



# 'Be Smart... Be the best that you can be...'



***St Martin and St Mary Church of England Primary School Newsletter No.3 – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024***

**Remember, Remember the 5<sup>th</sup> of November – 'no, it already feels ages ago!'** It has been a very busy few weeks since half-term with some very wet weather and difficult conditions. I am just glad that we seemed to miss out on the deep, deep snow of last winter. Saying all that, it is early days. Who knows what December and the New Year will bring?

**Staffing Changes at Christmas** I know most of you will know, but we say goodbye to Nick Jones (Year 5) and Becky Gibbs (Year 6) at Christmas. We wish both of them well in their next endeavours.



**Arbor App** – You have received log in information about the Arbor App. Please try and get this set up on your phones, tablets and devices as soon as possible. From Christmas, this will be our principle means of communicating with you, we are trying to streamline our communications and be more efficient. The App also allows you to update contact information, consent preferences and medical information amongst other things so it will prove very useful in making sure we hold the correct information about your children and you.

**Uma Kunda School in Nepal** – I am delighted to tell you that, with the help of Michelle Rothwell and a local charity, we have created a learning link with a school in Nepal. The Juniper Trust, based in Keswick, has been supporting schools in Nepal since the earthquakes of 2014, helping to rebuild schools and train the teachers in those schools. We are not supporting the school from a charitable perspective but linking with them to learn about life in our different parts of the world. Our project, that costs nothing but time, has the following three strands;



**Cultural Understanding** - Exploring how people in different cultures live, including their traditions, beliefs, language, food, and family life.

**Environmental Responsibility** - Learning the importance of reusing resources and adopting sustainable practices.

**Inner Happiness** - Understanding that true happiness and contentment comes from within, not from material possessions.

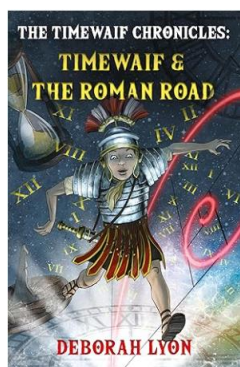
So far, all our children have seen a video from Uma Kunda school where the Nepalese children say welcome (Namaste) and talk about how excited they are to be linking with us. Our School Council team have generated questions we want answered about life in Nepal, and based on these a small team of video makers have worked with Michelle in our school to make a video that is being emailed to Uma Kunda. The children were very excited to tell our international friends all about life in our school and in Cumbria. I am really hopeful that our children will broaden their horizons as they learn about this school and this part of the world.

**Shoe Box Appeal** – We had a lovely message of thanks from Rowena who organises the Teams4U shoebox appeal. 2,078 boxes, including 27 from St Martin and St Mary will be distributed to children and young people in crisis across Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this appeal.

**PTA – Dates and Events** – last week, every family received an update letter about PTA events in the run up to Christmas and our Christmas Fair. All of these dates can be accessed on the [school calendar](#) on the website.



**Attendance** – Many children have started to collect their ‘raffle tickets’ by being in school each and every day. Remember, for each week of 100% attendance your child will have an entry into our school attendance lottery. Every week of 100% attendance is an extra ticket and an increased chance of winning a prize.



**Timewaif** – On December 12<sup>th</sup>, local author, Deborah Lyon, is visiting school to talk to children in Year 5 and 6 about the art of writing and her latest book, ‘Timewaif and the Roman Road’.

*Twelve-year-old Tim Wainwright, growing up on the west coast of Cumbria, struggles with his mum’s intense grief after the death of his dad and the constant taunting of village bullies. Only his best friend Annie brings any fun to his life.*

*Fleeing his tormentors after school one day, he finds a hidden cave in the sea cliffs. Once inside, Tim leaps through an enchanted hopscotch board to emerge into a very different Cumbria... two thousand years in the past.*

This book has had rave reviews and children will be able to purchase a signed copy at a discounted price of £6. If children would like to purchase a copy of the book can they please bring £6 in cash on the day. We might be able to source further copies if children decide to buy the book after meeting Deborah.

**Admissions – change to PAN Sept 2026** - Our Admissions consultation closed on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November. At our Full Governing Body meeting on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, school will consider these comments. A decision will be shared with parents in the December Newsletter.

**Morning Club** – In September, we extended the hours of our Morning Club (care for younger children before school) as many parents expressed an interest in accessing this provision to support their working hours. We now offer this club from 8am. We have a very small number of children using the club and therefore we are not covering our staffing costs. We will review this at Christmas but we may have to consider adjusting this club if more children don’t begin to use it regularly. I apologise to those of you who currently rely on this provision. [early-morning-club-and-after-school-club-school](#)

**Cygnets – Play Group** – On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November, (9.15am to 10.45am) our very own ‘Cygnets’ playgroup started in school. This has been a huge success and it has been great to see lots of new babies and toddlers in school with their families. More details can be found on our website or by following this link; [Cygnets Playgroup](#)



**School Christmas lunch** - This year, school Christmas lunch will be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. If your child/ren would like a Christmas dinner then orders must be placed in the usual way on SchoolGrid by **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**. There is a vegetarian option and a gluten free option available.

Thank you to everyone that donated a box of crackers. We now have enough for every child to have one with their Christmas dinner.

**Christmas performances and KS2 Christmas Church Service** - The Reception and KS1 Christmas Nativity performances will be taking place Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 9.30am. These are ticketed events and details were sent out to families last week on how to purchase tickets. Please [click here](#) for further details on how to book.

Our KS2 children will be having their Christmas church service on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 1.30pm at St Mary’s Church. Parents are welcome to join us.

**Outstanding payments** – Invoices up to the end of term have been sent to parents for Pre-School & Nursery fees, early morning club and lower school after school club and payment is due by 4<sup>th</sup> December. Currently, we are owed just under £5,000 so please can I ask for these invoices to be settled on time.

**Illness** – It's that time of year where there are lots of viruses going around and we have had a number of children off/sent home with sickness bugs recently. Please can we remind you that if your child has been sick or had diarrhoea, then they can only return to school 48 hours after symptoms have stopped. We realise that it is frustrating if your child seems well enough to be back in school, however, it is important that we try and avoid it spreading to other children and staff.

**Important Diary Dates - All dates are in the school calendar on our website for easy reference**

- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – 2.30pm – Nursery New Parents Meeting
- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December – PTA Festive Outfit day in return for bottles (KS2)/chocolates (KS1) for the raffle – no nuts please
- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December – 9.15am to 10.45am – Cygnet's Playgroup
- Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December – 3.15pm – PTA Christmas Fair
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December – 9am - Nursery come and play session
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December – 9.30am – Reception & KS1 Nativity Performances
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 9.15am to 10.45am – Cygnet's Playgroup
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas dinner (whole school) – please order your child's Christmas dinner via SchoolGrid in the usual way by **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December**
- Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December – 9am - Nursery come and play session
- Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 9.15am to 10.45am – Cygnet's Playgroup
- Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December – AM – Nursery Christmas Party
- Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December – 1.30pm –KS2 Christmas Service at St Mary's Church – parents welcome
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December – AM – Year 3 & Year 4 Christmas Party
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December – PM – Year 5 & Year 6 Christmas Party
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December – AM – Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Christmas Party
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December – **Term ends today at 12.00noon** for Pre-School & Nursery children
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December – **Term ends today at 2.00pm** for Reception to Year 6 children
- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January – INSET Day
- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January – Spring Term begins