

17 December 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

'Thinking is difficult, that's why most people judge.' – Carl Jung

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have made it to the final week of term and I'm sure that you are all looking forward to breaking up for Christmas and spending some time with family and friends.

Although we have not been able to invite parents, the Christmas performances have all gone really well. A link to the Nursery Nativity and the Year 3 Nativity have been posted to your Class Dojo account. I hope that you will enjoy viewing them with your children and families. You will also be able to share any links with other family members and family who may be abroad who wouldn't normally be able to see the shows and performances. The confidence and performances of the children have been wonderful.



I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the staff who have helped put the Christmas performances together for our children. There is always so much work that goes into these behind the scenes and I'm sure that the children really appreciate all you have done.

The recent rapid spread of COVID-19 and the emergence of the Omicron variant has underlined that the decision not to host audiences for Christmas shows was the right thing to do. Our intention has been to try and limit any spread of the virus to enable our children, staff and families to have a normal Christmas without the need to isolate with positive cases. We have also tried to schedule some of the events that we would normally have to maintain the magic of Christmas in school. I am pleased to report that cases in school are still very low when compared with the local community and other local schools.

I am expecting a full return to school in January as the government have made it very clear that schools should remain open. Headteachers do not have the jurisdiction to make decisions about

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HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH

school closures and any decisions of this nature are taken on the recommendation of Public Health England. In some cases, it is staff absence that has forced these decisions, and whilst this is a hugely challenging situation, we have managed this effectively up to this point, with minimal disruption to our pupils.

Despite the ongoing challenges this term, I have been very proud of what we have achieved as a school community. We have managed to operate some of our educational visits that broaden the educational experience for our children and have kept the content of their curriculum as rich as

possible. We have also managed to schedule a number of competitive sports matches and tournaments which the children have enjoyed competing in.

I would like to thank you all for your support during the course of the year and particularly this term. It has again been a year like none of us have experienced before and this doesn't look like it will be changing anytime soon. We will continue to adapt and adjust to the situation and make decisions based on the best interests of our children, staff and families. Have a wonderful Christmas break and a prosperous New Year and I look forward to seeing you all again on Wednesday 5 January 2022.



Christmas Jumper Day

Christmas Jumper Day for pupils and staff at WMPS took place today and was a tremendous success. Many thanks for your contributions to the non-uniform day appeal for Save the Children.





Christmas Card Competition

We received a large number of entries this year and the standard of the entries was also very high. After careful consideration, a card designed by Surbhi in Class Y5.1 was chosen as the winner. She has received printed copies of his card along with a voucher. Congratulations Surbhi.

Termly Report Card

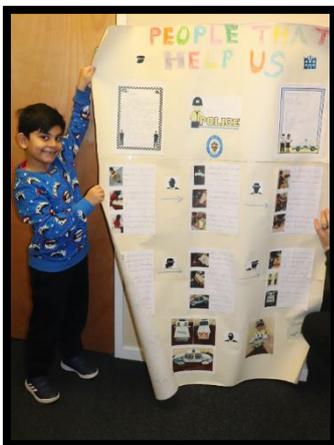
Your child has today brought home their very first termly report card. Please check for a sealed A5 envelope that contains the report card, a letter explaining the content of the report and a copy of the home reader book band chart.

Dolce Catering – Prize Winner

Yesterday our catering providers ran a special competition whereby the lucky child whose lunch tray had a prize-winning sticker received a £5.00 Amazon voucher. As you can imagine the children were excitedly checking their trays. The prize was won by Yaqub (Y4.2) who stated he would be spending the voucher on American snacks.

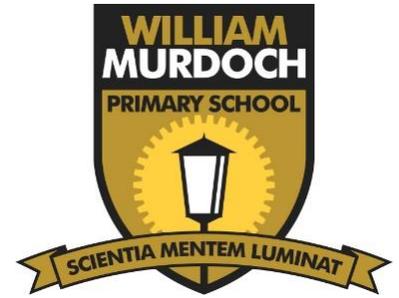


Autumn Project



This term's Year 1 project was called "People Who Help Us", and was about those people who are in our lives that help us in times of need e.g. the police and fire service.

Taranveer in Y1.3 completed his project with the help of his parents and told us about how much the police help us. Mr Singh and Miss Harris were astounded that a child at such a young age had produced such an excellent piece of work. What Mr Singh was especially impressed with was how Taranveer had handwritten all the instructions so beautifully. Well done Taranveer, we can't wait to see your next project.



Free School Meal Vouchers

Birmingham City Council have confirmed that they have secured provision of supermarket vouchers for children eligible for free school meals over the Christmas holiday, using funding Birmingham has recently been allocated through the government's Household Support Fund.

Sodexo will once again be used as the provider and the £30 vouchers have been distributed to the parents of eligible pupils via email this week. Please be aware there has been a change to the format of the vouchers. You will have received a weblink that will take you directly to the website to redeem and select a voucher at the supermarket of your choice. Further guidance has been sent out alongside the voucher links this week.

If you have not received your voucher, but your child is in receipt of Free School Meals, then please email the school at enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk.

Staffing

We said goodbye to Mrs K Kaur, a cleaner of 25 years, and Mrs S Patel, who has worked in the school kitchen since 1981, this week. We wish them very well in their retirement and thank them for their tremendous service to our school over a significant number of years.

