



Dear Parents,

With today being the first day of winter (meteorologically speaking), it seems an appropriate time to share with you some of the seasonal things that will be happening in school as we head towards Christmas. Although we are not able to have a 'normal' Byers Green Christmas this year due to the continued coronavirus restrictions, we are still planning lots of fun activities for the children to take part in towards the end of this term. Please note the following:

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we would like the children to be able to send Christmas cards to their friends in class and across school as they would normally do. However, to ensure this can happen in a covid-secure way, we are asking that all Christmas cards are brought into school by **Friday 11 December**. They will be stored in a box in each classroom and then safely distributed during the final week of term.

PANTOMIME CANCELLED? – OH NO IT ISN'T!

We were delighted to see this announcement from the Gala Theatre, Durham: "*Villain, Rupert Von Rottenchops wreaks havoc in Durham in a tale of kidnap, blackmail and all-round treachery. Without any pantomimes to perform in this year, a series of characters from pantos past, team up to take him on. Will good triumph over evil...? With Gala's much-loved pantomime unable to take place this year, we have filmed a brand-new comedy thriller, to help keep you in touch with your panto favourites. Our new online adventure Rottenchops Revenge comes to the Gala website in four episodes. Screening from Monday 14 December to Thursday 17 December each day at 4.00pm, the episodes will remain online to watch until midday on Christmas Eve.*" We are looking forward to watching these episodes in school during the last week of term as an alternative to our annual visit to the pantomime.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY – WEDNESDAY 16 DECEMBER

The children and staff will still be able to enjoy the traditional Christmas dinner on Wednesday 16 December. If your child normally has packed lunch but would like a Christmas dinner, please let Mrs Blenkiron know as soon as possible. To add to the festive feeling, children and staff are invited to wear Christmas-themed clothing on this day.

CHRISTMAS PARTIES – THURSDAY 17 DECEMBER

The children will be able to come to school dressed in their party clothes on this day. The parties will take place in classrooms with a range of fun games and activities – party food and a drink will also be provided.

CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

As I anticipated in my previous newsletter, we will be unable to host our usual Christmas performances in school this year. Although nothing can replace the experience of seeing the infant nativity or the junior show live and in person, we recognise it is important to mark this important tradition in some way. Therefore, coronavirus permitting, we are planning to put together contributions from each class into a format which can be shared with everyone before the end of term.

COUNTY DURHAM SCHOOL BENEVOLENT FUND

The County Durham School Benevolent Fund is an independent registered charity which offers a grant towards shoes and coats for school pupils. A grant of up to £35.00 can be awarded towards a winter coat and up to £35.00 for a pair of shoes for families who are eligible. A full list detailing who is eligible can be found within the application form. Since 1 November 2020, CYPS have administered this fund on behalf of schools. The home page of the Durham County Council website <http://www.durham.gov.uk/schoolbenevolentfund> provides additional information. Please note that requests for application forms can only be made by contacting the following: benevolentfund@durham.gov.uk.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

School will close for the Christmas holiday on **Friday 18 December 2020 at 3.15pm**. We return on **Monday 4 January 2021**.

Mr W. Kirtley (Headteacher)