



NEWSLETTER

December 2020

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Headmistress's Message

The lead up to the festive period is always an exciting one. From the arrival of our Christmas tree to wonderfully lively and energetic pantomime performances at school, we have enjoyed a wonderful range of festive celebrations over the last two weeks of term, culminating in a delicious Christmas lunch and Christmas parties for the junior bubbles.

There has been a sense of awe and wonder in our Christmas celebrations, from the annual nativity performance by our youngest pupils to the thought-provoking performance of *The Nutcracker*. I hope you will all agree that all the performances were fantastic. This has definitely been a proud moment for our school community.

The Year 11 pupils have been able to celebrate both the lead up to Christmas and the end of their first set of GCSE mock exams. They should be proud of their efforts and have celebrated with Christmas lunch, their final one as members of Normanhurst School.

The articles in this newsletter give you an indication of some of the opportunities the pupils have enjoyed over the last three weeks. Enjoy reading them.

I wish you all a peaceful and joyful festive season and the best of luck for the new year. The Spring term begins for pupils on Wednesday 6 January. We look forward to seeing them then.

Mrs Jacqueline Job

Headmistress

Festive Fun Day

On Monday 30 November, it was Festive Fun Day in the Early Years department. Pupils had a lovely day learning about how people celebrate the festive season around the world. The highlight was a chance to put on their pyjamas, get cosy and have a very special visitor to read a story. Mrs Job arrived with the Elf, who they have been looking after since, and she read the fun story of '*Father Christmas Needs a Wee*'.



The Early Years children took a walk along Station Road to admire the huge Christmas tree on the corner. The twinkly lights were the perfect end to the festive day!



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Infant Nativity

Although our Nativity was slightly different to normal, the children put on a great performance. They re-enacted the story of The Animal's Christmas Eve, with the children in Years 1 and 2 narrating the production whilst the Reception and Kindergarten children took on the traditional Nativity and animal roles.

The story was seen through the eyes of the animals, including doves, a hen, kittens, puppies, cows, horses and donkeys. Throughout the performance the children sang songs and traditional carols. Kindergarten and Reception sang 'Little Jesus Sweetly Sleep', Year 1 sang 'Little Donkey', Year 2 sang 'Silent Night', we all sang 'Away in a Manger', and we finished with a rousing performance of 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas.'

Year 1 and Year 2 dazzled in their Christmas jumpers and festive head dresses. A special mention goes to Year 2 for their brilliant performance on the bells, which was note perfect and beautiful to listen to. Kelly in Year 2 impressed all with her confident start to the show and Elise in Year 1 brought the story to a wonderful finale.

A huge amount of time and effort went into preparing and practising the show, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the teachers and team for bringing it all together.



Junior Christmas Celebrations

What an exciting time of year this is; laughter, music and lots of FOOD! This was the week of the Christmas parties and Normanhurst children know how to party. The children enjoyed a fantastic Christmas lunch with all the trimmings: roast potatoes, stuffing and we can't forget the turkey. After the children filled their bellies, they finished off the lunch with mince pies and sticky toffee pudding; it was all delicious! There was plenty of music for the children to show off their amazing dance moves, but the cherry on the top would have to be Santa's visit. Luckily, all the children have been good, so they all received a present. The day was finished with a movie and snacks. The children looked amazing in their Christmas jumpers and had a fantastic day!



Senior Christmas Lunches

Senior pupils happily celebrated Christmas early in the school hall with a specially prepared Christmas meal, albeit in their year group bubbles. As a Normanhurst tradition, senior staff served them turkey with all the trimmings – Christmas crackers and music added to the festive spirit. Students were also allowed to wear Christmas jumpers earlier in the week followed by the annual non-school uniform charity morning on the last day of term. After such a stressful year it was great to see happy, smiling pupils enjoying themselves. We hope that things will be safer and less stressful for all schools next year!





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Penguin Magic

Reception used their creative magic to turn some water bottles into penguins. They each stuffed their penguin with cotton wool, then they created some feet, flippers and a beak. In a recent Maths lesson the children had used repeating patterns to make beautiful scarves which they then used to adorn their penguin creations. When the children put them altogether, they looked amazing! Each penguin is unique and individual!

