

18 December 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

"Mankind is a great, an immense family. This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas." - Pope John XXIII

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are at the end of what can only be described as a most exceptional Michaelmas term. With the Christmas break upon us, and the opportunity to meet up with three other families during the Christmas Bubble period between 23 – 27 December 2020, the advice is very much to do this with the utmost care.

Dr Justin Varney, Director of Public Health Birmingham, reported this week that cases in Birmingham have increased, with rising hospitalisations putting increasing pressure on the NHS. Spread often happens in the household and he recommends that you visit the webpage www.germdefence.org to look at how to reduce spread at home. The information on the website is available in different languages as well.

Nursery Nativity

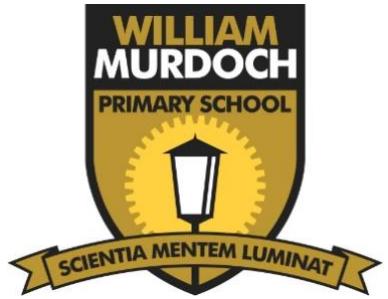
School at Christmas time is one of my favourite times of the year. However, this year we have had to curtail significantly our Christmas activities. We have been able to put on a Nursery Nativity performance for both the morning and afternoon nursery. The children were simply amazing and incredibly charming. The videos of both performances are available using the following links:

Morning AM Nursery performance <https://youtu.be/usDLoO181WA>

Afternoon PM Nursery performance <https://youtu.be/qksUNSngGsq>

Edenred Free School Meal Vouchers

The school will be distributing vouchers on behalf of Birmingham City Council for those children who are entitled to Free School Meals for the Christmas two-week break. These are the weeks commencing 21 December 2020 and 28 December 2020. Those eligible will receive a voucher equivalent to £15 a week via email from today onwards (please note the vouchers may take a few days to arrive). If you have more than one child, you will receive a single voucher that covers entitlement for all your children. They are valid for 3 months from when you receive them. Please find attached guidance on how to use the voucher.



COVID-19 Reporting over Christmas

If your child tests positive for COVID-19, myself and my office staff will be on call to deal with track and trace up to Wednesday 23 December 2020. Beyond this date, NHS Test and Trace will take over contact tracing but you must also inform school of any positive cases in your household. If your child tests positive for COVID-19 during the school holidays, please inform school immediately by emailing the Main Office at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk. Please do not use Class Dojo to inform school of a positive test.

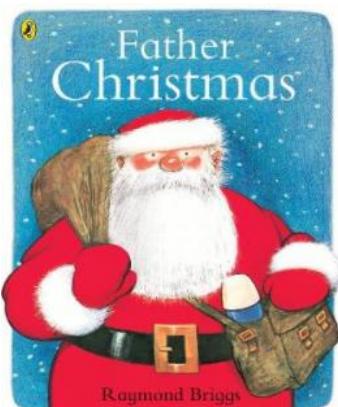
Please also note the self-isolation period for contacts of a positive case has reduced from 14 days to 10 days.

Online safety tips

Some children will be unwrapping digital devices this Christmas. For many it will be the first time they have owned a device that connects them to the online world. Unfortunately, this also means being exposed to new risks that they need to be made aware of. The National Online Safety organisation has produced a very useful leaflet (see attached), full of tips, to support parents in ensuring their children enjoy their new digital gifts safely.

Book of the Week – Mr Panichi

Lower School

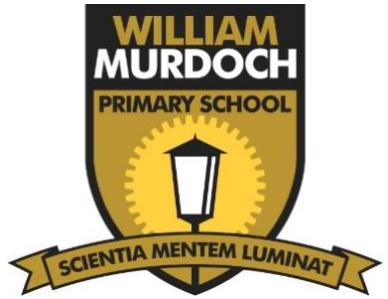


Father Christmas - *Raymond Briggs*

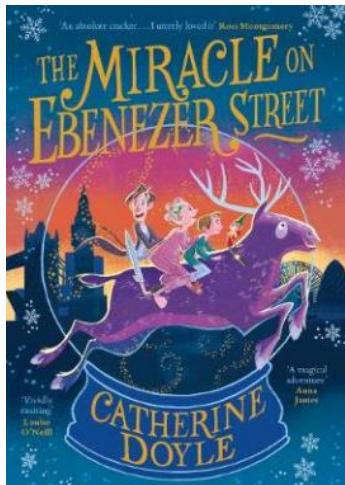
Sometimes, you can't beat a classic, and this is such book! It has stood the test of time and no child's home library would be complete without this title.

