



# NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER 2

COCKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

26th November 2020

Dear Parents

We are approaching the festive season and the staff have been thinking carefully about how we can make this year special for the children. It will be a very different Christmas for us; we normally have our wonderful Christmas performance at the Langstone Cliff Hotel but as we are unable to do this, the classes will enjoy Christmas performances in their classes. These will not be on the scale of our whole school productions, but we felt that we wanted to give the children an opportunity to perform together. These performances will be filmed and posted on the school website. Costume letters will be coming home from the individual classes very soon. If you need help please let us know as soon as possible.

We will also be holding a Christmas Carol Service for the children on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December. The Reverend Richard Allen will be joining us for our socially distanced event. We can't invite parents this year, which again is such a shame, as we are putting together an open air service, rather than visiting the church, and I expect all Covid requirements for us will continue until well after Christmas. We hope that the children will enjoy this, as they haven't really seen the other classes this year.

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> is going to be busy, as we are also having our Christmas Jumper Day on this day. For our new parents, this is where the children can come to school in a festive Christmas jumper and non-uniform. The PFA (Parent Friends Association) are holding a raffle this year to support school fundraising, so we are asking the children if they can bring in a raffle prize to support them on this day. It is also the official Save the Children fund raising day, so if you would like to make a voluntary contribution to this charity we will send this on for you.

I am very proud of how the school has supported charities this year, but as always, I would ask parents to only contribute what they can afford.

We look forward to a busy December! Please make a note of the important dates and I look forward to an exciting festive period in school.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER

Christmas Jumper Day – raffle prizes and donations to Save the Children

FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER

Christmas Carol Service in the playground

THURSDAY 17TH DECEMBER

Christmas lunch and non-uniform

FRIDAY 18TH DECEMBER

Last day of term

TUESDAY 5TH JANUARY

Pupils return to school

## CHILDREN IN NEED



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Pupils, parents and staff raised an amazing £168.60 for Children in Need. This is the most we have raised – so thank you to everyone for supporting this very worthwhile cause. The children enjoyed their Pudsey Bear biscuits at lunchtime.

## AMAZON WISH LIST

This has been an amazing success and we are so thankful to all parents and family members who have purchased a book for our school. The children get so excited when we have new books for the library and we have already seen children enjoying these new books. We have now had 23 new books donated to our library, and Mrs Buttree is adding them onto the system as soon as she gets these. Thank you so much and we will continue to add to this wish list. Here is the link if you would like to donate a book to our library.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/5FLD7TFJ2BMZ?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/5FLD7TFJ2BMZ?ref_=wl_share)

## SHOE BOX APPEAL

Thank you so much to all of the families and staff who supported the Shoe Box Appeal this year. We sent 28 boxes to the Rotary Club who will transport these to Moldova.

## MORE IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### ATTENDANCE IN TERM TIME

We have had a long period of time now where the children's overall school attendance has been affected by the Covid pandemic. I am really pleased to see many of our children attending well, and I would like to commend the staff team as a group, who have worked very hard to keep the school clean and sanitized since the March lockdown. A huge thank you to parents too, who have supported the school in this area, with overall attendance, staggered drop-offs and collections. I would like to take this opportunity to ensure that all parents are clear on the DFE guidelines around attendance, now that we are back into school full-time.

As of September 2013, an amendment came into force where there was greater clarity around the authorising of absences during term time. A family holiday is not considered exceptional by the government and therefore will not be authorised. We urge parents to take medical appointments, such as dental appointments outside school hours and if your child is late and arrives after the registration period (this ends at 9:15am), then your child is automatically marked as absent. Registers are legal documents and all schools follow the same protocol.



We are very aware of the challenge that parents have faced, but as a school we must follow the government directives around school attendance. If your child does not attend and the absence is unauthorised, then you may receive a penalty notice or a potential summons to Magistrate Court, which could result in a fine of up to £2500.

Schools are required to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has a number of unauthorised absences. These can be acquired when;

- Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and is taken anyway
- Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for avoidable reasons
- A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed

We are here to support all parents with encouraging every child to be in school all of the time, as this is crucial for their life chances and helps to ensure that they meet their potential. This is now more important than ever, with many children missing so much school this year. If you are planning to take a holiday over Christmas, then can I urge you to check whether your child will need to self-isolate on their return, as this may be 14 days of unauthorised absence.

We understand that at times it is difficult – especially this year – but regular attendance at school is essential.

We will send home your child's attendance termly, but in the meantime, if you have any questions, please do get in touch with me at school.

All term dates are on the school website, so are available for the booking of future holidays.

### **ONLINE SAFETY UPDATE**

We sent home the details of a new APP for parents, produced by National Online Safety. We subscribe to this service and this would be a useful tool for you, in the ever changing world of online safety.

If you are a new parent to the school, you can register as a parent – we have a link on our website, and you will then have access to the parent guides and some online virtual training.

### **TEMPEST PHOTOGRAPHS**

The school photographs have been coming in and thank you if you made some purchases. We hope to have the photographer back in the New Year, when we are able to take family photographs. So far the commission is £182 – these funds will be spent on the children this year.

### **HEALTHY SNACKS**

Just a reminder that break time snacks should be healthy please – fruit is perfect. If not cereal bars (with no nuts) or something similar. Crisps and chocolate have been sneaking in, and the children should not have these. Could I also ask all parents to only put water in drinks bottles please. Thank you.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

We met this week – socially distanced – and the children came up with some brilliant ideas, especially around playtimes, so we have been busy ordering some new equipment for them. Well done to our Council this year and we look forward to being able to meet properly in the coming months.

Our Council for 2020 – Callum, Lexi, Brooke, Lola, Molly, Elsie, Ava, Oskar, Savannah, Harvey, Reuben and Rocco.

## RAFFLE PRIZES

Just a further reminder – if you have a potential raffle prize, please bring this into school. We will quarantine the prizes and the children will draw the winning tickets in the final week of term. The PFA will be sending raffle tickets home soon if you would like to purchase any.

## DARTMOOR CHRISTMAS TREE

We are taking part in this year's Dartmoor Christmas Tree School's competition.

They have kindly donated a Christmas tree to the school which will be decorated over the next week. A picture of the finished tree will be posted on Dartmoor Christmas Tree's Facebook page the week commencing the 7<sup>th</sup> December and the tree with the most likes after 1 week will go into a final where DCT staff and Forestry England will pick one winner who will receive a £250 prize for their school.

As part of the competition Dartmoor Christmas Trees have asked us to pass on an e-voucher for you to claim a FREE Santa hat and £2.50 off the purchase of any Dartmoor Christmas Tree from their retail outlets at Haldon Christmas Tree Centre, their Dartmoor Farm or at Morrisons Paignton & Totnes. We will email this to you today. We have won this competition twice, so it would be wonderful to manage this a third time!

## 50 50 RESULTS FOR NOVEMBER

£50 prize to Mrs D Barnes

£20 prize to Mrs N Woolcock

£10 prize to Mrs C Custons-Cole

We have some lovely surprises planned for the children and we can't wait to share December with them!

Thank you as always for your support.

Lorraine Curry

