



Towcester Church of England Primary School

We will send the children out, as Noah did the dove (Genesis 8:8-12), having nurtured and prepared them for life. Knowing that they are valued, they can fly and take the values of the school out into the world.

'If we live by the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.' (Galatians 5:25)

December Newsletter 2023



Wishing you, your families, friends and loved ones a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have had a wonderful and incredibly busy term at Towcester – so many exciting things have been taking place both for our children and to develop our school. The children have made us incredibly proud when taking part in trips and events in the community, we have had so much positive feedback on their awareness of good citizenship and demonstration of our school values from everyone that has come into contact with them. They truly are living out our vision and values in their daily lives!

In the last couple of weeks, we have started our Christmas celebrations, starting with our Christingle Service, led by Year 3, children across the whole school are sharing words, stories, songs and prayers with our community in their celebration of Christmas. We hope that you will be able to attend our Christmas services in the coming days and appreciate the messages of Christmas that our children share.

On behalf of our whole school community, I would like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas time and to thank you for your support and care throughout 2023.



Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2024.

Kind regards,

Sally Beaton
Headteacher.

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A special visitor... or four!

This term, the children took part in Parliament Week and received a visit from the Rt. Hon Dame Andrea Leadsom. They were told many fascinating stories about the history of British politics and how traditions and customs are upheld today. They learnt how bills and acts are created and about how these are passed and signed by the reigning queen or king. In addition, they discussed current affairs via questions and answers. The children posed brilliant questions, which ranged

from the environment, the life of an MP to conflicts and wars. They listened very carefully and answered many questions themselves with confident knowledgeable answers.

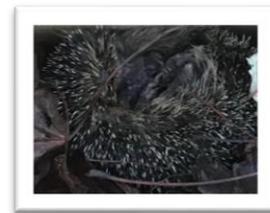


At the beginning of term, we were very lucky to have a special visitor to talk to us about Diwali. A big thank you to Ishver from Wellingborough Mandir for his very interesting and informative Collective Worship. We learnt so much in such a short time.

PCSO Nicole spent her day with us at school. She reminded us how to stay safe by recognising safe and unsafe butterfly feelings and who to talk to. Thank you for spending the day with us and speaking to each year group after the assembly.



We have also had a baby hedgehog visiting the school grounds. Miss Day and her team of helpers managed to catch him so he could be taken to the local vets for treatment.



Living Streets Initiative

Mr Boon was very unprepared for the massive uptake to the challenge! He is overwhelmed by the number of children actively travelling to school with around 90% of the school having earned a badge! He has requested some more badges from Living Streets and these will be given out as soon as he has received the order. It would be fantastic if 100% of the school could earn a badge in the new year. Hopefully Islington Road has been a little quieter and safer with less traffic around! A reminder for those who do drive to school, you can still earn a badge by parking at Waitrose and walking to school through the park.

Christingle

Year 3 started our Christmas Celebrations by leading our whole school Christingle Service. As a school we have managed to raise £102 for The Children's Society. Thank you for your support. We would also like to take this opportunity to recognise Waitrose, Tesco, Aldi and the Co-op for their donations of sweets, oranges and cocktail sticks enabling every child in our school to take part and make their own Christingle.



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Remembrance 2023

This term began with our whole school Remembrance service which took place on our school field. Every child in the school made a poppy and 'planted' it in our school field as a mark of respect. In addition, the Year 6 children made two poppy wreaths and researched the names of soldiers that died in the war and had the same surnames as them. The wreaths that were laid next to the cross during our Remembrance Service. Thank you to the Royal British Legion and Mark Limbert for participating in our service. Our thanks also go to parents and carers who joined us for this memorable occasion.



As a school we raised £383.78 from the sale of poppies, this was combined with the local area total to make a grand total of £22,500. Thank you for your donations.

Anti-Bullying Week

Children and members of staff showed their uniqueness and marked the start of antibullying week by wearing odd-socks to school. We had a special assembly where we were reminded to use STOP (Several Times On Purpose) when thinking about what bullying is and use STOP (Start Telling Other People) to help tackle bullying. We reflected on how we can STOP and 'make a noise about bullying' over the duration of the week.



Life Education

Years 3 and 4 had a brilliant time with Pam and Harold from Life Education East Midlands learning all about keeping their bodies healthy

Bikeability

Our Year 6 pupils have enjoyed participating in their Bikeability lessons this month. They have shown the school values of Wisdom, Courage, Fellowship and Thankfulness as they put their trust in the instructors and took to the road, gaining vital skills that will stay with them for life.



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Kurling

At the beginning of the term the Year 5/6 Kurling Team brought home a trophy for **1st place** – What an amazing achievement! We wish them luck for the County Finals in February next year. Well done to all who participated and ‘thank you’ to Sponne School for organising and hosting the competition.



