



Ellington Primary News

Believe and Achieve

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the last news bulletin of 2023! We have had a fantastic December with many events taking place and many more coming up.

We have had another hugely successful year at Ellington Primary School. I feel very fortunate to be Headteacher at such a brilliant school. We have amazing children here who behave superbly and are frequently commended for their behaviour. We have completely redesigned our curriculum over the last two years and the progress in attainment and in books is clearly evident for all to see.

Thank you for your on-going support, any success is only achieved by working in partnership between home and school. We hope to invite you in to school on many occasions in 2024.

Christmas Events

Class parties will take place during the last week as follows:

December 18th - KS1 Party

December 19th - EYFS Party

December 20th - Years 5/6 Party

December 21st - Years 3/4 Party

Children can bring their party clothes with them to school to change into after their lunch, or they can wear party clothes all day. We will provide the refreshments for the parties.

Finally, we will be holding two Carol Concerts for children from Reception to Year 6 on December 21st and 22nd at 9:15. Children will be singing a range of traditional Christmas carols and some Christmas favourites, we would love you to join us.



We will draw the raffle at the Carol Concert on December 22nd.

The prizes are:

1st Prize: £1000 Cash

2nd Prize: £250 Asda Voucher

3rd Prize: £100 Amazon Voucher

All money raised through the raffle goes directly back into school. This year, the money raised will be shared between Early Years outdoor equipment, new reading books for Upper Key Stage Two and subsidising all school trips in Spring and Summer terms.

Can any cash, sold and unsold tickets please be returned by Wednesday 20th December.



Cinderella Pantomime

The children had a fantastic time when the Cinderella pantomime visited us on December 4th. The show was brilliant and a fantastic way to kick off our Christmas activities.

We have booked in another performance for March when the children will be able to watch and join in with The Selfish Giant!

Nativity Performances

This week we have treated to four unbelievably good nativity performances!

Early Years were simply brilliant in their performance of 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel'.

Key Stage One were sensational in their performance of 'Bethlehem Bake Off'.

Fantastic singing, acting and lots of smiles!



Supporting Charities

On Friday 8th December, we held a coffee morning and a bake sale in aid of Save the Children. Thanks to your amazing support, we raised over £300! Since September, we have raised funds for The Pearl of Africa Choir, Children in Need, The Salvation Army, The Red Sky Foundation, Wansbeck Valley Foodbank and Save the Children. The children at Ellington understand how together we can make a difference to others.

Attendance 04/12–15/12

Reception— 98.5%

Year 1—92.7%

Year 2—95.0%

Year 3—93.7%

Year 4—97.9%

Year 5—91.9%

Year 6—95.0%

Whole School—94.9%

Up from 94.4%

Mr Hodgson—Headteacher

Diary Dates

| <u>Event</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Year 1 & 2 Party | 18 th December |
| Nursery & Reception Party | 19 th December |
| Year 5 & 6 Party | 20 th December |
| Year 3 & 4 Party | 21 st December |
| Carol Concert | 21 st December (9:15am) |
| Carol Concert | 22 nd December (9:15am) |
| End of term | 22 nd December |
| Teaching Training Day (School Closed) | 8 th January |
| Return to school | 9 th January |
| NCMP (Reception & Year 6) | 18 th January |
| School Photographs | 12 th February |

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SETTING UP APPS, GAMES AND SOFTWARE

Millions of new phones, tablets, laptops and games consoles will be nestling under Christmas trees this year. However, even if parents and carers have gone to the trouble of setting up these new devices and enabling the safety features, there are still potential hazards in the apps, games and software that children will want to install and use. Knowing what to look for and discussing those risks with your child may help avoid any nasty surprises this Christmas. Here are our top tips for ensuring that unwrapping this year's presents doesn't unleash any unexpected dangers.

TAKE NOTE OF AGE RATINGS

Back when most games were bought in shops, checking the age rating was easy: it was on the front of the box. Now that most games are downloaded, it's tougher – but not impossible. All reputable download stores show a game's age rating at the point of purchase, and you can check the suitability of a specific title your child wants to play at videostandards.org.uk/RatingBoard/games.

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'FREE' ISN'T ALWAYS FREE

The games market has changed radically in recent years. Many titles are free to download, but then tempt players to pay for cosmetic items (as in Fortnite) or to unlock additional content. There can be huge peer pressure for children to pay for these items. Agree a budget for in-game purchases before the game is downloaded, and make sure children can't authorise in-game purchases by themselves.

