

Although we all know that the restrictions we are living with continue to bring increasing challenges for us all, we hugely appreciate the patience and support of our school community. The festive season is fast approaching, and although things still remain uncertain, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mrs Gemma Rehal

EVENTS

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| Christmas Tree Decorating Assembly | 2 Dec |
| Christmas Postcard Sale | 2 Dec |
| Christmas Card Boxes Out | 7 Dec |
| Christmas Jumper Day | 11 Dec |
| Christmas Lunch | 11 Dec |
| School Closes at 2.05pm | 18 Dec |
| School Starts at 8.40am | 5 Jan |

Chestnut Lane School

NOVEMBER 2020

Autumn Update

Friendship Week

During the week beginning 16th November we celebrated Friendship Week in school. Each year this week provides an opportunity for the children to strengthen our ongoing work centred around building positive relationships with one another, and developing social skills such as turn-taking, team work and conversation skills.



In Early Years we celebrated friendship week by thinking about how we can be good friends. We made a big effort to make new friends and play with new children. Reception wrote a letter to our friend

Kailish to find out more about his life. We worked together to think of questions for Kailish and practiced asking and answering questions with our friends here at Chestnut Lane.



In Year 1 we were thinking a b o u t how to be a kind friend. We worked with a partner and recorded words on the petals of a flower.

Year 2 children were thinking about people's feelings and considering how our actions may affect others. The children also learnt the importance of permission seeking and enjoyed asking the teddy bear if we were allowed to give her a hug.

Secret Garden Competition

As part of the RHS Campaign for School Gardening, children were invited to design a secret garden. Well done to all the children who entered their imaginative designs. We also ran a school competition. Entries were voted on by the School Eco Committee who took this responsibility very seriously. The winners and runners up were awarded their school certificates during Monday's Well Done Assembly.

Viewing Children's Work

We are still working on options for parents to see their children's work and hope to have more information in January.

How are we spending our School Fund?

Just before the partial school closures in March 2020 we were awarded a small grant from the Early Years Service at the local authority in order to make improvements to our Early Years garden. The grant awarded partially covers the work required, and we have been able to



ensure the work can be fully completed by using our School Fund. Repairs to the gates have been made and we are having a new toadstool seating area installed imminently. These improvements will increase the safety of the garden area as well as help to provide designated learning 'zones'.



We have also used our School Fund to purchase a range of new books for the children. These are for use across the school and particularly focussed on supporting our work on equality and diversity across the curriculum. Some of the texts will be used as stimuli for learning activities, others for specific interventions as well as being available for pupils to view as part of developing their greater love of books.



Christmas Activities

Christmas Cards for Vulnerable People

In recent years we have supported the #onemorecard campaign and created Christmas cards for residents in local care homes. This year is no different and possibly needed more than ever. In addition, we have also been approached by the Rotary Club of Amersham to create Christmas cards for vulnerable local residents in their homes. We will be working on these cards within the classroom and they will be delivered in the final week of term.



Christmas Postcards

Wednesday 2nd December

The Environment Club have been busily preparing recycled Christmas postcards again this year, however the sale will be running slightly differently. On Wednesday 2nd December we are inviting the children to bring a small amount of change into school and they will visit the Christmas postcard stall in their class 'bubble' at some point during the day. Each class will handle postcard packs designated only for them, and the relevant cleaning will take place between 'bubbles'. A pack of 10 Christmas postcards is 50p and this year the children have voted to donate the money raised to a homeless charity.



Christmas Tree Decorating

Wednesday 2nd December

The children will be creating two Christmas decorations in school. One will be made using recyclable materials and will be weather-proof to decorate our outdoor tree (opposite Green Class). The other will be for our Christmas tree in the hall, a shared area which all classes use at some point throughout the week.



Christmas Card Boxes – Monday 7th December

The boxes for children to send Christmas cards/Christmas postcards to one another will be available from Monday 7th December. Due to the requirement to store the Christmas cards for at least 48 hours before they are handed out, **the boxes will close on Friday 11th December**, unfortunately we will not be able to accept any cards after this time.

Where we would usually invite parents to bring the Christmas cards in with their children this will not be possible this year, therefore the children will need to bring their cards in their bookbags during the week identified above. Please help the children to include surnames on their envelopes as we have duplicate names in some classes.

Christmas Jumper Day – Friday

11th December



We invite all the children to join the staff in wearing a Christmas jumper on 11th December. If they would like to bring in a donation towards the charity 'Save the Children' they are welcome to do so.

