

Message from the Executive Headteacher



Nebula
where stars are born

Nebula Newsletter
Issue 14

December 2021

THE SCHOOLS IN OUR FEDERATION

Frettenham Primary

Hainford Primary

Horsford Primary

Old Catton Junior School

St. Faiths' Primary

White Woman Lane Junior

The Executive:

Miss Anatola - Executive Deputy
for EYFS

Mrs Pellatt - Executive Deputy
for School Improvement

Mrs Connelly—Executive Deputy
for School Improvement

Mrs Porter - Executive Deputy
for SEND

Heads of School:

Mr Paul Cross -

Hainford Primary

Mr Gyles Longhurst -

Frettenham Primary

Mrs Tanya Kirton &

Miss Nicola Owen -

Horsford Primary

Miss Emily Erick-

Old Catton Junior

Miss Kat Wilson-

St. Faiths' Primary

Mr Daniel Richmond -

White Woman Lane Junior

Nebula Christmas ...

The past two years blur in my mind into a reel of fuzzy memories, stresses and constant changes. COVID alert levels and tiers, protests, violence, political animosity, Twitter fights, masks and mandatory COVID Passes required to gain entry to larger domestic venues ... and that's just what's happened or happening in the wider world!

In schools, we have had various risk assessments and compliance codes, daily DfE guidance, often emailed at midnight to be assimilated and implemented the following day, pupils and staff unwell ... Advent and Christmas have been different for our schools again this year from what we had come to expect before the pandemic. I know this has been disappointing for many of you that you have not been able to join us and your children in our schools – we were not able to have massive Carol Services or concerts to which everyone was invited, or crowds in our halls to watch the children's performances.

Masks have once again been introduced to be worn in our communal areas in school and depending on the levels of COVID cases in each of our schools and the advice received from Norfolk Outbreak Management Centre, other measures have had to be put back in place to mitigate risk and to try and stop, or reduce the transmission of the virus.

Not all our schools will have done exactly the same things - they are individual schools after all - and we value their differences.

Our schools may have had to

take different measures to neighbouring schools too. This may be because of the particular building, staffing or specific advice they have received from our public health advisers. All measures have the common goal of keeping children safe and help learning take place.

Once again the message, "Do not be afraid" is pertinent this Christmas. We are living in a time when fear has continued to take hold of the world in the face of the new Covid-19 variant. People are concerned about catching the virus, worried about what comes next and asking when it will end? Will we ever be able to return to life as we knew it before?

Regardless, in each of our schools we have celebrated Christmas with your children with a range of festive activities taking place and each school has shared with you what they can, either with photos, reports, recordings or by streaming events live ... to make Christmas in school as normal as we possibly can. Christmas celebrations in our schools for staff and our children are a time for joy and fun, to revisit the Christmas stories, the Nativity, and it is also a time to reflect about what Christmas is really about...

I'd like to share with you the following quotes which remind me of the real meaning of Christmas;

"Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you."
- Steve Maraboli

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?"

— Bob Hope

At the end of another difficult year, we are more aware than ever of our physical vulnerability. But we are also more aware than ever of our need for love, support and encouragement. At the end of all of this we will be changed. I would like to think that we will be transformed with a new zeal for life, not world-weary, exhausted and tired. And I hope we will come together to support and sustain each other and most importantly be kinder to one another.

I hope that this newsletter will give you just a little flavour of the Christmas festivities in our schools: the fun, the celebration and our thought for others ...

*Wishing you all a very happy
and safe Christmas and a
healthy 2022.*



Ashley Best-White
Executive Headteacher
The Nebula Federation

Nativities and performances ...

The highlight for each class at Hainford Primary has been their Nativity performances and especially the costumes, which have been so generously donated by a range of parents. Classes 1 and 2 worked together to perform 'Prickly Hay' while class 3 focused on a more traditional retelling of the Nativity story - with some more modern elements.

At Horsford Primary, Mill Lane, Mr Patient, the music subject leader, arranged for the whole school to sing carols and perform readings as part of this year's Carol Concert. The children sang in key stages in order to stay Covid safe and Mr Patient then worked hard to incorporate the different videos into one performance for our parents and children to watch at home. There were a number of solos and the readings from our year 5 and 6 children helped to tell the story of the birth of Jesus.



