

# The Lantern

St. Boniface said of St. Bede that 'he shone forth like a lantern.'



## Dear Families

### I hope this finds you well.

We have had a great day in school, with children wearing their Christmas jumpers and enjoying Christmas lunch. Well done to our cook Samantha and her team - I believe they fed over 350 of our children. Sitting with the children on Top Table, Mrs Roberts and I both enjoyed the festive meal.

### Autumn Assessments

This week, I have been able to look at the children's results from the assessments that they have taken this month. Overall, I am pleased with what I am seeing. It is clear that children, staff and parents have worked very hard indeed. My thanks to all of you. I am confident that when children take their SATs this summer in Y6 and Y2, they will do well. Progress in other years and sets has been good this term too. It is apparent that our younger children have been hardest hit by the interruptions to their schooling, particularly in reading. In school, we will be doing all we can to help children in our infant school (aged 4 to 7) to make accelerated progress in the months to come and I know we will be able to count on your support at home. In terms of our junior children, the progress of some of our more able mathematicians is not where we would want it to be. When we returned after the first round of school closures in September 2020, I said I thought it would take two full years to regain our stride. We remain on track for such a recovery, but it is going to have to be worked for...

### 4K

The parents of many of our Y4 children, were expecting a suitably experienced agency teacher to teach their children from

Friday 26th November, as Mrs Kaur is convalescing at home following surgery. However, due to the continued impact of the pandemic, there is a national shortage of agency teachers to cover short-term absence: schools are having to call upon such agencies more than hitherto because more permanent staff are absent — either ill or waiting for the result of a PCR, having shown symptoms. In turn, there are some supply teachers having to self-isolate or take sickness absence for the same reasons. Therefore, I have asked Mrs Mackie to teach 4K until Mrs Kaur's return. Mrs Mackie is an experienced Y4 teacher at our school—children respond well to her. I will ask her to make herself available to the parents of children in 4K in a Teams video call on our return after the Christmas break, so she can answer any questions you may have. I expect Mrs Kaur to return in the Spring, but will keep you updated.

Mrs Grady (member of St Bede's staff from September 2018 to July 2021) has returned to St Bede's to teach the RE lessons across the school that would have been taught by Mrs Mackie. We are delighted to see her back - such a great teacher.

## School Council

The School Council met with Mrs Roberts and Mrs Dayson this afternoon. They met in the classroom adjacent to my office and I could hear their excitement as they discussed and voted on classmates' suggestions. We look forward to sharing with everyone what the councillors have agreed to do next term.

## Lantern Certificates

*Youngest to oldest*

Lorena; Jahziah; Leo B; Oliver C; Sienna G; Renesmae; Erin; Praise; Tayela; Ruth; Jamilah; Michael A; Gbolahan; Jameillia; Zuzanna; Amelia F; Isabella; Danielle; Erin E; Oliver L; Lainey; Klaudia; Riley; Fleur; Nivain; Kehinde; Jeshuran; Santana; Kevin; Samuel O; Uyiosa; Chelsea S; and, Olayinka.

## Head teacher Awards

Nathan and Teniola

## Times Table Challenge

This comes to an end next Friday. We are looking forward to announcing the House winners.

## Children's Birthdays In the Past Week—Many Congratulations

Kacey (9), Martine (8), Bethany (8), Teniola (4), Eiren (8) and Eden (10)

## Gentle Reminder

No clubs, tutoring or choir next week. Thank you for your ongoing support.

## And finally ...

I enjoyed talking to the children this afternoon during our weekly Celebration Time via Google Classrooms. We enjoyed a bit of Abba, listening to their new Christmas song. I am still learning the tricks for making the most of Google Classrooms—I am really enjoying it. Next week, we will sing along to our school song again—I so enjoyed seeing everyone do that last week.

Mrs Roberts and I wish you a great weekend

Gary

13th December (2pm)  
14th December (on-line)  
15th December (2pm)  
16th December (1pm)  
16th December (3pm)

**17th December (1.30pm)**

Carol Service at church (years 1-6)

Nursery Nativity—**10.45am and 2pm via Teams link on the class blog**

Year 2—A Christmas Story

AM Pantomime (on-line in class) Class PM Christmas parties in school

Carols at the front gate sung by the choir

**Early closing for pupils. Nursery is shut all day**

## Weekly Reflection, with Mrs Mackie

This weekend we reach the third Sunday of Advent known as Gaudete Sunday. Gaudete means 'rejoice'. Not only will we see the pink candle lit in the Advent wreath, but this is also the Sunday when we will see our priests wear pink! It is a reminder that we are getting closer to that special time of Jesus' birth,

This week many of the children have been learning about the Visitation when Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, who was expecting a baby too. In the gospel of Luke, Elizabeth exclaims about the moment she spied Mary coming towards her and talks about how, 'The child within her leapt for joy.'

What is joy though?

It is an overwhelming feeling of happiness and pleasure.

I have experienced joy this week from seeing the generous donations of food under our Christmas tree, to hearing the children singing their Christmas carols with gusto, and witnessing many children receiving individual reconciliation.

Seeing someone else's joy can see the happiness and pleasure spread.

In school this week, I have seen joy in so many places: from the child who was beaming having received one of Mr Nott's Golden Lantern; to seeing Father Sean's face light up at the sight of so many children queuing to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation.

When we have moments of precious joy, let us appreciate them and give thanks to God. Let us take these moments to our hearts and cherish them, while recognising that in a few weeks' time we will celebrate the ultimate joy – namely, the birth of Jesus.

*Jesus, fill us with joy as we approach the great celebration of Christmas*

*Amen*

God Bless

Mrs Mackie