

Ely St John's November Newsletter

Dear all,

This newsletter is to voice thanks for a number of different things and to inform you all of a few things including any changes to usual events in this half term.

A huge thank you

First of all, a huge thank you to the School Council for arranging Children in Need Day – there was lots of enjoyment and merriment and all in a good cause. The duck race in particular was enjoyed by children and it was lovely to see them all dressed up.

A special thank you to our School Council members in year 6, who showed real care and thought for their fellow classmates recently. They were discussing raising money for Children in Need and how to manage the day so as not to make any families feel bad if they were in need themselves and could not afford to give to Children in Need. It was as a result of this conversation that Lawrence from All For Sports, who works with Year 6 at lunchtimes, overheard and offered to contribute on behalf of all those in yr 6 unable to do so themselves. His donation was so generous and thoughtful. Thank you Lawrence – you are a star!



A thank you to our Friends committee who have been working hard to plan events / occasions that will continue to support the school community. We hope you enjoy the Lucky Squares they have planned to replace the usual Christmas Raffle – the prizes look fantastic!

Christmas

Due to COVID restrictions, some of our usual Christmas events will not be able to happen in quite the same way.



There will not be a Christmas dinner this year as we cannot manage to get so many children through in their bubbles safely. However to replace this we have decided that every class will have at some point in the last week, a Christmas Party afternoon. They will be able to make hats for this event instead of for the dinner; have some party games and we will be asking each child to bring a plate of party food in for themselves on the day so as to avoid sharing food.

The EYFS and KS1 usually do a Christmas performance at the end of term. We do not want the children to miss out on that chance to dress up; to be in a nativity; to mark the occasion in a way that you the parents can enjoy. Each class will therefore put on a short performance – a song or a poem in costume, that we can then share on the website with you all.

We also hope we can find a way for our musicians to mark the occasion and play a few Christmas tunes for us all to enjoy.

Unfortunately we have to ask you not to send Xmas cards into school this year – we will not be able to have our usual class Xmas card boxes or handing round of cards. Children will have to say Happy Christmas to friends instead and save cards for those loved ones they will not see and whom they can post cards to. There is also of course, the option of sending virtual cards. 😊

We have paid for a virtual pantomime for all the children this year – the children will be able to watch it whenever it suits in the last couple of weeks leading up to Christmas. We thought this would go some way to compensating for not having Christmas performances to watch live this year. While it too is virtual, we hope the children will still get that same sense of excitement and enjoyment out of the world of pantomime.

Jolly Jumper Day

Children can choose to come wearing a colourful jumper on **Thursday 10th December** instead of their usual uniform sweatshirts – we are calling it *Jolly Jumper Day* to avoid parents feeling they have to buy a Christmas Jumper especially. If children have a Xmas jumper they can wear this or they can just wear a bright, colourful jumper instead. The staff always have a Xmas jumper day to raise money for charity – we are not asking children to contribute but thought they may enjoy wearing something different for a day too.

A message from the Chair of Governors

Hello,

It has been another term which is flying by, as we all deal with the continuing challenges of Covid-19 on everyday life. We have been delighted to have everyone back in school this term, and have supported school in their hard work to ensure suitable safety measures are in place to keep everyone safe, whilst trying to keep an exciting educational environment for the children.

This term, we have focused on the return to school and spent time understanding how last year's restrictions have impacted on children. We have been delighted to see how children have adapted to coming back to school and that some of the national trends for significant reductions in progress have not been seen at the school. This is a great reflection on the hard work put in by families through the restrictions. We have also focused on supporting the school in developing the Remote Learning provision for use when children or bubbles need to isolate, and in allocation of the government catch-up funding to provide additional targeted support for children.

Thank you to all parents who completed the surveys. The governors have begun to discuss responses. We will communicate the survey outcomes soon.

As we come into the festive season, it is a great shame that we will be unable to celebrate this through some of the usual methods but we're excited at how the school are finding different ways to make the time special for children.

We would like to thank you all for your continuing support for the school and wish you all the best for the festive season.

Matt Leach
Chair of Ely St Johns Governing Body



Registered charity No: 1117367

Friends

If anyone wants to purchase a **Lucky Square**, they should follow the link to the virgin money page, followed by a quick email to the Friends (thefriendsofesj@hotmail.co.uk) to let them know you have purchased a square.

Link: <http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/friendsofelystjohnsluckysquare>

After School Clubs

The After School Clubs all seem to be running really smoothly with the children managing to keep to the new Covid rules within their clubs. I am putting a programme together for the Spring Term which will be along the same lines as this half term in that it will only run until the February half term break. Hopefully this will accommodate any unforeseen Covid problems or cancellations and then another programme will come out for the second half of term which may allow for a few more activities to be added if restrictions are lifted in any way.

Therefore please look out for the new programme which will be coming out via School Comms towards the end of next week. Don't forget if your child receives Pupil Premium are entitled to free After School Club places.

Any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

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