

## Loving, learning and flourishing in community

### Message from Mr Edwards-Grundy

As we continue our journey through Advent, we will be lighting our third Advent candle in Collective Worship. Our value of Thankfulness underpins our thoughts and is this week linked with joy and celebration.

All around the school it is definitely “beginning to look a lot like Christmas”, your children have been busy preparing and performing the Christmas narrative within their bubbles and we will be sharing a montage of all these performances with you by the end of next week. It is a delight to see your children enjoying so many of the usual rituals and patterns of this joyful season and I would like to share with you my thanks to the staff team who have worked creatively and tirelessly to enable all these things to take place.

For Christians, Christmas is a season of great joy, as the angel told the shepherds, “I bring you good news”. In these short winter days, so often cold and grey, with all the challenges of the current restrictions placed upon us, the message of the angels reminds me of the hope that is so central to Christians. There is no darkness too great for light, no situation beyond hope. There is great joy in this Christmas season, not perhaps in the ways that we may usually find it, but in a re-focusing on the things that are important. My joy is in the message of Christian hope, that Jesus came to our world, to be like us and live as one of us, knowing what it is to have difficult days, days of darkness. He came to change things for us, to give us reason for hope, to bring us light – what a joyful message.

As the term draws near to its close, your children also bring us all great joy. As teachers begin to reflect on the long autumn term, there are so many stories of triumph and hope, children who have persevered in learning and personal growth. What a lot there is to be thankful for...

### News from around the school

A very strange sight greeted visitors to Year 3 yesterday – a golden ticket was seen chatting to an Oompah Loompah and Matilda was seen playing with a crocodile! Everywhere you looked there were characters straight out of Roald Dahl storybooks. Over the course of the day, staff and children produced a fantastic piece of collaborative art work – we think the team should feel really proud of what they produced.



Can your children tell you who this member of staff is?!



## 'Tis the season...

We have really enjoyed seeing children in all sorts of bright and colourful clothing today, including lots of bells, red noses, Santas and Christmas trees.

Thank you to everyone who brought in a donation today. Our grand total of £348.32 will be split equally between The Friends and Save the Children.



## The Friends of The Blake ...

It has been a busy week for The Friends as they have drawn their Christmas raffle and the next number on the 100-club.

The lucky winner of the 100-club draw was ticket number 75, Zuzana Hughes – congratulations Zuzana, a Christmas treat!



The Christmas raffle raised a whopping **£1838.00**, almost double last year's total.

The Friends have asked us to pass on an enormous THANK YOU to everyone who supported the Christmas raffle this year, the winners have been informed and prizes distributed.

All proceeds from the raffle go to the school to benefit children and their learning environment.

We are immensely grateful for all your donations and for promoting the raffle amongst your friends and family, especially during this extraordinary time.

We would like to thank The Friends for all their hard work, we know a lot of hours go into making these fund-raising events happen.

## Staff changes

At the end of next week, Mrs Rowlands will be starting her maternity leave.

Mrs Rowlands has been teaching in Reception for a number of years, but this past term has been providing additional teaching capacity for Year 2.

We will miss Mrs Rowlands' ready laugh, boundless enthusiasm and professional skill, but we cannot wait to be introduced to the new member of her family later in the new year.

We are delighted that since September Mrs O'Connor has been teaching in Reception. Mrs O'Connor has worked part-time at The Blake School for a number of years, teaching across all the year groups and we are thrilled that she has accepted a full-time contract with us to cover Mrs Rowlands' maternity leave.

Mrs O'Connor brings a great deal of experience to the Reception team, including that from many years spent working in special school settings. We look forward to continuing to work with Mrs O'Connor whilst Mrs Rowlands spends time at home with her new baby.



## End of term

**On the last day of term (Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December) school will be finishing early.**

If you usually pick your child up at the earlier time (3pm) please collect them between 1pm and 1:10pm. If you usually pick your child up at the later time (3.15pm), please collect them between 1:15pm and 1:25pm.