



Welcome back and Happy New Year, if I haven't already managed to greet you on the gate this week! We are looking forward to a very busy **Spring Term** with lots of exciting activities planned for all of the classes. Just next week, Y3 Topaz are looking forward to their first swimming lesson on Monday, Y1 classes have a visit to All Saints church on Wednesday and Y4 staff are going to Dorset to prepare the risk assessment for the Hooke Court residential later in the term. School life as normal!

On Tuesday this week, Father Bill came into school to celebrate **Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany**. Reception children had proudly remembered and excitedly shared the very difficult names of the kings' gifts and we all considered what gifts we might give to Jesus in this New Year. Our crib scene is still up in school as we continue to celebrate Jesus' birth until 2nd February (The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord) in the Church year. We promise we haven't just forgotten to take the crib down!

In continuation of the Christmas spirit, we enjoyed our postponed **pantomime** in school this morning! The story of Dick Whittington seemed to go down well with all ages – Y1 children told me: "It was good." "It was very funny and made us laugh." "We shouted very loud!" Y6 described it as: "Fantastic!" "Very interactive!" "We were up dancing and some of us got to be in it!" Staff reported that the children loved the performance and sat spellbound during the show; I think staff were also quite relieved that they weren't required to dress up! Our thanks go again to the Parents' Association for funding the show and to all of you who support their great work!

Dick Whittington has been a rich source of excellent writing opportunities this week and I have been delighted to celebrate some brilliant retelling of the story. This has also been a week for celebrating some of the "**Learning Powers**" the children have been learning:

**Resilience** - Y2 have been sharing with me their excellent progress in division; some great resilience has been evident in their books, supporting their learning from finding it tricky to finally "getting it!" Always great to see!

**Reflective** - Y3 produced some wonderful Quentin Blake art work, where the children's skills in sketching and in ink drawing were really developing. More importantly, the children's enthusiasm and enjoyment for their subject was tangible and they were able to reflect on what had made them successful this time: opportunity to practice; looking carefully at the details; having confidence that they could really do it. We look forward to seeing more superb art work as they progress!

I was delighted to hear from many of the children that they had received new and exciting books for Christmas. I am looking forward to hearing how they enjoy reading them! At a Surrey Head's Conference this week, there was some discussion of the rapidly disappearing art of reading for pleasure! In our fast-moving world, our children often don't have time (or inclination!) to lose themselves in a book – and what's more, they don't see many adults doing that either! Many parents ask us what they can do to help their child in school, so if you haven't already made a New Year's Resolution, perhaps you might consider this one:

**Make time to talk to your child about what they are reading and let them see you enjoying reading**

Share the funny parts, the scary parts, even the difficult or interesting words – let your children know how exciting and how useful reading is, so it isn't just a homework task, but a joy for life. As Roald Dahl's Matilda says: "The books transported her into new worlds and introduced her to amazing people who lived exciting lives." What a great gift to give our children!

Have a great weekend! Catherine Burnham

## **GREEN CLASS ASSEMBLY—FRIDAY 18 JANUARY**

Green Class parents are invited to their assembly on Friday at 9.00am.

**CLUB NEWS** Chess in Schools apologises for Chess Club not going ahead on Tuesday as planned, the first session will be Tuesday 15 January.

**Homework Club** re-starts next week, along with other school run clubs except for:

**Environmental Club, Table Tennis** (28 January), **Ukulele** (23 January, please note finish time is 4.00pm) and **Eco Warriors** (now starting 24 January). Please check the clubs page and clubs lists on our website.

**PE KITS** A reminder that **PE kits must be in school at all times**, not only for scheduled PE days. PE kits should include:

**White socks** to change into—**tights must not be worn for PE lessons**

**Joggers and sweatshirts** for the colder weather (except for children in Reception).

If your child has borrowed any school PE kit either for a lesson or to change into, please return it as soon as possible so it is available to lend out again. Thank you.

**A reminder that earrings cannot be worn during PE lessons**—if children cannot remove them by themselves, they must be taken out at home before school. We cannot cover earrings with plasters.

**BREAK TIME SNACKS** We encourage children to bring in a break time snack of fresh fruit or vegetables, or plain rice cakes, but please no processed fruit products, eg Fruit Winders etc. Thank you.

## **COME READ WITH US—TUESDAYS 9.15AM OR 1.30PM**

A reminder that we welcome parents, grandparents and members of our parishes to come and read with our children every Tuesday, this term starting on 15 January. All adults taking part need a current DBS, just enquire at the school office. If you, or someone you know, would like to join us please let us know.

**MATHS CHALLENGE** Congratulations to our mathematicians Lilia B, Lara M-E, Nathan C and Matthew Y who completed the second round of the National Young Mathematician's Award competition. They worked really well as a team and showed great resilience.

**SURREY CC/NHS** Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services for Young People in Surrey is running Designing the Right Care Together workshops during January—please find out more on our website.

**SURVEY ABOUT HERSHAM COMMUNITY SITE** Elmbridge Council is running a survey about the Hersham community site which comprises the Village Hall and Hersham Centre for the Community near Hersham Green. Please find the link on our website.

**FREE FOOTBALL SESSIONS FOR GIRLS** Walton Casuals FC is helping to get more girls involved in Football by offering free sessions in association with the Surrey Football Association and Active Surrey. The sessions start on Friday 18 January—please see the link on our website for more information.

**THE PROMENADE CHOIR** rehearses at Bell Farm School and is recognised as one of the top choral ensembles for young singers in Elmbridge. The Junior Choir is for boys and girls from 7 or 8 years old and rehearses from 6.30 to 7.45pm on Mondays. For more information about how to join, please see the link on our website.