

Newsletter

News from Mr Edwards-Grundy

This week in Collective Worship we have begun to light the candles on our Advent wreath. The first candle on the wreath signifies Hope, which provided a great link between our Value of last month and of this month.

Our new Value is Thankfulness, which is a great Value to be exploring as we head towards Christmas. Whatever our circumstances, we all have a lot for which to be thankful. Over the remaining weeks of term I am really looking forward to exploring with your children all that we have to be thankful for.

Lighting of the Advent wreath reminds us all (as if a reminder were needed) that Christmas is coming. For Christians, Christmas is the pivotal moment in history. The Bible is a story that begins in one garden and ends in another. The Garden of Eden, at the start of the Bible, begins as a place of beauty and promise but quickly becomes corrupted by human greed and a desire to be like God. The Garden at the end of the Bible is a place we are still awaiting, a place where all the wrongs will be put right and the beauty of the Garden of Eden will be restored.

The Christmas story sits mid-way on the journey between the gardens. For Christians, the arrival of Jesus, who walked the earth and whose life is recorded in the annals of history, is the moment that makes the journey from garden to garden possible. Without Jesus, there is no possibility of the second garden, where tears are no longer and everything that has gone wrong is made right again.

In Collective Worship, we thought about how candles bring us light and how Christians are thinking about Christmas bringing light in the darkness. We began thinking about how each of us, whatever we believe, can bring light to others. Do ask your children what they resolved to do this week to bring a bit more light to the world. And do also help your children to think more about what they can be thankful for – their ideas will help us in the coming weeks as we think more about the importance of being thankful.

Welcome to Rev Matt Beer

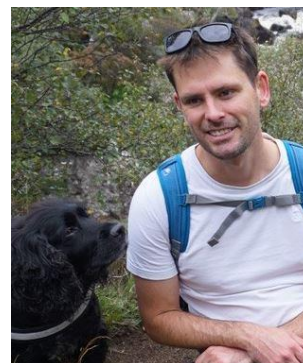
I am the new Vicar of St Mary's Cogges. I am settling in quickly and I am full of energy and excitement to work with the whole community around The Blake School.

When I was a teenager I was a county swimmer and I played water polo. I also met with Nelson Mandela to talk about youth aspiration and poverty.

Before I was a Vicar I was a youth worker and a primary school teacher, so I have spent much of my working life working with children and young people. I love to see children of all abilities develop into who they were made to be and helping each other to do the same.

I love gardening, walking my dog and running.

I look forward to meeting you, whether when I am at school, or at the church – keep an eye out for our Christmas services, I'd love to get to know you.



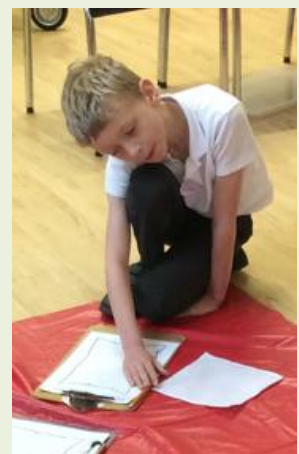
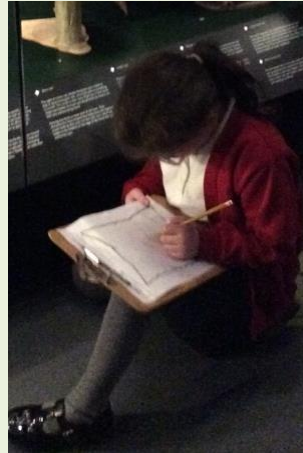
News from Around the School - Our School Choir

The School Choir has had a very busy week! Last Friday a coach full of children went to the Centre for Music at Oxford to be part of 'The Big Christmas Sing'. On Sunday, most members of the choir sang as part of the Cogges Christmas Market and yesterday a small group went and sang at Chatterbox in Witney. We are looking forward to hearing the choir sing at our Christmas Fayre (after school on Friday 13th December) and at our carol services.



News from Out and About – Year 3 trip

The Year 3 classes were delighted to be able to go on their rescheduled trip to the Roald Dahl Museum this week. A wonderful day was had by all. We are looking forward next week to seeing all the children in Year 3 dressing up as characters from Roald Dahl's books.



Values Awards

This week, there were a lot of children to congratulate on showing our School Values. Well done to each and every one of them for seeking to live according to our Values. During a school tour for prospective parents one of our Year 6 children said of our school 'They don't just teach you Maths and English, they teach you to be kind'. Well done to all the children for working hard, not just on their academic learning, but also on the skills to live well as a community.



News from Around the School

Our children in Year 2 are undertaking an investigation over time observing a daffodil and its growth. They are needing to exercise patience as they look forward to seeing the results of their planting!



Like children across the school, the children in Year 2 are also enjoying counting down the days of Advent using calendars made of baubles, stockings, world flags and children's photographs.

Children are also very busy with a whole range of Christmas crafts – it's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...



News from Around the School – Oh no it isn't!

There was a great deal of excitement in school yesterday as we welcomed the Saltmine Trust into school to deliver their performance of 'A Christmas Carol'. The children were captivated by the storytelling and threw themselves into the audience participation.



Our ability to continue to bring high quality theatre into school for the children to enjoy depends upon our costs being met by parental donations. If you have not yet made payment on ParentPay, please do so as soon as you can.

Thank you!

This week we received thanks from both the Royal British Legion and Operation Christmas Child. Thank you to everyone who bought items to support the Royal British Legion Poppy appeal and also to all those who filled a shoe box, or donated items to go into a shoe box. Your generosity will change the lives of others – thank-you!



Please bring any loose change to our Christmas performances, at each of them there will be the opportunity to donate to a range of charities that are close to our hearts.



Christmas is coming

During the next two weeks of term, there are lots of additional events in the calendar, please do make sure that you have a note of your child's performance and any end of term parties.

If you haven't yet booked a Christmas lunch for your child please make sure that you do so ASAP. Please remember, all meals previously booked for the last day of term have been cancelled and must be booked again for a Christmas lunch.

**Loving,
learning and
flourishing in
community**