



# **GOLDSBOROUGH and SICKLINGHALL** **Federation** **Sicklinghall Community Primary School Newsletter**



HEADTEACHER NEWSLETTER No. 10 – 18.12.19

Dear Parents and Carers,



We have enjoyed the build up to Christmas in recent weeks and the ensued fun and chaos that it brings to the school day. The children have been preparing for the Cherry Blossom Nativity 'A Miracle in Town' and the Silver Birch and Willow Carol Service. The children spoke their parts with such loud, clear voices and I'm sure that you will agree that their singing was superb.

The children have also been busily preparing for the German Market Enterprise Extravaganza!

Each class was able to spend up to £30 on resources to make their item for the German Market with the aim of them being able understand business and profit and calculate an accurate costs of items. They had to make back the money they had spent and any profits that were made could be used to spend on something for their class such as books or playtime games.

I am sure you will agree that the items were fantastic – lovingly made by each child in the class. It was interesting to see the competitive side of the children... or should I say the teachers?! Some of them may now feel they have the business acumen to put themselves forward for the next series of the Apprentice!

The PTFA made this such a special event by decorating school – the windows were snowy and there was even a giant gold bow wrapped around school! Did you spot it? There is still time to see it if you haven't already. Every bit of help is always greatly appreciated as not only does it raise money for school, but these events are the most special moments in the school calendar.



The school was a bustling hive of activity and even the children who have been enjoying peripatetic music lessons found the courage to play in front of a crowd – well done!!

## **News**

There are two pieces of important news to share with you this week. The first fills me with great sadness. Mrs King has decided that she will be leaving us in the new year. Personally, Mrs King has been a real rock to me in the first few months at Sicklinghall and her talent and patience knows no end. She is a friendly face for the children, staff and the parents every morning and I know that you will all miss her as much as I will. After almost seven years in the school office, Mrs King has decided that she would like to spend more time at home with her family and so has our full support in what has been a very difficult decision. I am sure you will join me in wishing her the best of luck for the future; she knows that she can come back any time as she will always be part of the Sicklinghall family.



The second piece of news is something that brings Christmas Joy to school: Miss Gimeno is having another baby!

This is such fantastic news for Miss Gimeno and her family and we look forward to sharing the next few months with her. Make your guess now: girl or boy?

## **After School Club and Breakfast Club**

We are really pleased about the wraparound provision that is now in place at school for an extended period of the day (from 7:30am until 6pm). We listened to your requests and ensured that we reacted to the needs of our families. The children now have a substantial snack and are engaged in a wider, more interesting variety of activities often resulting in each child having an item that they can bring home afterwards.



We know the research carried out that this service is really good value for money but we **need** your continued support to use this service!

If there are any instances where you can support this service, please do use it. We would like this to remain part of our school provision for the future, but it needs to be utilised by our families.

## **Do you use the Government Scheme to help with the cost of childcare?**

Only a few of our parents pay for After School Club costs via an employer childcare voucher scheme. These work via salary deduction and save the individual National Insurance contributions. These schemes, however closed to new applicants in October 2018. You can still stay in them if you remain with your employer.

## **Tax-Free Childcare**

<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/childcare-vouchers>

**If you did not sign up to the above, there is now a new way to access support for these costs.**

The Government have a calculator (link above) which works out whether people are eligible for the new Top-Up Scheme and estimates how much the government will contribute to your childcare costs. Essentially, if you work more than 16 hours and earn less than £100k you are likely to get a government contribution of 20% of your costs up to £2k per annum. There may be some differences regarding Universal Credit or Tax Credit eligibility but the calculator will work this out. To access this, the individual registering will pay into their account that has been set up and the Government will then add their contributions. You can then pay the provider (us at school!) directly from this account.



## **Online Safety Christmas Tips**

With the Christmas countdown already in full swing, it is an important time to continue to help parents understand how to best keep their children safe online. This is part of the curriculum and something that we do in school with the children regularly.

Many Christmas lists will probably include electronic devices such as tablets, smartphones or games consoles. Below are some hints to help parents make these devices safer:

- When you purchase a device, take it out of the box before you give it to your child. Go onto the settings section where you can restrict or disable features so your children cannot download unsuitable applications or content e.g. videos. A good site to support you with setting controls is: <http://www.internetmatters.org/>
- Make sure that the account on the tablet/phone is set up by a parent or carer, so that they can authorise content that is downloaded. This is important if they want to download any additional content called 'In App Purchases' (IAP).



- Look at the age ratings for applications as some might not be suitable for your child. The same goes for access to popular sites such as You Tube, Snapchat and TikTok.
- Talk to your children about using cameras and video chat facilities. If someone acts inappropriately, then make sure they tell you immediately. Also, ensure they use these features sensibly and don't take unsuitable images and share them with people they don't know.
- If you are buying a smartphone for your child, talk to the mobile provider about parental controls. These might not be automatically switched on, so you may need to look at the providers website for support.
- Games consoles such as Xbox's and Play Stations are very popular with primary-aged children. The key issue with video games is the suitability of a number of titles as they are rated in the same way as films. Therefore, major releases before Christmas such as Call of Duty: Modern Warfare (rated 18), Star Wars Jedi (rated 16), NFS Heat (rated 16) all have 16+ ratings. A useful site to find about the content of games can be found here: <https://www.askaboutgames.com/>
- If you would like to download simple sheets please visit: <https://esafetyoffice.co.uk/resources/>

### **Reminders:**

An extensive list of dates has been shared with you for next year on a previous newsletter and are available on the website.

### **Parent Pay – Swimming**

There is **substantial** amount of **outstanding** payments for swimming for the Summer term 2019 (last academic year) and the Autumn Term 2019 (this academic year). This totals over £1000. Please check your Parent Pay accounts and clear any debts. If the costs cannot be met, the way swimming is organised may need to be explored in the future to make it more sustainable.



### **Parent Pay – School Lunches**

Please ensure that all lunch debt is cleared this week. School lunches should be paid for in advance – please ensure that accounts are credited for the four school days of the week commencing 6.1.20 (Monday is a training day) beforehand.

### **PE Lessons – Spring Term 2020**

From January, PE lessons for Cherry Blossom and Willow will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays so please send your child in their PE kit on both Mondays and Wednesdays. Silver Birch children will be swimming on Monday afternoons, so please remember your swimming kits, towels & goggles (if required) every Monday. Please come to school dressed in your PE kit on Wednesdays only.

Full school uniform should be worn on the remaining days.

Thank you for all of your ongoing support. We look forward to seeing you all in school on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Merry Christmas!



