

**Learning and Caring Together,  
“...they will flourish in the courts of our God.” (Psalm 92:13)**

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Dear Parents / Carers

Can you believe that we are at the end of the first term already? How time flies when you are having fun and enjoying learning and caring together at school! Christmas preparations have gone well. The children have been enjoying showing their class elves how to follow our school rules and taking part in many other activities too. I will update you more after all the other exciting events that have taken place this half term.

Our Year 3 **Remembrance Service** in church was led admirably by the children. They conveyed important messages and poignant reminders for our community, ensuring that we continue to learn, remember and are grateful to those who have served and those who still serve our country. Thank you to Mrs Johnson for supporting Year 3 in their service preparations and delivery and thank you, as ever, to Reverend Diane for her child centred address.

**Anti-bullying week** has taken place this half term. The theme this year was ‘Small Change, Big Difference’. Teaching and learning focussed on understanding what bullying is, how to protect ourselves and respond to bullying and how to change bullying behaviour. Thank you to those of you that joined us in wearing odd socks for the day and to Mrs Clifford for co-ordinating the focussed teaching and learning as well as the fun. Of course, bullying can happen at any time and anywhere. Although anti-bullying week raises the profile and provides focus, **respect, responsibility** and **compassion** are part of our everyday ethos, culture and high expectations for all at St Edward’s.

**Robins, Bats and Frogs** retold their class text through excellent dramatic performances of ‘The Leopard’s Drum’ in November. The impact on improved confidence was clear for all to see and exploring the text so deeply has influenced progress, attainment and **wisdom** in reading, writing, geography, PSHE and music too. Well done to the children and staff in Key Stage One; your performances were amazing!

It has certainly been a half term of performances as, straight after the Key Stage One performance, the stage was taken up with nativity rehearsals. Although festive fun is important, we have, of course, been learning about the significance and importance of the Christmas Story and the birth of Jesus. The children showcased this at its best during the **Early Years Nativity** and our **Year 1 Christmas Service** at St Edward’s church this week where Reverend Diane taught us to retell the Christmas Story using signs and actions. Thank you to the EYFS and Year 1 staff teams for their commitment to excellent teaching and for sharing the children’s learning with you all. Thank you also to the PTFA for the refreshments and raffles and to you, for once again digging deep and supporting the school’s fundraising efforts.

Other fundraising events this half term included **Children in Need**, where £281.55 was raised through non-uniform donations, Pudsey coins and our bake sale. The School Council led a whole school assembly (thank you Mrs Blairs and Mrs Leese) that focussed on why we raise money and how it is used to help others. They also included lots of fun too with the children guessing which baby or child photograph was which member of staff. They found this highly amusing as you can imagine! The **Bag2School event** raised £144.00; thank you once again to those who sorted out their wardrobes and donated generously.

I have been very impressed with the children's learning about **Road Safety** this half term and hope you have too. They can clearly articulate and show you how to cross-roads safely at an age appropriate level. Some of the children's work has been proudly displayed on our safety board in school. Take a look next time you are in to meet with a teacher or attend an event!

On the subject of roads and traffic, I have been asked to raise awareness of **parking and car emissions** on behalf of our local community. We politely ask that you do not leave car engines running if you are parked outside school in the morning or at the end of the day. Our children will be part of the Global Learning Programme that includes looking at ways to improve the air quality within their environment and health of our community this year and this is one way that you can support them in their efforts.

On the subject of environment... thank you all for respecting the PTFA alternative to **Christmas cards** this year. The children have been very proud to see their cards displayed electronically and on the display boards in the hall. They have been the topic of many conversations over lunch.

**Christmas dinner** was enjoyed by all. Thank you to Jodie and the Fresh Start team for the delicious food and to the lunchtime staff who went 'above and beyond' to make this day extra special. The children were very proud of their place mats and hats and they looked ready to celebrate in their Christmas jumpers. We raised £112.90 for **Save the Children**. Thank you again for your generosity, compassion and commitment to helping others. Following Christmas dinner, the children enjoyed yet another treat! The PTFA, once again, paid for our annual **pantomime**. This is always a highlight for the children. It was lovely to see them squealing, laughing and singing at the performance of Robin Hood and Mr Carter and Mrs Gliddon who 'willingly' showcased their dancing skills as part of the performance!

Once again, our PTFA organised and led our **Christmas Fayre**. Thank you for your generous donations and for supporting the event by playing games, visiting Santa etc., to the PTFA for EVERYTHING and for the staff that stayed late at a time that is very busy for their own families too.

