

Windermere Primary School



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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are fast approaching the end of term – the time has just flown by! It seems just a few weeks ago that Reception were nervously standing on the threshold of their classroom and yet this morning I witnessed an incredible nativity performance. The children were so confident, knew their words, remembered their cues with very little prompting and were amazing singers too. It was an absolute delight!

Performances

Next week there is more excitement to look forward to. Year 2 will be performing 'An Out of This World Christmas' with the support of the rest of the school's singing and dancing. I have had a sneaky preview of this and it promises to be a real treat too. If you have not yet asked for places at the various performances, please come into the office or email booking@windermere.herts.sch.uk There are still spaces for the afternoon performances. All costumes should be in school by now, although there are still some children without their T-shirts. We always try to make the costumes as simple as possible, by requesting just different colour T-shirts for each play, so it is disappointing when parents don't support their child by providing them with a top.

Photographs

As you should be aware, for various reasons we no longer allow photographs to be taken at performances unless specified. Where there are multiple performances we will try to ensure that one performance can be photographed, although we still ask that these images are not uploaded onto the internet and social media. It is especially upsetting when having been asked not to take photographs (such as at the Harvest assembly), one or two parents tried to do so covertly. Firstly, please remember that we are teachers and therefore we have eyes in the back of our heads and can spot furtive activity from a mile off! On a more serious note, I would like to share a post that has appeared on FaceBook. Whilst it doesn't specifically apply to our children, the sentiment does.

'When you sneakily record your child's Christmas play...it is likely that a child in that school is at risk of abuse, or has been removed from a dangerous and chaotic life and has been placed into foster care or with adoptive parents. If we then publicly post a picture or video with the child in the background...a friend shares, the abusers see it, and they then know the child's school.'

Potentially, this child then has to pack up their belongings, move to a new home, new school, new carers, new life. All to protect them from dangerous people in their lives coming after them. All because we need to share it online.

Please, just follow school policy. They don't tell you not to record because they are miserable. They tell you this to protect vulnerable children.'

Winter Weather

When I am out on playground duty, I am always surprised at how many children don't have hats, gloves or even warm coats. Naturally we try to get the children outside at playtime to run off some energy, but they do need to be properly clothed. When the weather is particularly bitter, we will open up a classroom for quiet indoor activities, but mostly the children want to be outside.

School Closure

Have you signed up to the Everbridge notification system? Are your contact numbers up to date on the system? The link is below, please check.



<https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736725489#>

It is always our intention to stay open, but if we are unable to staff the school adequately or the site is unsafe, then we would need to close. In an ideal world snow would only fall at weekends and be totally clear by Monday morning! However, that is rarely the case. Some schools are able to announce a closure early because they know their school site is likely to be icy and some schools know that they will be able to stay open because their teachers and kitchen staff live within walking distance or on well-gritted main roads. It can be difficult to find the right time to announce a closure: early announcements give parents time to make other arrangements, but the snow may be gone by the morning and the school would need to re-open, late announcements mean that the school is closed for the right reasons, but parents may struggle to find childcare.

If the weather forecast is for snow, then think about a contingency plan for school closure - bring work home so that you could work from home, give Granny a call and ask her to be on stand-by or talk to a friend and share childcare for the day. This way, if we are forced to close, you will be prepared.

Car Parking

Overall it seems that car parking has become more considerate of our neighbours, although there have still been one or two exceptions. However, I must remind you that parents are not allowed to park in the staff car park before 4:45pm. Parents collecting from EnergyKidz after this time may park in the car park whilst they collect their children.

Recruitment

I am keen to recruit another MSA (midday supervisory assistant) to ensure our KS2 pupils have a fun-filled, happy lunchtime. If you are interested in this role, please ask at the office for further details. Like most school based jobs, the pay is poor but the reward is in knowing that you are helping children to develop. Obviously it is subject to safeguarding (DBS) checks, but we would be prepared to consider a job share if you were not able to commit to every lunchtime.

Miss Scott

On an altogether happier note, I am delighted to tell you that Miss Scott will be staying with us until the end of the summer term. She has been supporting children and teachers across the school, so I am very pleased that we will be continuing to benefit from her expertise.

Children In Need and Christmas Fair

Thank you all for your generosity over the last few weeks in supporting Children in Need and the Christmas Fair. I am pleased to let you know that £1191 was raised for Children in Need and approximately £2000 raised at the Christmas Fair. Thank you to everyone and particular thanks to our PTA for all their hard work again in making the fair so successful.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

The school Christmas lunch takes place on Wednesday 18th December. Children may wear a Christmas jumper or come dressed as an elf, sugar plum fairy or other festive themed character. This is not a general non-uniform day!

The school postbox is open for sharing Christmas cards, but please ensure that the 'address' includes the recipients name and class.

School finishes on **Friday, 20th December at 2pm**, with EnergyKidz open until 4pm. Children may bring small games and activities to share on the final day, but these must not be electronic, electrical or toy weapons of any sort (guns, swords, arrows etc).

I hope you all have a restful Christmas holiday and we look forward to seeing you and your children again in the new year on **TUESDAY 7th JANUARY 2020**.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs D Raftery
Headteacher