

# Leeming RAF Primary School

## Newsletter



December 2018

Dear All,

Well, the bells are jingling, the trees are sparkling, the children are smiling, and the staff are looking rather tired – it can only mean Christmas is here! We've had a marvellous month at Leeming enjoying all the festive delights whilst maintaining, as always, a packed learning agenda!

The highlights of the last few weeks have undoubtedly been our performances and productions. Starting with 'Lights, Camel, Action!', the children of KS1 delivered a brilliant Strictly Spin-off – complete with tangoing innkeepers, balletic angels, line dancing townsfolk, ceilidhing shepherds, funky camels (F-U-N-K-Y!) and a disco star! Of course, no show would be complete without the judges – an ever expressive donkey, a charming innkeeper's wife, and a rather grumpy Caesar (who, of course, bore no resemblance to Craig Revel Horwood)! The play was superb – and even featured a brilliant duet by Mary and Joseph – a really moving moment in the midst of all the fun and frolics. Well done to all!

The Reception pupils were next to take to the stage for their Nativity. Again, a wonderful rendition of this special story, reminding us that the true meaning of Christmas comes not in the parcels and presents, but in the birth of Jesus – God's gift to mankind. The pupils did a brilliant job – dancing, singing, narrating – all in front of about 100 people. This is no mean feat when most of the cast are just 4 years old and have only been in school a matter of weeks. We are so proud of them!

Our school choir then attended a lovely event at the Junior Ranks' Mess in which they sang carols to elderly residents from Bedale and the surrounding area who were enjoying a Christmas lunch. The team did brilliantly, in spite of the failure of the sound system- resulting in them needing to perform acapella for much of the time!

The Key Stage 2 Carol concert completed our Christmas performances. The children have been practising their songs in the last couple of weeks and have polished their skills to deliver a really tuneful and uplifting performance. It's been great to watch them improve their technique, projection and tuning – and even to bring in some Modern Foreign Language learning in too - with Silent Night in German.

A particular thank you goes to all the staff and volunteers who have worked so hard to bring these productions together – directing, organising, sewing costumes, playing music, sourcing props, putting up displays – none of these things 'just happen' so I'm grateful to everyone involved – I'm sure you'll all agree their efforts are much appreciated. A thank you as well to all of the parents who attended – I think we've had our best uptake ever for places this year, and it's lovely to see how pleased the children are to share their talents with you all. We appreciate your support.

It's been a drama-rich month here at Leeming – we played host to the Station pantomime (oh yes we did!) of Jack and the Beanstalk, and then Key Stage 2 enjoyed a brilliant workshop from the Young Shakespeare company. This has inspired the children, not only as performers, but also in their writing with some brilliant work being produced across the board.

Here's a selection of photos from the productions – enjoy!



We've also been busy in our other endeavours – in sport, we've seen our girls do really well at the cluster football, and a group of children thrive in the local Athletics competition, as well as running a host of brilliant clubs. The school supported the station's Road Safety week – please do continue to remind your children about the importance of bike helmets and being aware of the risks on camp. Thank you to all who attended our Maths morning – it was great to receive such positive feedback, the children love having you in to share their learning with you.

A few further reminders and things to share...

**Absence** – we have had a number of pupils recently who have been absent with a pattern of Monday / Friday absences without prior notification or authorisation. Often, these children come back to school saying that they have been away for weekends with their families. I am aware that it can be challenging for service personnel who live away from their extended families, but parents have a *legal obligation* to ensure their children are in school. If children have a repeated pattern of unexplained, unauthorised or questionable absence, then the school has a duty to report parents to the Local Authority who may take prosecutorial action. *Please note, this does not apply to authorised absence which has been discussed / cleared.*

One final reminder however; parents sometimes come in asking for a 'holiday form' – there is no such thing. We are legally unable to grant 'holidays'; I am only able to authorise 'Leave of Absence in *Exceptional Circumstances*'. In our service community, I am able to authorise a short period of time away for children of personnel returning from active deployment to spend time with their family, but this remains an 'exceptional circumstance', rather than a default entitlement. This is a national policy, not a school one – although, of course, we do support the importance of children being here as much as possible. Thank you for your understanding and support in this matter.

**Production Images / Video** – as mentioned at the performances, we are aware that a number of parents are currently deployed or were unable to make the productions of the Nativity plays. We took a simple video of the Reception play, and one of our parents, Mr. Cox, kindly took some lovely photos of our KS1 performance. If you would like a copy of the film, please bring a memory stick in to one of the Early Years teachers, and, if you would like to view the photos of *Lights, Camel, Action!*, these can be found on our website under the *Parents > KS1 Nativity Photos* menu.

**Dinner Money Payments** – a gentle reminder to check any outstanding payments on Parentpay please – we know many parents prefer to pay monthly etc., but a few people have accrued substantial debts on the system. It would be helpful if these could be settled when possible (perhaps after Christmas if needed!). Thank you.

**Friends of School** – a huge thank you to our FoS volunteers who have been beavering away with a range of fundraising activities this term! The Christmas Jumper Day, Candy Cane exchange, and Tombola have been brilliant. I'm not sure of the total amount raised as yet, but, in a world where schools need to make every penny count, their efforts (and your donations) are very much appreciated and go towards supporting the sorts of 'extra' experiences that we so enjoy providing for the children.

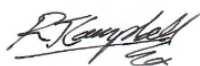
**Sponsored Spell** – staying with the fundraising theme – thanks to all who partook in the sponsored spell this term. Not only did this support the children's learning, it also raised a fantastic £483 which will be put towards purchasing books and resources for a new 'Reading Zone' on the playground. We are looking forward to launching this.

#### **And Finally...**

I thought I'd share with you a model made by one of our Reception pupils – it's apparently 'baby Jesus in the manger' – to be fair – bubble wrap is a good insulator for a blanket, Jesus probably drank milk, and who knows, maybe he even had blue eyes!

I wish you a blessed and wonderful holiday season with your families and friends.

Best regards,



Rob Campbell  
Headteacher

