



St Patrick's RC Primary School, Dipton

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Headteacher: Mrs J Burgess
We follow in Christ's footsteps

Thursday 19th November 2020

Dear Parent/Carers



I hope you are well and managing under continued difficult circumstances.

Reception intake September 2021

Parents have until January 15th to make an application for a place in our Reception class for September 2021. Please pass this information to all families you know who have a child due to start school next year. Our current Reception class are a delight and staff and pupils are making the most of our fantastic new Reception facilities. Children have settled beautifully already and we constantly receive nothing but positive comments regarding their excellent attitude to learning and behaviour towards each other. This year our Reception class is full and we would love to again fill all 25 places as we know we can offer pupils a wonderful start to their education. Unfortunately, we are unable to invite parents to school to view all this first hand, but we are in the process of putting together a presentation to share on our website. In the meantime, if you would like to have a conversation either with myself, or the class teacher, please contact the school office and a phone appointment can be made to answer any queries.

Application packs are available from nurseries or from County Hall. On-line applications can be completed by accessing www.durham.gov.uk school admissions.

Reception outdoor area

On Wednesday 25th November, weather permitting, work will begin on transforming our small yard. After submitting a grant application through local councillors, we have obtained funding to add new markings and adventurous play equipment to complement our new Reception development. We are very excited that this will complete a very significant overall investment in our Reception facilities, which are now second to none!

Christmas updates



After a whirlwind start to the academic year, we find our attention is now turning to Christmas! Yes, it's that time already. We all appreciate Christmas will be different this year but we will still strive to ensure it is as spiritual and enjoyable as possible. We just have to be creative and also challenge ourselves with new ways of working.



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Christmas Performances

As I am sure you will have guessed, with Covid-19 restrictions in place, there will be no 'public' performances this term – we are going on-line. Our intention is to produce 3 performances involving (i) Reception, (ii) KS1 (Years 1 and 2) and (iii) KS2 (Years 3,4,5 and 6).

We want to make sure our Reception pupils still have the opportunity to experience and participate in their first Nativity, which is always unforgettable for pupils and parents alike.

Year 1 - 6 will work individually (to maintain bubbles) and their performances will be combined to form a Christmas narrative using a mixture of scripture and spiritual dance.

As these performances will be videoed and uploaded to our website, we require your permission to involve your child. We appreciate, due to personal circumstances, this permission may not be possible for all pupils. Where this is the case, an individual will be allocated a different role as we want everyone to 'play a part' in some way.

We will endeavour to have everything ready to view in the last week of term.

Class	Online performance	
Reception	A Very Special Baby	Text will be sent at the start of school day Friday 20th November to obtain permission for pupils to be included. School must receive a text reply (if you cannot text reply please email - a phone call will not be accepted as permission).
Y1 and Y2	Follow The Star in conjunction with More Than Dance	Text reply should be as follows: Yes to video with the names of all children in family
Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6	Follow The Star in conjunction with More Than Dance	No to video with the names of all children in family Please ensure you reply by Monday 23rd November.



Christmas Lunch

Our delicious Christmas lunch will be served on **Wednesday 9th December**. There will be traditional roast turkey, chipolata sausages, roast and creamed potatoes, seasonal vegetables and gravy, followed by a selection of Christmas desserts. A vegetarian option of vegetable crown is also available.

If your child already has school lunch, no further action is required. If your child usually has a packed lunch but would like the Christmas meal, you will be able to pay £2.10 on ParentPay. To allow for the kitchen staff to order provisions for the day we need to know final numbers by **Tuesday 24th November**. Please note that Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children who bring packed lunches will be eligible for a free Christmas lunch under the current Government Universal Free School Meal Scheme and payment will not be required (although we do need you to let us know your intentions in advance). All those who usually have a packed lunch will be sent a text at the start of the day on Friday 20th and we ask that you reply via text:

Yes Christmas lunch/No Christmas lunch with names of all children in family. We need this reply to be specific so it does not get confused with other text replies.

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Santa Dash/Movie – instead of panto (Oh no it isn't – Oh yes it is (unfortunately). This year only - fingers crossed.

We plan to organise a half day of physical activity (indoor or outdoor depending on weather) complemented by a Christmas movie.

Santa Dash – Pupils can wear jogging bottoms/Christmas jumper (or school jumper) all day. Please make sure clothes are warm.	Year group
Tuesday 8 th December	Y4 Santa Dash am/ Christmas movie pm Y1 Santa Dash pm/Christmas movie am
Wednesday 9 th December Christmas lunch day	Y6 Santa Dash am/Christmas movie pm Y2 Santa Dash pm/Christmas movie am
Thursday 10 th December	Rec Santa Dash am/Christmas movie pm Y3 Santa Dash pm/Christmas movie am
Friday 11 th December	Y5 Santa Dash am/Christmas movie pm

The Friends of St Patrick's (FoSP) are going to fund the movie treats. Thank you! As we are not taking part in the shoe box appeal this year, we ask for a small donation, via ParentPay, which we will send to St. Cuthbert's Hospice, Durham. Suggested amounts are between £1.00 - £5.00.

Christmas Parties

Party Date – Pupils can wear party clothes all day. Please make sure clothes are warm and footwear is suitable for outdoor play.	Year group
Tuesday 15 th December	Y4 (am) Y1 (pm)
Wednesday 16 th December	Y6 (am) Y2 (pm)
Thursday 17 th December	Reception (am) Y3 (pm)
Friday 18 th December	Y5 am



Christmas Cards/Gifts

Children will be making Christmas cards in school which we will be sending home once completed. We know parents are extremely kind, but we respectfully ask that children do not bring in any other additional cards or gifts for each other or staff. We suggest, instead, that any amount you intended to spend on cards/staff gifts be donated to World Gift Cafod via ParentPay. We will let you know the total raised and what we are therefore able to donate from our school family. We

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suggest you offer whatever amount you feel is manageable. Do not feel under any pressure to donate – we appreciate every family's individual circumstance is different, particularly in these challenging times.

Feeding Families

Your response to our request for food donations for the 'Feeding families' charity has been brilliant. Thank you! Your generosity will make such a difference.

As there is a lot of information contained in this letter we have provided a summary:

- *Closing date for new Reception application for September 2021 is January 15th. Please apply via Durham County Council's website. Contact the school office if you want to make a telephone appointment;*
- *When prompted by text, we will need a reply to confirm permission for your child to appear in Christmas performance/liturg (online) – deadline Monday 23^d November;*
- *Date of Christmas lunch – 9th December. If your child has packed lunch and s/he would like a Christmas dinner, please reply by Tuesday 24th November. Payment £2.10 via ParentPay.*
- *Dates of parties, Santa Dash and movie days given.*
- *Please do not send in any Christmas cards/gifts for staff or pupils. If you are able, please donate instead.*

If you have any queries regarding the information shared in this letter, or general questions, please ring the school office or email: diptonstpatricks@durhamlearning.net and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Thank you for your fantastic support so far this term. We have all had to adapt to a new 'normal', and more challenges await, but I feel a great sense of pride that pupils, staff, parents and governors of St. Patrick's have worked together so positively.

Please remember to socially distance, around school grounds, at all times – we want to keep everyone well so we can all enjoy forthcoming festivities (whatever form they will take). 😊

Kind regards

Mrs J Burgess
Headteacher

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