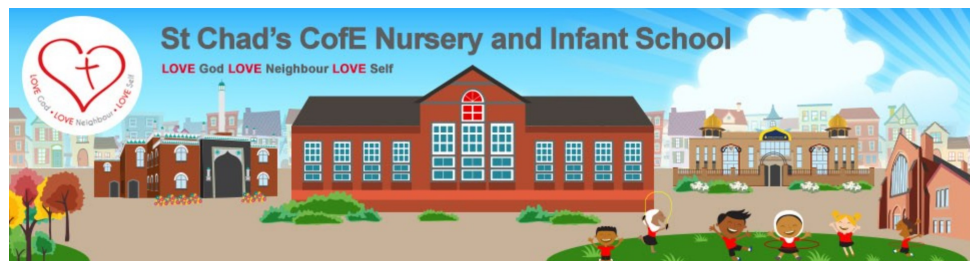


December 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

Undoubtedly, the past couple of weeks have once again been challenging for us all in light of further Covid disruption. As I am sure you are aware, the situation seems to be escalating again with the Omicron variant and case rates are rising, including in Derby. As I write this newsletter, there are no plans to make any operational changes to school. However, as we have seen time and time again, things can change at very short notice. We continue to work with the support of our MAT, DDAT, the Local Authority and to follow guidance from the Department for Education. If government guidance does change over Christmas, this will be communicated with you all via Class Dojo.

We were very disheartened to cancel some of our end of term events in school, including our 'Games and Giggles with a Parent' sessions. We once again thank you for your understanding and for supporting the additional precautionary measures that have been re-introduced while the Omicron variant is tracked and assessed. Over the past few weeks, we have continued with some reduced parent sessions and workshops in school and Mrs Sohanpal, our Family Support Worker, hopes to continue with these in the New Year. If you are attending these sessions, we kindly ask that you carry out an LFD test at home prior to coming into school. We continue to request that all visitors, including parents, wear a face covering when in school. Please remember to bring your own face covering—we cannot keep using precious school budget to pay for these.

Although it does feel like we have taken two steps forward and five steps back because of this new Omicron strain, there have been so many wonderful moments in school that we must not let the pandemic overshadow. Our children continue to show remarkable resilience and we are very proud of the progress that they have made in their learning this past term. Of course, none of this is possible without the commitment and hard work of the remarkable St Chad's staff team.

I wish you all peace, health, rest and love over the holidays. We will once again get through this latest Covid set-back, together. For those of you celebrating, Merry Christmas! I look forward to welcoming you all back to school on **Monday, 10th January**.

Love Ms. Leach x

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday 22nd December	SCHOOL BREAKS-UP
Monday 10th January	<u>SCHOOL RE-OPENS</u>
Thursday 17th February	SCHOOL BREAKS-UP
Friday 18th February	SCHOOL CLOSED (INSET Day)

GOVERNMENT APPEAL

On Sunday, 12th December, the Prime Minister, together with the NHS launched an urgent national appeal calling for everyone to get the Covid vaccines that they are eligible for, including boosters as they offer a higher level of protection against the new variant. Further information about the vaccinations/boosters and how to book them can be found here: [Book or manage a coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/covid-19/vaccination)



In Collective Worship after half-term, we will be exploring the values:

truthfulness and hope

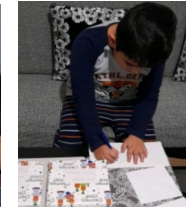


CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

As a Church of England School, Christmas is a special time of year on our annual school calendar. Although Covid has once again restricted some of the events that we have organised and hosted, we have still managed to hold onto the Christmas spirit. Here are some of our highlights that have helped us to reinforce our school's Christian values.....

ALTERNATIVE ADVENT CALENDARS: GIVE THE GIFT OF FRIENDSHIP

Our oldest children in Elephants, Flamingos and Crocodiles have enjoyed their 'alternative' advent calendar this month to help support their learning in Collective Worship on the values, friendship and compassion. Instead of the traditional chocolate advent calendar where we tend to 'take' and think of ourselves, they have been carrying out daily acts of friendship in school. Acts have included sharing a compliment, playing with a new friend and coming up with a class 'hand shake' (we loved how the children incorporated lots of love into their routines!). We have also had some wonderful home learning completed this half term.