Dolce Christmas Lunch – Friday 11th December

Dolce are providing a Christmas lunch for the children on 11th December. The menu is now available on School-Grid so if you would like your child to have the lunch please ensure you order it well in advance.

Christmas Performances

Everyone in school is very disappointed that we will not be having a whole school Christmas performance this year – it is a very special time that we will all miss! Due to the restrictions on mixing class 'bubbles' and limiting visitors into the school this just isn't possible. We still want to provide an opportunity for the pupils to perform, and so all the classes are working hard on something special with the aim to record the performances, and provide access for our families. You should have received a communication asking for your consent so your children can be part of these festive presentations and we ask for your response by Monday 30th November.

Christmas Holidays

School closes on Friday 18th December at 2.05pm. School returns on Tuesday 5th January at 8.40am.



CLESA Update

As outlined in our recent letter, CLESA are taking a sabbatical year with the view that we can restart the committee once it is appropriate to do so. The following initiatives are however able to continue so please support these if you are not already signed up to do so:-

- * Gift Cards
- * Lottery
- * Easyfundraising
- * Amazon Smile (New)

Full details can be found on the PTA page of our website: <https://chestnutlane.bucks.sch.uk/clesa/welcome-to-clesa>



Important Updates

Staff News

We have been pleased to welcome a number of new staff since October half term. Miss Shona Nicholls has joined our Early Years team as a Learning Support Assistant. Mrs Swetha Garlapalli has joined us as a midday supervisor.

Earlier in November we conducted interviews for a Deputy Headteacher, and we are extremely pleased to announce that Mrs Megan Harper will take on this role in January 2021. We would like to reassure parents that she will also continue to maintain her position as Early Years Lead and Little Chestnuts Class Teacher. We are all looking forward to working with her in her new role.

In January, Mrs Roxanne Turner will be increasing her teaching time in Green Class to Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. We are very pleased that Mrs Sandeep Sanghera will be taking on the teaching responsibilities in Green Class for the end of the week, until the end of the academic year. Mrs Sanghera will spend time over the coming weeks getting to know the children well and having a full handover with Mrs Elliott.

COVID-19 Update

Our COVID-19 risk assessment continues to evolve in line with the updated Government guidance that we receive. We know that it can feel repetitive, and in school we would much prefer to focus on positives, however we also know that the protective measures we have taken are essential to keeping everyone safe. The school driveway is a particularly challenging area due to the high volumes of people and narrow space. We continue to ask everyone to be considerate of others, particularly as we have families with a range of different circumstances.

Please maintain 2 metres distance between households, wear a face covering unless exempt, and stick to the one-way system which is in place.



Feedback from Dessert Survey

Thank you to everyone that provided their feedback on our desserts survey which closed just before half term. We had 166 responses, and the majority (36.7%) indicated that their preference would be for the children to be served the advertised desserts for two or three days of the week. We are currently working with Dolce on this and will update parents on when it will be possible to roll this out. We have also raised the concerns around low-fat yoghurts with Dolce. Since hot meals returned to school in October whole milk yoghurts have been served and we have asked for assurance that this will remain the case, again I will update parents when I have further information.

Statutory Relationships & Health Education

As mentioned in our March newsletter, the new curriculum for relationships and health education has now become mandatory, with an expectation that teaching of the curriculum will begin to be taught by at least the start of the summer term 2021. We will be virtually consulting with parents in the coming weeks via a prepared presentation, and we aim to share resources with you which we hope will be useful in supporting the curriculum objectives at home. Further information for parents can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>

Please Note

Named Coats, Hats, Gloves etc.



All children should have a named coat in school every day and as the weather is getting colder, named hats and gloves may also be required. Please ensure all your child/ren's belongings (including shoes) are clearly labelled.

Increased Ventilation

We know some children are beginning to feel the cold in the classroom. Additional base layers are encouraged including long sleeve t-shirts or roll/turtle necks if required. As a final option pupils can wear a plain red, black or grey fleece over their uniform.

Poppy Appeal

Despite the different approach we had to take this year with our poppy appeal, we are pleased to have raised £160.75. Thank you for all your contributions.



Extracurricular Clubs

We have been pleased to welcome back a variety of extracurricular clubs, mainly taking place at lunchtimes, with the exception of Playball club after school on a Monday. The majority of the clubs will finish week commencing 7th December, with the exception of Judo Fitness club which will run until Tuesday 15th December for Red Class only.

Details of the Spring Term clubs will be announced before the end of term.