

# The Lantern

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



## Keeping People 'Well' In School

This week, we have made some changes to our COVID risk assessment. Two of these adjustments have been called for by the Department For Education and are being put into place by all primary schools. Firstly, school staff are now asked to wear a face mask in communal areas, unless they have a good reason not to. I worry this might be a little disconcerting for some of our children, particularly younger ones. But there is no wriggle room for head teachers in this matter. Secondly, if a child or member of the staff team were to test positive for the Omicron variant, all members of the household must isolate for ten days. Test and Trace would contact the family to tell them if this action was needed.

Elsewhere, as a school we have taken the difficult decision to share our nativities with you this year via Google Classroom, rather than inviting you into school. We know this will be a disappointment to you. It is to us too. But many schools have had to revert to putting children into year group bubbles in recent weeks as the number of primary school children testing positive has increased measurably. The parents of our choir children were being invited in to share some carols with them on Monday afternoon and this too will now be shared via Google Classroom. We will send those parents of children performing over the remaining two weeks, all the information they need next week.

We have been lucky. As I write, I have three children absent, recovering from COVID. Some schools have more than that in every year group. In part, I think this is because everyone—children, staff and parents—have adhered to the measures set out in our risk assessment— but we should also count ourselves as lucky too!

In terms of hand washing, given COVID and the recent gastroenteritis outbreak in some of Y3, we are continuing to do what we have done all term: children clean their hands with gel on entering and leaving school and we encourage staff to make time for the children to wash their hands with soap before eating. The local health team described our handling of last week's suspected outbreak of Norovirus as 'superb'. It is usual for such an outbreak to rapidly spread throughout a school. It did not. Again. This was thanks to the understanding of affected children, staff and parents, who responded so supportively to my request to stay away from school for four days—Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Our office staff and caretaker were faultless in how they helped Mrs Roberts and I deal with the situation. This gave us the 72+ hour window to break the cycle of transmission. Moving forward we are reminding everyone in school that it is imperative to wash their hands with soap and water when they have been to the bathroom. Hand gel is thought to kill Coronavirus, but not Norovirus — hence, the need to use soap and water before eating.

If you wish to read the school's revised risk assessment, it will be posted on our website next week.

## Christmas

Our tree has gone up this week and children are invited to bring their cards into school from Monday. We have purchased admission to an online pantomime, which the children can enjoy on 16th December.

Our **Reverse Calendar** will again be running this year. We call it that because instead of the usual taking something out from the calendar, we put something in! The school community is invited to send dried or tinned food (no fresh food please or opened packets) into school during the remaining fortnight of the term. We will then offer this to those families in our school community who would welcome a gesture of our collective good will.

Christmas Jumper day is on Friday 10th December. Your child may exchange their school jumper for a Christmas jumper (£1 donation which includes 50p to charity and 50p towards the class party provisions). If your child would also like to wear a Christmas hat or Christmas headband, they are welcome to do so.

### Head Teacher Awards

Eadie, Fleur, Jimmy, Kehinde, Kian, Eesa and Shari.

### Lantern Certificates

Youngest to oldest...

Mercedes; Sonny; Leiana-Grace; Kai; Leira; Eutyclus-Paul; Davina; Isla; Jeremy G; Alice K; Samantha; Anastasia; Maya L; Alya-Janita; Mark; Frederick; Sophia; Simon; David E; Zachariah H; Samuel K; Patrick M; Bozhidara; Chelsea A; Kavina; Jaida; Arminas; Abigail Dky; Michael D; Latisha; Alfred; Amelia F; Ciara G; Jameillia; Mo-siah; Aiden T; Oluwatamilore; Oliver M; Piotr; Favour; Catherine; Tanvee; Ziva; Faye; Jimmy; and, Rebecca S.

### Friday 'Celebration Time'

Each Friday afternoon at 3.00pm, we join together via Google Classrooms to celebrate the gift of another fantastic week that God has given us together. We give shout-outs to those children who have made it into my office during the week to be congratulated on something. This afternoon, we sang the second of our two school songs—'**What I am**' by **Will.i.am**. The children are invited to sing and, those who want to copy the actions, appear to enjoy doing so. I have invited the children to teach you the song this weekend and we will attempt to get some of you on to Google Classrooms during a 'Celebration Time' to join us. I think the children would enjoy this. Any volunteers?

- here is the YouTube link

<https://youtu.be/cyVzjoj96vs>

Mrs Roberts and I hope you have a great weekend.

10th December	Christmas Jumper Day (£1) and Christmas Lunch
10th December (on-line)	Reception Nativity — <b>PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF ARRANGEMENTS</b>
13th December (1.30pm)	Carol Service at church (years 1-6)
13th December (4pm)	Choir singing to parents on playground
14th December (on-line)	Nursery Nativity— <b>PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF ARRANGEMENTS</b>
15th December (2pm)	Year 2—A Christmas Story
16th December (1pm)	AM Pantomime Class PM Christmas parties in school
16th December (3pm)	Carols at the front gate sung by the choir
<b>17th December (1.30pm)</b>	<b>Early closing for pupils. Nursery is shut all day</b>

## Weekly Reflection, with Mrs Mackie

On Monday, we held a service in Church to celebrate the beginning of Advent. Our theme was 'darkness into light'. During the service, the children reflected on this being a time to prepare our hearts for Christmas. In the classes, we have thought about the different ways we can prepare ourselves for this wonderful season:

**By thinking of others - bringing food for our reverse Advent calendar to give comfort to those less fortunate than us**

**By small acts of kindness towards each other - whether this a smile or helping someone in the playground who has fallen over.**

**By praying the Angelus prayer each day and reminding ourselves of when Mary said yes to give birth to Jesus our Saviour.**

**By asking forgiveness for the things we have done wrong in our lives.**

This Monday afternoon, we will be holding a Reconciliation Service to give an opportunity for the children who have made their First Communion and adults in school to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation individually from Fr Sean. Reconciliation is when we have the chance to say sorry for all we have done wrong and know that God loves us so much that he forgives us for all that we have done. How wonderful is that!

### Instructions for the Individual Sacrament of Reconciliation

Say : ' Please Bless me Father it is ... these are my sins

Say the things that you have done wrong

Father will talk to you about what you have done and will give you penance, prayers to say

Father will then ask you to say the **Act of Conscience** –

*Oh my God, thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins for not loving others and for not loving you, help me to be like Jesus and not sin again.*

While Father gives you absolution , this is when your sins are forgiven

Say 'Thank you Father' and then leave.

We will also go through this with the children on Monday before the service.

*Jesus, you are light even in the darkest places. Help us to trust in you when we are lost or lonely. Shine hope into our hearts we pray. Amen*

Seeing the children receiving the Sacrament and then praying afterwards is always powerful and moving alongside their smiles when they have had that special experience.

God Bless

Mrs Mackie