A grumpy and irascible Father Christmas gets ready for his Christmas Eve duties.

An irreverent look at Christmas through the eyes of Father Christmas - a grumpy Father Christmas who loves nothing more than a cup of tea and for Christmas Eve to be over.



Upper School



The Miracle on Ebenezer Street - Catherine Doyle

Three years ago George's mum died in a car accident on Christmas Eve. Since then his dad Hugo has cancelled Christmas entirely, much to George and his Nana Flo's sadness. Then one day George stumbles upon Marley's Curiosity Shop and in it he finds a mysterious snow globe that seems to show a scene from a past Christmas, a time when he and his family were happy and celebrating. What he doesn't know is that "Old Marley's magic leaked out" and that night he and his Dad and intrepid Nana Flo are swept away on an adventure, visiting a past, present and future Christmas, along with Randolph the purple reindeer and Trixie the miniature elf who somehow always manages to cause chaos!

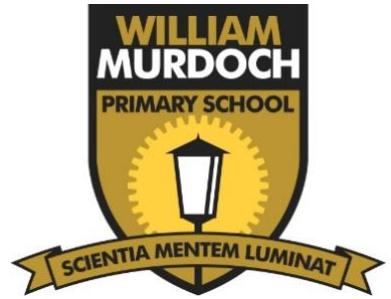
This is a heart-warming, modern re-imagining of A Christmas Carol and I know you'll LOVE it. It has a wonderful cast of characters, is full of magic and humour, but also deals very sensitively with the issues of grief. There is something almost 'Narniaesque'. There are 26 chapters and it would be the perfect book to read a daily chapter, to your little ones, during this Christmas period.

Artists of the Week



Y2.3 Liya

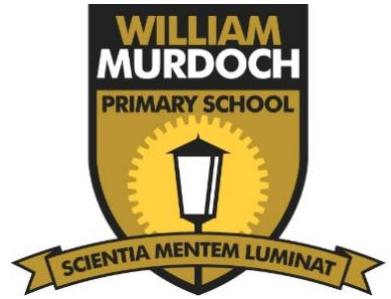
In Year 2 the children have been looking at the artist Jan van Eyck and how he used fine, long marks and lots of different shades in his Arnolfini Portrait. The children used oil pastels to create their own picture to show different visual textures on the different items of clothing by using different marks and colours. Liya carefully drew the detail on the clothing and then used oil pastels to show the different textures on her drawing.



Y4.1 Inaaya

In Year 4 the children have been looking at creating layered images to create the illusion of depth. They used different pieces of coloured paper to layer a landscape scene. Inaaya worked very hard when creating her landscape and took lots of care throughout the process. The children in Year 4 really enjoyed studying this unit of Art.





No one could have foreseen the events that overtook our lives in 2020. The collective effort of William Murdoch Primary School staff has been incredible. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all my colleagues for their hard work over this term. It has been uniquely challenging, but it has also been inspiring to see how the school community has risen to the challenge and supported each other. As ever I am grateful for your enduring support and cooperation.

I would also like to wish all those celebrating a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Stay safe. Stay well. Have a relaxing and enjoyable holiday period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Singh".

Mr M Singh
Headteacher

KEY DATES

FRIDAY 18 DECEMBER 2020

STAFF TRAINING DAY

MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021

STAFF TRAINING DAY

TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2021

PUPILS RETURN TO SCHOOL