DISABLE IN-APP PURCHASING

It's not wise to leave children with devices that can make in-app purchases without your permission. Ideally, set up computers, consoles and phones so child accounts need an adult's authorisation to buy anything. On shared devices (like iPads, which don't allow user accounts), check the settings to ensure that in-app purchasing requires the account holder's password, fingerprint or face ID.

APPS ARE AGE RATED, TOO

Like games, apps in the major stores have age ratings, too – so you can see in advance whether an app's appropriate for your child. Additionally, phones' parental control settings allow you to set age limits, preventing young ones from downloading unsuitable apps themselves. These ratings aren't infallible, however: we've seen TV apps featuring adult shows with an age rating of 3, for example.

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CONSIDER STORAGE

Most apps and games will tell you in the online store how much space they need on a device. Check this carefully – especially with games, which can run into hundreds of megabytes and beyond. If you don't have enough free storage on a device to run the game or app, you won't get a refund from the store. You can normally check a device's available storage space through the settings menu.

WATCH OUT FOR IMITATORS

Even in the official stores, untrustworthy rogue apps can slip through the net. Common tricks are apps or games that have a slightly different name to the genuine article (Fortnite rather than Fortnite, for instance) or use logos which deliberately look very similar to the official app. To avoid downloading these imitations, read the app's description and check who the publisher is listed as.

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LEGAL APPS THAT BREAK THE LAW

There are many apps that are perfectly legal but enable illegal activity – streaming apps which let people watch football matches, say, without paying for Sky or BT Sport. Prosecution for using such apps is rare, but they can lead to risky behaviour like viewing rogue streams on sites teeming with malicious links. Watch for children installing unusual apps with 'TV', 'stream' or 'sport' in the name.

IN-APP REGISTRATION

It's common for apps and games to ask users to register: entering personal details like email address, date of birth and other information you might not want your child to divulge. Ask them to get your permission before giving any personal info to an app – and consider using your details rather than the child's, so they're not targeted by marketing spam or put at risk of having their data stolen.

STAY UPDATED

Most games and apps are subject to regular updates, which not only offer new content and features but also provide critical security improvements. Children tend to ignore such updates – usually because they don't understand why they're important, or they simply want to get straight on with gaming. Check your child's devices periodically to make sure these updates are being installed.

CHECK THE SPECS

To avoid let-downs, check a game's specs before buying – especially for PC or Mac, where games often need a particular graphics chip or processor to work. Sites like systemrequirementslab.com can scan your computer to see if it will run certain games properly. On consoles, make sure you're buying the right version: some newer Xbox or PlayStation games won't play on older consoles.

MONITOR IN-GAME COMMS

Voice chat with friends is part of the fun of modern gaming – but danger lurks here too. Many titles have open chat systems, meaning that children could speak to strangers or hear adult language and verbal abuse when games get particularly competitive. Using a shared family area (as opposed to alone in bedrooms) for online gaming is a good way to keep an occasional ear on what's being said.

BE WARY OF GIFTS

Titles like Roblox, Minecraft and Fortnite have in-game currencies, which can be earned through progress in the game – but can also be bought with real money. A common scam is for a young player to be offered currency if they click a link, visit a certain site or contact another user directly. Warn your child about such offers; they should show you if they're in any doubt over an in-game gift.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *Newsnight*, *Radio 5 Live* and *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and has writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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Nursery News

The biggest news by far this fortnight had to be Elsa freezing Nursery!! Nursery were so surprised to see their classroom turned to ice and snow! 'What happened?' they wondered. The children had to go on a snowflake hunt to find it and it led them to Mr Hodgson's office. Well it turns out Elsa had forgotten her snow crown after a meeting with Mr Hodgson! The children then had fun exploring the icy land of Nursery before Elsa herself made an appearance to collect her forgotten crown. The Nursery children were so excited to see Elsa and all wanted to talk to her about what she had done. We then had a Let it Go sing along with Elsa before bidding her farewell. A big thank you to all of the staff members who helped freeze Nursery as well as a huge thanks to Miss Brooks who made the day even more magical by transforming into Elsa.

We've also been baking scones for the bake sale, enjoyed Christmas jumper day, loved watching the pantomime 'Cinderella' and we've been practising our Christmas Play lots too.

Super stars Nursery!



