

Garstang Community Primary School



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Dear School Family,

Well, we have almost made it to the end of one of the longest terms on record! I can't believe that we break up on Friday and it's actually Christmas Day on Monday! But that does give us, hopefully, a nice long rest period after Christmas. As always this is one of our busiest terms and I think both staff and children will be glad to see 3:25 on Friday! There's a lot of coughs, colds and tummy upsets around, as is normal at this time of year—let's hope we've got them all over and done with before Christmas!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the very dedicated staff team we have here at GCPS—they really do go above and beyond to ensure that your children have the very best education they can. They have worked incredibly hard, particularly with all of the extra Christmas activities and I am sure you will join me in wishing them a lovely, restful break.

Thank you for all of your support this term—our relationship with you is so important, and only by working together can we achieve the best outcomes for the children. I hope you all get the chance to spend lots of quality time together over the Christmas break.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Steph Reeves
Headteacher

**A VERY MERRY
CHRISTMAS**
and Happy New Year!

Staffing Changes

January brings lots of staffing changes! Firstly we say goodbye to Mrs Love. Mrs Love has taught at our school for 8 years, and has been an amazing teacher—the children all have very fond memories of being in her class. We wish her luck for the future! Mrs Newiss will become Willow Class's teacher in January—and she is very excited to take on this role, whilst being sad to leave Maple Class behind. Mrs Russel will be increasing her hours in Maple Class to 3 days, and on Thursday and Friday, Mrs Simpson will be Maple Class's new teacher.

Miss Chaplin will leave her role in the office to become a classroom based TA, full time in Willow, alongside the staff who already work in there. Her place in the office will be taken by Mrs Porritt, who we have appointed to the front office. All of Mrs Porritt's children have been through our school and it will be lovely to have her join the team! Please be patient for the first few weeks as she will be learning new systems and procedures! We will also welcome Mrs Blackett to our team in January—she will be Oak Class's new Teaching Assistant. She comes with a wealth of experience, and is very excited to get to know the children in Year 6. **WE ARE STILL ON THE LOOK OUT FOR A SITE SUPERVISOR—PLEASE TELL ANYONE YOU KNOW THAT MIGHT BE INTERESTED!**

School Activities and Achievements

We were invited to Garstang Free Methodist Church to watch 4front Theatre's Pantomime, 'Herald of Herod'. It was great fun, and it was lovely to share the opportunity with our friends from St. Thomas's. Reverend Michael from St Thomas's Church came in to support Oak Class with their RE curriculum, explaining to them all about Baptism. It really helped them to make connections in their learning. We had our final Open the Book of the year, where our friends from the local churches, alongside some pupil helpers retold the Nativity Story. OTB assemblies are always a highlight for our children and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for their fun and informative ways of bringing Bible stories to life.



A group of Year 5 and 6 children were invited to Garstang Community Academy to take part in an inter-school basketball competition. They were amazing, in what I have decided is a very intense and really rather rough sport!

KS2 visited The Dukes Theatre in Lancaster to watch a beautiful production of 'A Christmas Carol'. They really enjoyed the story and were beautifully behaved.

The Santa Dash that Oak Class were meant to take part in was cancelled due to inclement weather, so Lee Cadwallader came instead to teach them a manic version of the 12 Days of Christmas. It was great fun!

KS1 travelled to The Grand in Blackpool to watch their panto, Aladdin, which was very funny! We even had 2 brave pupils who went up on stage at the end—well done Dougie and Penelope!

Our Nativities have been just lovely! As I said before each one, it is amazing that our 4-7 year olds have the confidence to perform in front of an audience, and learn so many lines and songs! We hope you enjoyed them!

As ever, the Secrets Room was just a delight! The children are so excited to choose their gifts, and tell their wrapper all about Christmas Day in their house. A huge thank you to the PTA for their hard work in organising such a fabulous event!



Acorn Class visited the United Reformed Church to hear all about the Nativity Story. They placed the Nativity figures as Irene told the story, and helped finish decorate the church with baubles.



Maple Class gave us a great performance on their ukuleles, and left us feeling really Christmassy! They have learned so much in such a short space of time. We also had Sam, Alfie, Max and Seb on guitar and Emily on keyboard—they were all super!

Christmas lunch was amazing—Mrs Bickerstaff and her team catered for over 200 children and adults! The Christmas tunes were on, and the children all wore the hats that they had created (I'm not sure there are many embellishments left in the art cupboard!). A huge thank you to the kitchen staff!

Thank you for all of your generous donations for the Elf Run in support of St. John's Hospice. Because of the windy conditions we had a combination Elf Run/Dance! £1387 has been raised so far for this excellent cause—thank you!

St Thomas's Christingle Service

Rev Michael has asked me to share information of the Christingle Service being held at St. Thomas's Church:

Come and celebrate Christmas with us at our Christingle service 4:30-5:30pm on Christmas Eve. Perfect for families, this service looks at the birth of Jesus using an orange, red tape, a candle and dolly mixture. Expect songs, prayers and a puppet. Anyone is welcome, whether you go to church every week or have never been before. Rev Michael.