Then, adding to the festive magic, the Reception classroom suddenly had 'snow' falling everywhere. The children had great fun throwing snowballs and creating snow angels. The teachers really enjoyed getting involved in the fun too!



Charity News

With all the current restrictions due to Covid-19, the Charity Committee have been unable to hold as many fundraisers as usual this term. Thank you to those of you who supported our new initiative to sell Normanhurst advent calendars in aid of our chosen charities.

Many thanks also to all the parents and pupils who donated shoeboxes to our annual Operation Christmas Child appeal. This year we received 115 shoeboxes packed with toys and goodies for less fortunate children around the world.

I wish you all a lovely Christmas break, and hopefully 2021 will bring us more opportunities to exercise our charitable energies.



Mrs Prior

Charities Coordinator

Christmas Craft Club

Christmas Craft Club attendees have been busy creating lots of crafts to enjoy at home.

However, in one of the weeks, they spent their time creating a special collaborative Christmas tree for Mrs Job. Using a variety of green cardboard boxes and other recyclable materials, the children decorated their given part of the tree beautifully. Miss Stone and Miss Sainsbury were very pleased with their efforts and could not wait to surprise Mrs Job. It is now on display outside Mrs Job's office for everyone to appreciate.

Well done Christmas Craft Club!





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Reception Get Creative

The Reception children have created a beautiful Winter display based on the story of The Gruffalo's Child. For the background, the children all put wellie boots on and walked over the piece of paper with paint. They independently created some beautiful snowflakes using pipe cleaners and beads. Mrs Job happened to come in and saw them making the snowflakes, and the children made her a snowflake which she wore as a brooch on her jacket. They finished the display by creating the Gruffalo's child using finger printing with paint.



Reception also had a very exciting afternoon in the Art room with Miss Parrott and Miss Georgie, creating winter themed artwork. They were given all the body parts to create a winter bunny. First, they had to lay out the bunny how they would like to have it. Then they used wax crayons to decorate it using different techniques to make it look like fur. They then used water colours to go over the top and see the amazing effect when you paint over wax crayons. They finished it by sticking all the body parts together to create a beautiful winter bunny.



The children also collaborated to create some snowballs by scrunching up pieces of paper and attaching them to a piece of string which is now hung up in our classroom as part of our lovely winter display. Well done children for all your hard work!

Year 1 History Detectives

Year 1 used their super detective skills when they went for a walk along Station Road for their History topic 'Shops and Toys from the Past'. The children were very observant and pointed out clues to show which shops were older and which were modern. They spotted shops called Robins, Shaws and Wilsons and thought they may be named after the families that first owned them. A couple of children spotted dates on the shop fronts which indicated when the shops may have first started. The class observed that Shaws had goods on display outside like some older style shops. Children also spotted that outside Tesco there was a modern traffic light system signalling green for customers to enter and red for them to wait outside.



Hunting Nouns and Adjectives

Year 1 love their SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) lessons, especially when they go outside to learn. Making the most of the advice to use the outdoors as a classroom as much as possible, they went on a 'Noun Hunt' in the large playground. Having learned that nouns are the names of things, they identified examples of common nouns and wrote and drew the examples they found.



Then a few days later, they went on an 'Adjective Hunt' in the Early Years playground. Pupils looked closely at some nouns and then carefully described them using lots of exciting adjectives. Their favourite adjectives were bumpy, massive, peachy, disgusting and smelly... !



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Year 2 Christmas Preparations

Christmas Art This half term, the children have thoroughly enjoyed using a range of techniques and media to create Christmas Art masterpieces. The children particularly enjoyed designing their own winter scenes. After mixing a few shades of blue and purple, they painted their background. The following lesson, the children used black card and oil pastels to create their penguins.

Kelly chose to create a family of penguins in her winter scene, and said "I really enjoyed using just a few colours of paint but creating so many different shades. I am really proud of how my winter scene turned out."