I'm sure you will agree that it was lovely to see and hear our **Songbirds** singing their Christmas songs as you arrived at our Christmas Fayre. They were fantastic again this year when they performed on stage at The Victoria Hall. Their singing and behaviour was commended by event organisers, staff and parents. Well done Songbirds and thank you to Mrs Huckfield and Mrs Blairs for their time and commitment to St Edward's choir!

The Christmas celebrations concluded this week with class parties and a visit from **Santa Claus** himself. He visited the classes and spoke to the children about their behaviour and what they were hoping to receive on Christmas Eve. He was very generous and gave the children an early gift.

When I wrote to you in October, we were waiting for our **Ofsted** report to be published. I'm sure you have read it and that it has given you continued assurance that your children are well cared for and receive a good education at St Edward's. We fully appreciate your contributions to working in partnership with us, as they most certainly influence our outcomes.

Extracts from the report include:

- Pupils enjoy coming to this small village school. It gives its pupils a good education and helps them grow as individuals.'
- 'Staff at the school are friendly and caring. They encourage pupils to aim high and work hard.'
- 'Pupils settle in straightaway when they start school. This gets them off to a good start.'
- 'Leaders at the school are very effective. They act with integrity.'
- 'Leaders, teachers and other staff expect all pupils to do well.'
- 'Pupils feel safe in the school. They know who to talk to if they have any difficulties.'
- 'Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and help each other.'
- 'The school has a very positive ethos of 'learning and caring together'. It helps pupils to flourish.'
- 'Assemblies and Christian worship give pupils a sense of belonging.'
- 'The school nurtures its pupils and helps them grow as individuals.'
- 'Staff meet the needs of different pupils well. Pupils with SEND enjoy extra help. Support for them is good. Like other pupils, they are encouraged to do very well.'
- 'Pupils learn English and Mathematics very well.'
- 'Sport is a strength of the school.'

We have been congratulated by our Multi-Academy Trust and Staffordshire County Council who also recognise St Edward's as a good school.

Inspection doesn't end there for St Edward's. As you may be aware, all Church of England schools receive a **SIAMS** inspection every five years and our next inspection is expected in March 2020. We are proud of the work that took place last year, to raise the profile of St Edward's as a church school, including strengthening our **school motto** and developing our **reflection areas** and **learning walls**. This year, we have introduced our **school values** and are learning about their meanings and how we show these values through our behaviour and attitudes. Each class is 'championing' one of the values and have created some outstanding artwork to display so that the values become embedded as part of our school ethos and culture. We are also establishing our '**Christian Council**' that includes children, staff, community partners, church representatives, Local Academy Council members and, hopefully, parents too. Mr Warrington has sought parent interest but we still have vacancies. If anyone else would like to know more about joining a team, that are dedicated to upholding and developing our Christian teaching and Christian Distinctiveness at St Edward's, please contact Mr Warrington via the office.

Before I sign off for 2019, I need to update you on leavers and new starters. Mrs Pike, Mrs Wheel, Mrs Davies and Mr Gee's **Local Academy Council** membership has expired and they have now left the board. We thank them for their service, dedication and valued leadership contributions to St Edward's. Mrs Davies continues to volunteer in school and Mr Gee is a community partner on our Christian Council so we are lucky to 'keep them' as part of our team! We are pleased to share that we have elected three new Local Academy Council members this term and welcome Mrs Arnott, Mrs Hadnum and Mrs Williams to the group. Their skills will undeniably strengthen our council and help us to continually move forwards on our journey to outstanding.

One of our Teaching Assistants, Mrs Grindey, will not be returning after the Christmas break. She has been a much-valued member of our teaching team and her child centred ethos will certainly be missed by us all. Mrs Edwards has also resigned from her position as Office Manager. St Edward's has been a special place for Mrs Edwards for many years. She has had personal connections and has worked at the school 25 years. As this chapter of her life closes, the staff team and I wish her good health and happiness in all that she does in the future.

As chapters close, others open and I am delighted to tell you that we have recruited a School Secretary who will start in January 2020. Mrs Bloor will be joining the staff team. I know that you will welcome her as you visit the office and hope that you see changes that she brings as positive and refreshing.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas with your families and friends and look forward to seeing you at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve, out and about over the festive period and/or back at school in the New Year.

Kind regards,



Mrs Machin  
Principal