Healthy Snacks

A reminder that in the Spring term children will not be permitted to eat unhealthy snacks in school. They will instead be asked to save their snack to eat after school.

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.

Nursery Parents – Apply online for a place in Reception

If your child was born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 you are now able to apply for your child's school place. Please visit <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions> and submit an online application for a place in Reception by 14 January 2022 (the final closing date). Online applications will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted. If you experience any problems completing the form or require support, please see Mrs Kullar.

Please visit the school website at <https://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk/new-nursery-reception-2020-intake/reception-intake-2020> to see our excellent early years offering.

COVID-19 Community Champion Update - Birmingham Weekly COVID-19 Statistics

This week, the total number of cases identified in Birmingham was 4,237 cases, compared to 3,714 cases reported in the previous week, an increase of 14.1%.

Compared to previous weeks, cases increased in all age groups this week, except 80+, which decreased by 13%. The 60-79 age group showed the largest increase of 33%, followed by an increase of 28% in the 20-39 age group, 13% in 40-59, and 11% in 0-19.

Cases increased in all ethnic groups this week. The Black ethnic group showed the largest increase of 75%, followed by an increase of 44% in the Mixed/Other ethnic group, 20% in the Asian ethnic group and 7% in the White ethnic group.



**MOVING TO
COVID-19 PLAN B**

LATEST RULES TO KEEP YOU SAFE

Friday 10 December
Face coverings required by law in most indoor spaces and on public transport, unless you're exempt or eating/drinking.

Monday 13 December
Work from home if you can. If you need to continue going into work, take LFTs regularly to reduce risk.

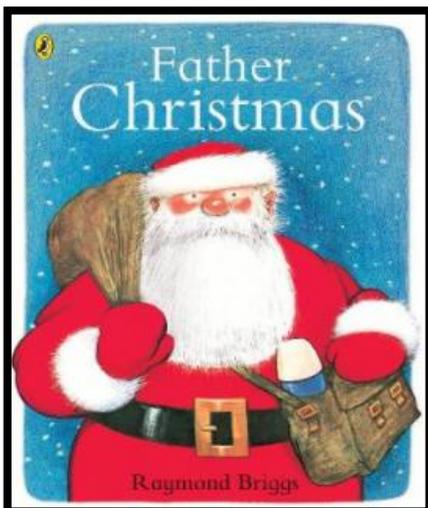
Wednesday 15 December
Introduction of mandatory NHS COVID Pass for entry into nightclubs and large venues

A BOLDER HEALTHIER BIRMINGHAM | Birmingham City Council

For more information on the latest news search online "COVID-19 Plan B"

Mr Panichi's Book of the Week

Lower School

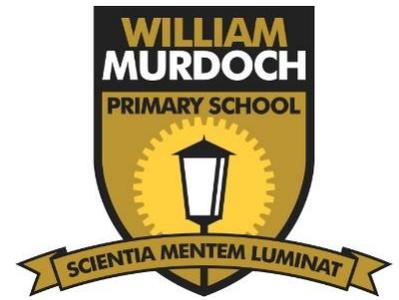


Father Christmas - Raymond Briggs

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

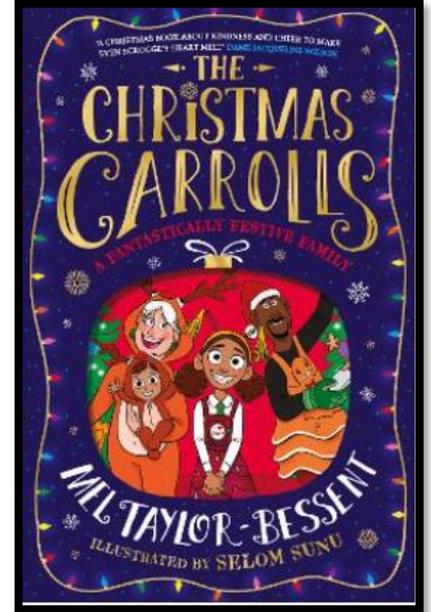
The Christmas Carrolls - Mel Taylor-Bessent and Selom Sunu (Illustrator)

This book is like watching a feel-good family Christmas movie! The Christmas Carrolls is a heartwarming, hilarious and inclusive tale about the power of spreading cheer, the magic of friendship and what really matters at this most wonderful time of the year.

For nine-year-old Holly Carroll and her family, Christmas time is the most important time of the year. Living her merriest life in a house with year-round fairy lights and Christmas trees, a carol-singing toilet and a diva donkey who thinks he's a reindeer, home-schooled Holly tries to spread cheer wherever she goes.

But when she goes to a new school with a singing Santa backpack and first day Christmas cards (during a heatwave in September!), she realises not everyone shares her enthusiasm for spreading cheer. In fact, when the neighbours try to remove the Carrolls from the street and Holly discovers a group of children that may not get a Christmas at all, her snowglobe world begins to crack. Is the world's most Christmassy girl about to lose her Christmas spirit?

If your child enjoys reading books from Matt Haig, Ben Miller, Sibeal Pounder's Tinsel, and watching the Nativity! Films, then this book will be right up their street.



We will as always, remain vigilant during the holidays. If there are any implications for the school over Christmas and New Year, we will communicate with you if necessary.

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation. Have a restful break.

Stay safe. Stay well.

Your sincerely,

Mr M Singh
Headteacher

Dates

Staff Training Day 4 January 2022

Pupils return to school 5 January 2022