The children have also explored wax resistant art; they used a crayon to draw snowflakes and then painted over the top with watercolour. Noah-Hussain said, "I couldn't believe it when I painted over the top of the crayon and the paint moved away from the snowflake. It was so cool!"

Christingles In RE this half term, Year 2 have been learning more about the Christmas Story and why it is important to Christians. Caitlin summarised what they have covered in some of their lessons: "We learned that Christmas is important to Christians because it is a time to celebrate Jesus' birth. Jesus was the Son of God and he was sent to Earth to help save it and make it a better place. He taught the people to be kind in stories like The Good Samaritan."

Pupils also discussed how Christians prepare for Christmas during Advent. The children particularly enjoyed creating their own Christingles and learning about what the different parts represent. They also found it interesting to discover more about what other countries do during Advent. For example, Enis learnt that "In Germany, the children put their shoes outside on the 6th December and when they wake up there are sweets in their shoes."



Year 5 Festive Art



Year 5 have had a Christmas theme for their Art lessons this half term. They have been widening their art skill set through a variety of lessons to create some lovely Christmas items.

Over the past few weeks, they have used 3D models to create snowmen, used Hamma beads to create Christmas patterns and characters, created Christmas trees and holly wreaths using hand painting, learnt about and made their own Christingles and used collaging to create Christmas cards for their friends and family.

They certainly have been busy and are in a very Christmassy mood as we approach the end of term.





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Oak-Tree Challenge

Lots of children are enjoying completing their Oak-Tree Challenge award. There are Bronze, Silver and Gold awards and the children have to complete different challenges to complete each award. Even with the current difficulties and restrictions, the children have still been eager to take part and have shown great enthusiasm.

Some children have adjusted the residential challenge to camping in the garden, putting up the tent, cooking on a fire and spending the night outside.



It was lovely to see some of the Junior pupils collaborate to plan and run a fundraising event selling homemade cakes outside the front of their house. Dylan, John, Jasmine, Elizabeth and Nina sold over forty spooky cupcakes and tasty breads.

One of the challenges also involves the children participating in an outdoor pursuit for a day. It has been wonderful to see the children enjoying the great outdoors, trying sailing, canoeing and cycling.



The children are certainly enjoying taking part in the Challenge. Pupils can start taking part in the Bronze award in Year 4 and then work their way through each challenge. If you would like more information, please contact Mrs Allen.

Christmas Card Competition

Each year the whole school Christmas Card competition gets better and better. The range and standard of work, across all of the year groups, was truly fantastic this year. It was a real joy to look through them all and see how pupils were celebrating the winter season. This year we increased the number of winners to cover each key stage. The winners were awarded ten copies of their card to send to friends and family, as well as festive treats and lots of House points! The exhibition of entries is still available to view on the website.

The winners were:

EYFS: Florence (Reception)

UKS2: James (Year 6)

KS1: Noah-Hussain (Year 2)

KS3: Mehrnaz (9J)

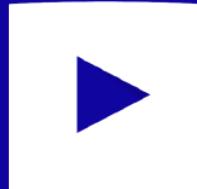
LKS2: Francesco (3G)

KS4: Mia (10C)

Congratulations everyone!



Getting Social

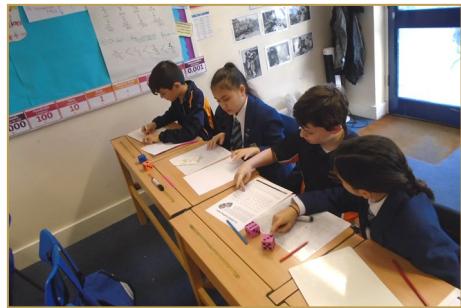




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We Love Spelling!

Along with the rest of the Juniors, Year 6 have been enjoying a different approach during their spelling lessons this year and making them more interactive in various ways. Whilst children were learning -able patterns in words a couple of weeks ago, they played a coordinates game with dice where they tried to score as many points as possible by not only spelling the words correctly but also by using them in sentences accurately. This engaged all our pupils who became very competitive and had a lot of fun! The weekly spelling scores have gone up and we are proud of our Year 6 children's spelling progress!