Reception News

Christmas is in full swing in Reception! Snowy our class elf arrived in style and has been up to all sorts of things including eating biscuits, reading stories and baking. We used our fantastic teamwork skills to decorate our Christmas tree and it looks fabulous! Our role play area has turned into Santa's workshop we have been busy writing our Christmas lists, putting them in envelopes and posting them in our post box. We have been thinking about how the post office works and the different jobs that happen there. We have also been practising our wrapping in Santa's workshop.

In the writing area, we have been practising our card writing by making and writing cards for different members of staff around school. The children have made some brilliant cards and the staff have been amazed by their wonderful writing skills.

The main event of the term happened this week, our performance of Whoops-a-Daisy Angel! The children have worked very hard during rehearsals which definitely paid off on the day. Everyone did a fantastic job of remembering their lines and their cues. They really gave both performances their all and I am SO proud of them!

I hope you all enjoy your Christmas holidays, see you in 2024!

Merry Christmas!



Year 1 News

Wow! What an incredibly wonderful and busy fortnight the children have had.

Firstly, I must say how extremely proud I am with all the children's efforts in the Christmas nativity: Bethlehem Bake-off. They have worked so hard learning lines, songs and dances in such a short period of time. A special thank you to all the grown-ups that came to support the children on Thursday and this morning.

They have also enjoyed a whole school pantomime: Cinderella, in which they enjoyed greatly and behaved exceptionally throughout.

We have also had a drumming assembly. They loved copying tunes, patterns and pitches.

As well as all this excitement, the children have continued to work fantastically in class. In English, we have written a set of instructions on 'How to make a Leaf man', we have been out and about around Ellington looking at Autumnal changes and collected leaves, berries and acorns to create our leaf people.

In maths, we have been working on fractions. We have been spotting halves of objects and amounts and beginning to represent halves in a variety of different ways.

In Science, we have started our new unit of work on Materials. We have been identifying different materials around our classroom and also talking about their properties.

We have been very lucky to have Mrs Hyams come and visit Year 1 to talk about her childhood. The children wrote some of their own questions to ask how her childhood was different to theirs. Fantastic listening throughout the lesson and fabulous respect whilst Mrs Hyam was explaining her childhood.

Finally, we have had a whole school 'Careers Day'. Each class had an occupation from the health sector. Year 1 had doctors. We did some research in the work doctors do, why we need doctors and what equipment doctors use. We then had the opportunity to dress up as doctors and add bandages, plasters and listen to heart beats.

Thank you,
Mrs Horsley



Year 2 News

Another fantastic week in Year 2! We hope you all enjoyed our Christmas performances of 'Bethlehem Bake Off', we have loved rehearsing and performing the play for everyone! After the final performance on Friday, we enjoyed a well-deserved treat and Storytime.



Last week, we baked our own cakes for the school's Bake Sale. The children all made and decorated their own Christmas-themed rice crispy cakes - yummy! At the bake sale, we bought some delicious treats made by other year groups and sang along to some great Christmas songs. All money raised went towards the Save the Children charity.

In English this week, we have started our Christmas unit 'The Polar Express'. The children all boarded the train and took a trip to the North Pole, on board the train we enjoyed a lovely hot chocolate and Christmas treat while exploring the story. Next week, we will be creating a descriptive piece based on 'The Polar Express'.



● During maths this week we have focused on comparing amounts of mass and distance using words and numbers in lots of different contexts.

● In PSHE we have been looking at our strengths, everyone designed their own 'Ladder to Success'. The children set themselves achievable goals for 2024 using the Ladder. We have also been looking at the importance of relaxation, the children were introduced to different breathing techniques which they have been practising in class.

It was great to see so many Year 2s at the Christmas Story Night, the children enjoyed plenty of wonderful Christmas stories and songs all while dressed in their pyjamas!

Next week we have our Christmas party on Monday, the children can wear their party clothes all day or if they would prefer they can bring a change of clothes with them!

Miss Brooks

Well done Year 2.

You have all been super positive and displayed a fantastic attitude towards learning this week.

I look forward to another great week in Year 2.

5 days to go!



Year 3 News

As the term comes to the end, Year 3 have kept super busy!

Last week the children worked very hard, showing how much they have learnt this term in English and maths. We also had a great morning making flapjacks for the 'Save the Children' bake sale.

On Tuesday we had a fabulous assembly from Yamaha music. We found out about the names of different drums and listened to some excellent solos, by the visitors and some of the children!

We were also lucky enough to get a 'sneak preview' of the Key Stage One Christmas performance.