Towcester Strictly Kids

Back In April, one of our TAs got in touch with the organisers of Strictly Towcester about the possibility of including children in this year's Strictly Towcester in support of one of the chosen Towcester Town Mayors charities for the year, The Lighthouse Centre. Rehearsals started at Towcester Primary back in September and we were very proud of the 14 girls from our school who chose to participate. In a very short amount of time, 8 sessions, they learnt to jive and cha cha! They

worked so hard with the teachers to ensure they understood new terminology, rhythms and routines. They not only learnt the 2 dances from scratch but raised an incredible amount of money over £700 for The Lighthouse Centre. They performed back in October alongside the adults taking part at Strictly Towcester, twice in one day to audiences including friends and family. They worked so hard and we are incredibly proud of them all for showing all of our school values.



Baby Basics Donations

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the School Councils chosen Christmas charity. This year we have been collecting donations which will be sent to Baby Basics in Northampton. We are very grateful for everyone's kind donations and generosity which will help new mothers and families who are struggling to meet the financial and practical responsibilities of looking after a new baby.



We are an Anaphylaxis Aware School.

Please could we ask that our community are mindful of those children who have allergic reactions, some severe, to nuts. **We ask that when selecting items for your child's lunchbox items and mid-morning snack that you choose nut-free options. Please avoid using sandwich fillers such as peanut butter or Nutella as these pose a direct risk to pupils with allergies.** Your consideration and support enables us to keep all of our children safe in school. Thank you for your support.





Cross Country

Our children took part in a cross-country event at Sponne this term. They competed brilliantly and ran with determination, perseverance and motivation. Well done to everyone who was invited to participate.

A humongous thank you to all those who purchased books from our recent school book fair. We smashed our previous record and you have helped to raise an incredible £1000 for new books for our children.



'Design a Book Cover' Competition Winners!

Our Reading Champions selected the winning designs from our recent competitions. They were framed and presented to our winners during a Collective Worship. We cannot wait to see these on display in our library, they look amazing! Thank you to everyone that took part and well done to our winners.

Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers who would like to listen to readers or run some small group activities. We would love to hear from you if you are interested and can spare an hour or two on a regular basis. Thank you.



The Hive

Thank you to The Data Handling Company who transformed The Hive with their 'DIY SOS Makeover' day. We bought equipment and new furniture with the £1,500 we received from the Tesco Blue Token donations. This renovation would not have been possible without the help of Davinia from SNVB and Steve Challen. Already children, staff and parents are benefiting from the transformation.



A huge thank you from us all to everyone who donated their tokens, their time and their services!

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Towcester Primary Pupils in the Community

In addition to our sporting events this term, our Year 6 children visited Oxford Castle and Prison. Whilst there they learnt about the conversion from a castle to a prison and some of the unfortunate events that occurred there. The children participated in a workshop to explore crimes and punishments from the Anglo-Saxon times to the current day.



Some of our Year 4 children have more recently visited The Churchill Retirement Home in Towcester.

They showed our school values of compassion and fellowship as they sang Christmas Carols for the residents.

Our Year 3 children will be visiting the Natural History Museum in Oxford before the end of this term. We are sure that they will come back full of knowledge about Rocks to support their science topic this term.

We ask our children to wear their school badge with pride when they represent us in the community and, with the feedback that these year groups' teachers received from museum staff and members of the general public, our pupils have certainly made us very proud.

School Term Dates and Holidays

This academic year we are monitoring attendance, punctuality and absence closely.

We believe that 'every lesson counts' and encourage regular attendance at school. We have high expectations of our children just as you have high expectations of us; these expectations cannot be met if your child is frequently absent or late.

We ask that you avoid booking holidays during term-time. Our term dates are published on the website a year in advance giving ample notice of holiday periods.

Any holiday in term time will be treated as unauthorised absence and will be taken into account when referring parents and families to the Education Welfare Services. We will refer families to the Local Authority to consider administering Penalty Notices for non-school attendance when holidays are taken during term-time.

If your child's attendance drops below 95%, we will notify you and work with you to ensure that their attendance rate increases. Our target for every child is an attendance rate of above 96%.



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If your child's attendance drops below 90%, they will be classified as a 'persistent absentee'. We will work with you to set targets to improve their attendance, but if attendance rates don't increase within the timescales that are set, we have a duty to report the absence to the County Attendance Team. A Penalty Notice Warning may be issued which could result in a fine or further legal action through the courts.

Our school gates will close promptly at 8.50am as this is when our school bell goes to mark the start of the school day. Please allow ample time to arrive, park (if driving) and drop your children safely at school. Children arriving after 8.50am will need to enter school via the main school office. If your child is regularly late, we will contact you to offer support as important learning takes place from the very start of the school day.

Good attendance at school gives your child the very best opportunity to flourish, please support them in this by ensuring that they are in school every day that they are well enough to be.

If you need any support with your child's attendance, please do contact us through the school office. We will be more than happy to help.