Birds of Clay

Year 6 children have been working on the theme 'Birds' in Art this half term. They worked really hard on depicting fine details in their artwork. They started the unit with drafting bird feathers in the first week and moved onto sketching birds the weeks after that. This led them to working with clay to make 'bird inspired' tiles. Some children created various feather designs on their tile and some children decided to move their bird drawings onto clay, tackling the challenges the clay presented as they copied their drafts from their artbooks.



It was a messy yet fun session, where children had a chance to apply their various skills to their clay work.

Art Club Christmas Party

For the final Art Club of the year pupil created miniature wreaths while enjoying Christmas songs. They used willow to weave the structure and added paper foliage to decorate. As always in Art Club, pupils worked really well together to share their expertise.



Have an excellent holiday, Art Club! See you all in the new year.

Happiness and Families Assembly

In their Key Stage 3 bubble, Years 7, 8 and 9 participated in an assembly exploring the concept of family. Pupils and staff shared stories of their families, telling us what it was that made them uniquely 'their family'.

It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate all of the different families that make up our one big Normanhurst family.





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'The Nutcracker' and Christmas Service

This year, Mrs Jones decided that despite the current circumstances we should continue to spread the Christmas spirit, as we do every year, with a digital Christmas Service filled with songs from the Senior and Junior choirs and a play from Years 5 and 6. With the help of the Drama department, Art department, Mr Dograr, Miss Stone and Mrs Prior, the students worked hard learning their lines and rehearsing.

We are proud of our students' efforts and their Oscar-worthy performances, and we would like to thank the Oak-Tree Marketing Assistant Millie for her expertise and patience in putting together the recording of the performances. We hope parents and pupils will enjoy the digital recording!



Form Parties



Several of the senior classes had the opportunity to celebrate the end of term by sharing food and Secret Santa gifts in their form parties this week.



After the 'new normal' return to school this term, the form parties were the ideal chance for pupils to give themselves a pat on the back for all their hard work and the resilience shown as they worked through the term. Well done to all, we are very proud of you!

Birthday Book Donations



Our Junior pupils have continued to support the birthday book scheme by donating copies of books they have enjoyed to the school library.

4L pupil Ibraheem celebrated his birthday on 9 November and he brought in two books by Roald Dahl. He has said that he loves reading Roald Dahl books as they make him giggle!



Dylan in Year 6 also followed this new school tradition and donated several brilliant books. A Spanish speaker himself, one of Dylan's choices was in Spanish. Thank you to him for not only donating books but also for bringing a book to support our MFL lessons.

A big "Happy Birthday" from the Normanhurst family.



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Writing Challenge

This term the pupils in Key Stage 3 took part in a House competition to see who could come up with the best gothic stories in less than fifty words. The entries were excellent - the pupils put in lots of effort to condense their terrifying tales! The winners are published below - read at your own risk ... !

They never stay quiet. All these voices. Never quiet. So, I go down to my basement and make them quiet myself.

By Jasmine, 9E (Connaught)

I kiss her goodnight and turn on her nightlight, she says "daddy close the wardrobe door, there maybe ghosts." I smile and begin to walk out of the bedroom and close the wardrobe only to hear my daughter's voice inside whispering, "Daddy, there is someone in my bed."

By Mia, 7M (Connaught)

I get up and kiss her on the head, moving silently not to be noticed.

She looks so peaceful and calm. I slowly creep out of the window, placing a hand behind the glass to muffle the sound. I shall see her tomorrow peaceful and calm as always.

By Akshhan, 9J (Warren)

Well done to all our budding authors!



Investigating Respiration

While not all Science lessons produce flashes and bangs, children are often impressed with practical demonstrations, and a recent Year 8 lesson on the workings of the respiratory system was no exception. Mrs Jayaram was able to illustrate the topic of 'Investigating Gas Exchange' using a lamb's pluck (internal organs of the chest cavity).

In her account of the lesson, 8B student Roxy described feeling the lamb's heart as "weirdly cool" and said it was "surprisingly heavy". She was also surprised to learn that the heart is situated behind the lungs rather than at the front of the ribcage.