RECEPTION NATIVITY

Children in Bears did a superb job performing their Nativity via the power of Class Dojo this half term! The costumes, singing and acting were AMAZING! Thank you to all staff in EYFS for their hard work (the face painting was particularly impressive!). We hope that you have enjoyed watching the video and getting into the Christmas spirit from home. To support with our safeguarding procedures, please can we remind you not to share the video beyond Class Dojo, including on any social

media sites. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE

Regrettably, due to Covid, it was not possible to make our annual visit to St Augustine's Church this year with Reverend Andy. However, Miss Gilsenan was determined that this would not impact the children's learning and she did a fantastic job organising an alternative Christmas experience in school. On Monday, 20th December, each class: enjoyed a hot chocolate and biscuits around the Christmas tree; decorated an angel; sang 'Away in a Manger' and opened a special gift from the King...their own class Nativity book.



CHRISTMAS DINNER AND CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

On Wednesday, 8th December, the whole school enjoyed their annual Christmas school dinner. The children were so excited to wear their Christmas jumpers and a great day was had by everybody. I would like to say a special thank you to Mr Taylor, our senior lunchtime supervisor, and our 'kitchen and lunchtime angels' for helping to make the lunchtime serving run so smoothly.

SANTA VISIT (TOP SECRET!)

As I write this, we have had a secret message from one of the elves to say that Santa may be visiting school on the last day of term. He hears that the boys and girls have been very well behaved and would like to come and say a big 'well done'. Santa will of course be following Elf and Safety guidelines....



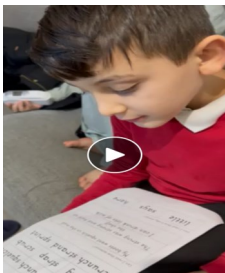
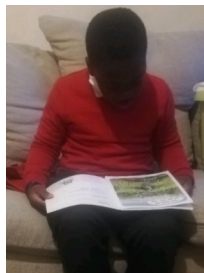
HOME READING: THE POWER OF CLASS DOJO

As an infant school, early reading and phonics are a priority in our curriculum as the ability to read and understand opens up learning for all children in all areas. This year, we are transitioning to a new phonics programme called Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. As part of this work, from January, we will begin introducing lots of new resources, including beautiful new reading books, into school.

Each year, we fall more in love with Class Dojo and how the app is helping us to drive school improvement. The use of Class Dojo to further strengthen our home learning continues to grow from strength to strength and we are keen to take this one step further next half term.

We have absolutely LOVED seeing recordings of your children reading at home since September. These have been a powerful tool for teacher assessment and have helped us to reflect on how we would like to further work with parents/carers to better support home reading.

Further details will follow in due course. In the meantime, please can we say a HUGE thank you for sharing your weekly video recordings of your child reading at home, please keep them coming! The children enjoy seeing themselves on the big screens in school.



KINGS AND QUEENS

I am thrilled to announce that our Kings and Queens for this half-term are:

Abdul Haadi and Sofia (Bears)

Karolina and Isaac (Crocodiles)

Deen and Lilya (Flamingos)

Muizz and Hajra (Elephants)



STAFFING UPDATES: FAREWELL MRS BARLEY AND MRS BANWAIT

At the end of this half-term, we bid a fond farewell to our kitchen supervisor, Mrs Barley and kitchen assistant, Mrs Banwait. Both Mrs Barley and Mrs Banwait have been members of the St Chad's family for a very long time and will be



READING VOLUNTEERS

We would love to increase our team of reading volunteers in school. Reading volunteers help to hear children read 1:1 in an afternoon in school and are such valued members of our school family. Even giving an hour of your time across the week can really benefit children's reading. Please get in touch with Ms. Leach if you are interested in finding out more information.



CLASS DOJO As is always the case over half term, teachers will not be responding to messages via Class Dojo until they are back in school on Monday, 10th January. Ms. Leach will only post on Class Dojo if there are any important government updates that impact the running of school they you need to be aware of. Thank you.