In English, we have continued working on the text 'Stone Age Boy' by Satoshi Kitamura. We are planning to write a non-chronological report about life in the Stone Age. We have just started a new book for our reading lessons called 'The Abominables' by Eva Ibbotson, which we are very excited about.

In maths, we have been learning all about the properties of 2D and 3D shapes. We have also been working on finding directions using the four points of the compass and on explaining pictograms where an image is halved.

In history, we have focused on trade in the Iron Age and the children enjoyed playing a game to find out how difficult it was to make a fair trade.



In computing we have been learning how to sequence blocks of code to make musical sound effects.

Merry Christmas Everyone!
Enjoy a well-earned break!



Year 4 News

Dear Parents and Carers,

Unbelievably it is the last newsletter of 2023 so if I don't see you, on behalf of myself and Mrs Mallaburn, I want to wish you a very happy holiday season and best wishes for the New Year. Hopefully we will see you next week at one of the carol concerts. It's been a great first term and I am already looking forward to all that the Spring Term has in store for us.

We've had a very busy fortnight as we ramp up to the end of term.

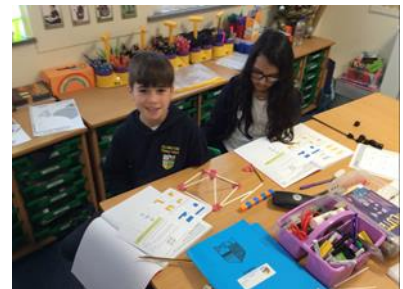
In English, we have written a diary entry based on the novel *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. We will finish reading the book next week and I really think the children have loved it.

In Maths we completed our work on shape. The children had a great time making 3D shapes using straws and plasticine. We have started our work on amounts by looking at finding the perimeter of shape.

In Science, we have started our work on States of Matter looking at solids, liquids and gasses. We also have looked at more complex materials like ooblek which are a harder to categorise.

In Geography, we have been studying the rainforest and have looked at the lives of the indigenous people of the Amazon Rainforest. We have seen how they rely on the rainforest to survive and have started to discuss the implications of deforestation.

Finally, in PSHE, we have been looking at the lives of children and families from around the world and how these compare to families in Britain.



Year 5 News

The children have had a very busy week this week after completing all their NFER assessments for reading, writing and maths. Everyone worked extremely hard and should be very proud of their achievements.

We had a fabulous time during Career's Day where Sarah Hepburn very kindly came to visit the children in the ambulance car. Through Sarah, NEAS provided fun and engaging activity booklets for the children along with some paramedic goodies! The children had a wonderful time learning about the life of a paramedic thanks to help from Sarah!



In English, the children have been gathering evidence to use in their persuasive speech against Apartheid. We have focused on events such as the Soweto Uprising to back up our argument. The children are planning out their speech that they will then perform in order to persuade the population of South Africa to abolish Apartheid.

In maths, we have been learning how to convert between different types of measures by multiplying and dividing by one thousand. The children have been applying their knowledge and skills to solve problems related to real life situations.

In history, we have been exploring what life was like in Tudor England. The children produced a brilliant non-chronological report about food and drink in Tudor times. It was good to see all the children taking pride in their work!

Well done on another fantastic week Year 5!

Have a wonderful Christmas everyone and I wish you all a very Happy New Year!

Mr Todd

Year 6 News

I can't believe how much the time has flown and we're nearly ready for Christmas. One third of Year 6 gone already! The children have done incredibly well and had a marvellous attitude towards our recent assessment week, staying focused and positive whilst completing them.

However, it's not all tests here in Year 6! We had a biscuit-decorating afternoon to create some delights to sell for the Save the Children charity. We ended up having a bit of a design competition and it was very hard to judge as there are some talented future-chefs in this class.



Speaking of the future, we also had a careers day where all children in the school focused on a job within the Healthcare Sector. Year 6 explored the role of Midwife and Neonatal Nurse where we looked at routes into the job, what qualifications and skills are needed as well as the qualities desirable for such an intense and varied career. Exactly which qualities were needed sparked some debate during our Diamond 9 activity where we had to prioritise them.

Of course, we've had our usual lessons too: understanding migration in geography; creating investigations about voltage in science; and discussing the positive and negative impacts of technology on our physical and mental health in PSHE.

I hope you all have a wonderful festive period and that the children have a good rest ready for a busy Spring Term.

Merry Christmas from Year 6!