Parents' Survey Results

Thank you to everyone that took the time to complete the parents' survey this term. We have been delighted with the feedback that has been shared about our school – thank you.

We are always keen to improve what we offer and are currently looking at the suggestions and comments that you have put forward for ways that we can continue to make our school even better.

A number of you commented that you would like support with using Class Dojo to ensure that it provides an effective means of communication; that you would like a broader range of extra-curricular activities for your children (particularly in Early Years and Key Stage 1) and that you would like more regular feedback on your children's progress throughout the year. We are working hard to act positively in response to your thoughts and comments and will keep you informed of what we are planning in these areas.

Thank you again – your feedback helps us to continue to improve for the benefit of our children.

Wraparound Care

We will be opening our Wraparound care provision on the morning of Monday 8th January. Please see the letter and registration of interest form that has been sent to all parents. If you have not previously used the school's provision and would like to book care for your child, please check on Parent Pay where information about available slots, booking and prices will be published. Please note that users of the previous KidsStop wraparound care will be given first priority in the allocation of places.

Please mind your language

We have had reports of parents swearing and using inappropriate language on our school site. Some of the words used have been overheard by young children as well as other adults.

We ask that all visitors to our site uphold the high expectations of behaviour that we have and show our school values towards each other.

If our staff hear you swearing, please expect to be spoken to about this. Persistent swearing on the school site may result in a ban from our school site. Your consideration for every member of our school community is appreciated. Thank you.

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Family Support Worker Section

Thank you to everyone who has come along to our coffee morning on a Wednesday whatever the weather; we've had rain, freezing icy temperatures, it's been windy and there has been some sunshine too but the coffee morning has been well attended and it has been lovely to see a growing number of parents join us for a coffee and a chat! For anyone who hasn't managed to make it yet, please do come along for a free tea or coffee, you can even take it to go!

Christmas is a busy time of year, and we know it isn't easy for everyone. I hope that however you spend your time over the Christmas holidays you manage to take time, to take care of yourself as well as everyone else you look after.

I have been to visit the team at Mind in Towcester recently, they were welcoming and easy to talk to. If you would like some more information about them and what they do you can find them online at [Mind in Towcester and Brackley | NorthamptonshireMind](#) or I can share their details with you, please just let me know if you would like them.

We have had such a busy term! Events have included a visit from PCSO Nicole to talk to our pupils about Road Safety & the Blue Butterfly scheme. The Local Offer team also visited to talk about SEND support, clubs and activities for our families and young people. We have hosted our Community Showcase Event during parent's evening, and Samantha from DW Roberts came to talk about the School vision assessments. We hope that you and your children find these visits useful and informative, we have lots more planned for the new year.

I have attached a Christmas recipe for you to try. If you do have a go at making it, please do share some pictures of your creations with us!

I look forward to seeing you all in the New Year. Merry Christmas from Mrs McShane!

Thank you for reading our newsletter, if you have any questions or queries about any of the items, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Have a lovely Christmas everyone!

Sally Beaton

Headteacher

Dates for the Term	
Tues 12th Dec	KS1 2pm Dress Rehearsal – to whole school/pre-school/care-home Year 3 visit Oxford Natural History Museum
Wed 13th Dec	KS1 2pm Nativity to parents
Thu 14th Dec	KS1 2pm Nativity to parents
Fri 15th Dec	A Very Christmassy Day – ABM Christmas Lunch, Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Crafts Day
Mon 18th Dec	School Christmas Church Service Year 5 - Planetarium in school
Tues 19th Dec	Y5 and 6 Carols and Readings – in school for parents
Wed 20th Dec	1.30 Carols around the tree – whole school and community Term ends for Christmas
Term 3 – January 2023	
Thursday 4 th January	Teacher Training Day
Friday 5 th January	Teacher Training Day
Monday 8 th January	School reopens to pupil
	Towcester Primary Wraparound Care opens

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Term Dates

Academic year 2023/24

Term 1	Training day	Monday 4 th September 2023
	Training day	Tuesday 5 th September 2023
	School opens to pupils	Wednesday 6 th September 2023
	School closes	Friday 20 th October 2023
Term 2	School re-opens	Monday 30 th October 2023
	School closes	Wednesday 20 th December 2023
Term 3	Training day	Thursday 4 th January 2024
	Training day	Friday 5 th January 2024
	School re-opens	Monday 8 th January 2024
	School closes	Friday 16 th February 2024
Term 4	Training day	Monday 26 th February 2024
	School re-opens	Tuesday 27 th February 2024
	School closes	Thursday 28 th March 2024
Term 5	School re-opens	Monday 15 th April 2024
	School closed – Bank Holiday	Monday 6 th May 2024
	School closes	Friday 24 th May 2024
Term 6	School re-opens	Monday 3 rd June 2024
	School closes	Tuesday 23 rd July 2024