Horsford Primary

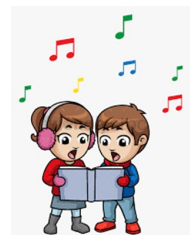
Year 6 at Old Catton Junior worked hard to learn two Christmas Carols: Silent Night and O Come All Ye Faithful, which they performed at dusk, with candle holders they had made in class, in front of the whole school on the playground. Old Catton ended their celebrations with an online service with Reverend David who retold the story of the Nativity, and the children shared their Christmas prayers.



Hainford Primary



Class 3 performing the Nativity Rap in their Christmas Jumpers which is the finale to their performance.



More Nativities and performances ...



This year Frettenham Primary was hoping to be able to use the Church to perform their Nativity, but in the end they had to opt for a video by Class 2, which they were able to send to the parents.

Class 1 videoed a performance of 'Twas the night before Christmas', with support from some Class 3 children who helped adapt the script, cast the parts and make the costumes and props too.



'Twinkle, Twinkle, Nativity'

The Reception children's Nativity at Horsford was also recorded for parents to watch. The children really enjoyed the whole experience, with rehearsals at school, songs to practise at home, getting dressed up at school and performing with their friends in front of lights and a camera - culminating in two beautiful short films. The children did amazingly well, they worked really hard.

Frettenham Primary



The camera operator and editor, Mr Terry, commented on just how lovely, patient and well-behaved the children were.



Horsford Primary



Images of Christmas 2021 ...

We have enjoyed so many festive activities during the last couple of weeks, despite the restrictions and difficulties posed by COVID. Thank you to everyone involved!

On Friday 10th December the children and staff helped to raise funds for Save the Children by coming to school in their Christmas themed jumpers for a small donation. The children really embraced the theme and helped to make the schools look so festive!



Horsford Primary



St. Faiths' Primary



At St. Faiths' Primary, on Christmas Jumper Day they saw some wonderful jumpers and outfits, and the children also enjoyed a Christmas Craft afternoon and enjoyed their annual Christmas dinner to a soundtrack of classic Christmas tunes!
More photos of these events later in this publication ...





Performances and Advent 2021 ...



WWL Christmas Performances

This week White Woman Lane's Year 3 performed the school's first (and hopefully last) virtual Christmas performance. The children sang a medley of traditional and popular Christmas songs. They worked so hard learning words and perfecting dance moves. The performance was a huge success; the children did themselves and the school proud. It was wonderful to finally be able to put on a show after such a long absence and the smiles on the children's faces lasted the rest of the day. Congratulations Year 3!



Year 4 pupils at White Woman Lane also put on a Christmas Concert via Zoom. This was attended by over 100 parents online who could witness the children singing traditional songs like 'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year', to more modern songs such as Elton John's 'Step into Christmas' and perhaps a less well-known song of Coldplay's 'Christmas Lights'.

Advent at Horsford Church ...

The children in Years 3 and 4 at Horsford Primary made white Christmas tree decorations for the Advent celebrations at Horsford Church. On Monday 6th December, all four classes visited Reverend Margaret to hang their designs on the tree in the church. Reverend Margaret helped them to celebrate the start of advent by lighting the candles of hope and peace and join in with prayers.



Festive Fun 2021 ...

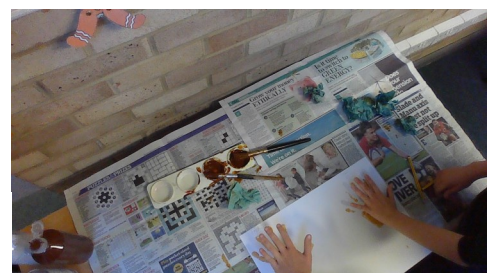
The children in some of our schools have taken part in a Rudolph Run where they donned their antlers and red noses to run, walk or skip a mile to raise money for Nelson's Journey.



Christmas Craft fun at White Woman Lane



Christmas Craft afternoon at St. Faiths' Primary



Pantomimes and Displays 2021 ...

On Thursday 2nd December the children at our Horsford Primary Holt Road site were able to experience the joy of a live (covid safe) performance of 'Cinderella'. We were fortunate to be visited by the latest touring production from the Norfolk Institute of Performing Arts. All the usual characters were present: Cinderella, her cruel step-sisters 'Tik' and 'Tok', Buttons, love interest Prince Charming and his 'right hand' Dandini - not forgetting the Fairy Godmother. The Reception to Year 2 children were clearly under the spell of this fun and energetic production, being totally memorised throughout the performance. With the elaborate painted scenery and the glorious singing and enthusiastic dancing, the children and grown-ups were easily transported from a crisp, December day in Horsford to the excitement and magic of Fairytale Land.