The pupils also learnt about the movement of air during respiration, from the nose into the trachea, then the bronchus and finally the alveoli (air sacs). They had the opportunity of witnessing how the lungs inflate when we breathe in. The pupils were both disgusted and amazed at the same time!



Year 7 Theatrical Puppets

After a very busy term exploring a wide range of Art and Design, Year 7 are coming to the end of their DT project to 'Research, Design and Make a Theatrical Puppet'.

The classes have explored the work of the Irish theatre group Macnas, who use puppetry to create visually stunning spectacle.

The pupils also researched folklore and fairy tales to inspire their own creations, and they then used willow and papier maché to bring them to life!





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Normanhurst Sports Report

Golf Club Golf Club is back! Starting in January our school golf club is resuming (provided the COVID situation remains the same and the driving range is open). This club is open to any pupil from Years 4-11. We spend the winter practising at Chingford Driving Range. In the summer term pupils then go to a local golf course to put into practice the skills they have learned and honed at the range. At the end of the summer, there is an inter-house and individual golf competition where trophies and prizes are awarded.



If you are interested for your son or daughter to attend this club please sign up through the school office; there is a termly fee of £20. This year we also have the additional advantage of the resident PGA Professional Ross Spurgeon to assist Mrs Taylor with the coaching.

Lockdown Athletics at Lee Valley Athletics Centre We have been so fortunate that Lee Valley Athletics track allowed us to come and use the centre during the lockdown for our curriculum PE lessons. We have had some excellent sessions there over the past month.



Junior pupils took part in a Mini-thon. This is a four-event competition consisting of a 60m sprint, a 600m longer run, long jump and a howler throw. All Years 3-6 pupils took part in their lessons, and those who performed exceptionally well will come home with Gold, Silver or Bronze certificates based on the standard set by the English Schools Athletics Association for each event. Our individual winners in each event will also receive medals. Well done everyone, there were some really excellent performances. We are now in great shape for the summer athletics season.

Seniors also took part in some challenges including a Team 2020 challenge where year groups or teams were set a challenge to complete 202.0 kilometres using the bikes, cross trainers and track at Lee Valley. They also had to complete a rep challenge where they had to perform a total number of squats, lunges, press-ups, dips, and burpees that added up to 202.0. We were really impressed with the determination our pupils showed in order to complete their challenge.



Ultimate Frisbee For a bit of end of term fun pupils in Years 7 and 8 had a go at a new sport, Ultimate Frisbee. They soon realised that the skills required to make a frisbee go where you want it to are far more complex than one would think!



Running Club and Morning Mile Please come and join in with one of our morning running clubs. They are a great way to start the day!

PE Kit Reminder Please remember that pupils must have their legs covered during the school day with either plain navy/black skins or the school tracksuit. All pupils must have their school tracksuit as part of their uniform on PE days. If they get muddy or wet this will ensure they have something clean and dry to wear after the lesson.

As the weather is likely to be cold during January and February it is really important that pupils dress with plenty of layers. Many lessons will be outside even during these months. Thank you from the PE Department for your support.



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Normanhurst School Parents' Association

Dear Parents

Wow! And so ends 2020.

The last time pupils, parents and teachers had a proper, old-fashioned, NSPA get-together

 was the Easter Walk. That was nine months ago! Which made the virtual Christmas quiz on Wednesday 2 December an especially enjoyable event. We had concerns over Zoom fatigue and worries about technical mishaps, but in the end we were thrilled to see so many people log on and get stuck into the many games and tasks that got everyone involved. It was particularly nice to see lots of new faces, and who would have thought that dressing up like Olaf could be so much fun?! Many thanks to the teacher team who definitely got into the Christmas spirit(s).

This event really chimed with our efforts to try to 'come together whilst we're being kept apart'. If you have other ideas on how we can do more, please do contact the NSPA on normanhurstpa@gmail.com.

Alternatively email us for login details and join our next meeting on Thursday 21 January. Please make a note in your diaries.

Until then, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and here's to a better and more social 2021.

The NSPA Committee



NSPA

Normanhurst Parents' Association