive time that kicked off with the year 1's Christmas performance. How magical! We were able to write our own reports on some fantastic creatures that we had created - Steve Backshall will be pleased! Finally, we hope you all have a very, merry Christmas filled with food, friends and family. The Year 2 team.

Year 3 News

The Year 3 team would like to thank you for your continued support so far this year, and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Joyful New Year.

Year 4 News

Wow! We have had a busy week, completing lots of different activities. Thank you for your continued support this term and we would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas!

Year 5 News

How quickly the time has passed and Christmas will be upon us shortly. Praise must be given to the children of year 5 as they have worked incredibly hard this term to improve and make progress, which they have. A pat on the back to all of you. Have a great Christmas and enjoy the holiday from all the year 5 team. Happy Christmas.

Diary Dates

- First day of term
- Mon 13th - Fri 17th Feb 2017 Inc.
- Half term

Fri 31st Mar 2017

- 'Wear a Hat' mufti day - for Brain Tumour Research

Mon 3rd - Tues 18th Apr 2017 Inc.

- Easter holidays

Mon 1st May 2017

- Bank holiday

Sun 21st – Fri 26th May 2016

- Bude Residential (Yr 6)

Mon 29th May - Fri 2nd June '17

- Half term

Tues 25th July 2017

- Leavers' assembly
- Last day of term 2:30pm finish (*Yr6 finish at 1.30pm*)

Wed 26th July 2017

- Start of the summer holidays



Monty's Den

Monty's Den is our onsite after school care. Call on 07522 429599 for more information or to book a session. Sessions start from £6.50. Flexible booking available www.thedens.co.uk

Year 6 News

The last week of term has been a busy one, but fun too!

We wrote our own performance poems in English using a Brian Moses poem called 'Walking with my Iguana' as inspiration. There were all sorts of animals doing all sorts of things! Ask your child what their poem was about!

We had great fun at the Christmas party, playing games, eating all the food you generously provided, and dancing. What fabulous dancers we have in Year 6!

After the holiday, children will be knuckling down in preparation for SATs in May. There will be revision sessions taking place some afternoons in school. Also, there will be additional homework which will we hold a meeting to tell you about in the new year. Therefore, we have decided to give the children a break over the holidays by not assigning homework.

We hope you all have a fantastic Christmas. Enjoy your break and come back rested next year.

School Menu Change –JAN 2017

Please note, wraps **will not** be available after Christmas 2016 until the new Summer Menu comes out after Easter.

Payments

May we take this opportunity to thank you to those who continue to make timely payments, it certainly makes life easier. May we remind those with monies outstanding of the school policy that payments for lunches and breakfast club are due in advance. For those who still have outstanding payments please ensure **all debts** are settled before the start of the new term.

School Games

Netball

The year 6 netball team entered into the first Lipson league, playing over 2 evenings to decide which league they would be competing in. After winning all matches on the first day, fairly comfortable we were going to play the next round in the Championship league. Once again MPS being the team to beat, entered the court full of confidence winning the first match 4-0, and second 3-0. Scoring over 25 goals and not conceded any giving over the 2 events, MPS the winning title. Congratulations team, you were all amazing.

Diving

A while ago the school was lucky enough to have specialist diving coaches delivering a PE session looking for any potential divers. Those children that showed this was invited to join the training sessions held at the Life Centre, and recently entered into a competition 'Flipping Fun'. The hard work and determination payed off with medals being collected. Congratulations to Matilda, Amelie, Phoebe, Dylan, Archie, Freya and Bella. Keep up the good work.

Christmas Jumper Mufti

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed, we raised a total of £259.16 in aid of Save the Children.