During the final week of term children in some of our schools also enjoyed watching a virtual live-streamed performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. This has been especially written by Nick Earnshaw and has been arranged by Norfolk Music Hub in partnership with Charanga, St. George's Theatre, Sheringham Little Theatre and NYMAZ. There are some songs which the children could start to learn before the pantomime and the children were also able to dress up like their favourite pantomime stars for the virtual performance.



Santa's Toy Train
Old Catton Junior School

The children at Old Catton have been busy creating their festive classroom windows to brighten up Church Street with the images ranging from Santa's Toy Train to the Twelve Days of Christmas.



Twelve Days of Christmas
Old Catton Junior School



Christmas Lunch and Hampers 2021 ...



St. Faiths' Primary



Hainford Primary

... and the children enjoyed their annual Christmas lunch to a soundtrack of classic Christmas tunes!



Horsford Christmas Hampers

Over the past two weeks, the children from across the school have worked together to create a Christmas hamper. Horsford Helpers support several local families, and we wanted to support them to help provide a lovely Christmas for everyone in the community. The target was to have one hamper per class, but as always, our wonderful children and their families have exceeded this target as we have averaged two boxes per class. Thank you all for supporting this wonderful charity.



Toys and Tins 2021 ...

Natalie Brown, our Pastoral Manager, once again this year submitted a request to the Salvation Army to provide Toys and Tins. This year a request was made to support 45 families, including 99 children across our schools. Sadly, this is a significant increase from last year when we provided for 23 families with a total of 63 children, All of the families we have nominated will be provided with gifts and food. All of these arrived at White Woman Lane and then our staff began to task of delivering to all our schools by the last week of term, ready for the staff in each school to distribute to the families. Please take a look at the photographs, which show just some of the parcels, bags and boxes received. It was very overwhelming and also heart-warming to know that by working with an external agency, we are able to provide families in need with some lovely toys, gifts and food for the Christmas period. A huge thank you to Natalie.



Toys and Tins and Posada 2021 ...



The Posada

Reverend Margaret visited both sites of Horsford Primary to introduce the children to the Posada, which is the celebration of the journey that Mary and Joseph took leading up to the birth of Jesus. Dolls depicting Mary and Joseph have been travelling to each class to find out what the children have been learning about and to help them celebrate Christmas. Once the class has hosted Mary and Joseph for the day they have travelled to the next class overnight. Reverend Margaret will be collecting them, along with their "travel diary", on the last day of term so they can return to Horsford Church for Christmas Eve.



This term we say 'Goodbye' to ...

Mrs Peck- maternity leave
White Woman Lane School

And we welcome ...

Miss Amos
White Woman Lane School
Miss Vickery
Old Catton Junior School

And finally, in other news ...

Ofsted came to visit

In July, Hainford Primary School was inspected by Ofsted. The inspection confirmed that Hainford VC Primary School continues to be a good school. The inspectors found that pupils at Hainford are very happy and really enjoy their learning and using the school's enquiry approach to find out more about what they are interested in. They recognised that staff make sure that pupils are well cared for, and that those with additional needs have these needs met and that Staff work closely with families to support those who need extra help. There is no bullying, behaviour is good and children learn well. The inspection also concluded that Hainford as a small school benefits from being part of the federation of Nebula Schools.

Congratulations to Mr Cross and the team.

Thank You to all the Staff ...

I would like to take the opportunity once again, to say a huge and heartfelt 'thank you' to all of our staff – to our amazing heads of school, teachers, teaching assistants and school support staff, who every day make a real and vital difference to the lives of our children and young people.

Their passion, commitment and drive to inspire our children is something I am extremely proud of and grateful for, and I want to pay tribute to them for their continued hard work, dedication and resilience during what continues to be a difficult and challenging time for all schools, staff, pupils and parents.

These have indeed been unprecedented times for our schools and our staff but through it all, their commitment to providing the best possible education and caring for your children has remained paramount. All of them are an inspiration to our pupils and I am incredibly proud to have them as my colleagues.

Michael Morpurgo, celebrated author and former Children's Laureate, said: "So often and for so many of us, it is a teacher who changed our lives, was at our side through hard and difficult times, who lifted us up when we were down, helped us find our voice, gave us confidence when we needed it most, set us on a path that we have followed ever since."

I know this is why our staff do what they do, and that's why I want to say "thank you" to them all.

Ashley Best-White.