



Poppy Appeal. Thank you for helping to raise £108.20 for the Royal British Legion



There has been so much going on at Hollybush since my last bulletin and I have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the festive season in the school for the first time. The decorations day went really well; the activities were all really good and the children were able to take some super decorations home. Now that we have established this in the calendar, we will build on it for next year.

The Nativity performance from Years 1- 3 is such a lovely Christmas tradition in many schools and our children spoke their lines well and sang beautifully. I particularly enjoyed the funny sheep. A new Hollybush Christmas event this year has been each child adding a decoration to the tree in the hall. The tree looks so good.

Last Friday, the children enjoyed their pantomime trip, going to watch Beauty and the Beast. To the great amusement of the children, Mr Mallick was asked to go on stage and take part in the show. I think he has now recovered from the experience.

The children from the Nest, Nursery and Reception children raised the cute factor to the maximum and performed so well, sharing Christmas Nursery rhymes and songs and signing along to them. Well done to all of years 4,5 and 6 for the Carol Concerts. The reading and singing were very good There was a great turn out of parents who enjoyed the super performances. An extra well done to Year 6 for the performance at Carlton House on Thursday evening. I was informed that the residents really enjoyed joining in. Thank you to so many of you for joining us at the Christingle Service. The staff organised the walk there very well and the service was very enjoyable. The singing was particularly lovely and the holding of the Christingles was very poignant.

Please could everyone be thoughtful in the morning whilst parking near the school. Please avoid blocking resident's driveways and if there is an issue, please show courtesy and kindness.

One final piece of news..... Miss Borgeat is having a baby. We are all delighted for her. She will be going on maternity leave later on in the Spring Term. Have a great weekend. Mr Fisher



SAFE	
We move around school in a safe manner. We follow instructions to keep ourselves safe. We keep hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. We use equipment safely. We stop safe online. We talk to an adult if we feel unsafe.	
READY	
We wear correct uniform. We arrive at school on time. We have our equipment ready. We show that we are listening and ready to learn.	
RESPECT	
We listen when others speak and we respect the property of our friends and the school. We have an understanding of others' cultures and beliefs. We respect that everyone has a right to learn.	

Type of query	Member of staff to contact
Safeguarding/child protection	Mr Fisher, Mrs Cracknell, Miss Borgeat, Mrs Poole and Mrs Richardson
Any issues relating to your child or another child in the class	Email admin to arrange a meeting, sometimes a phase leader may join this meeting
If you do not feel the issue has been resolved or you may need more advice.	<p>Step 1 Phase Leader</p> <p>EYFS-Miss White Year 1 - 3- Mrs Christman Yea 4 - 6 -Mr Chandler</p> <p>Step 2 Deputy Headteacher Mrs Hannah Cracknell</p> <p>Step 3 Headteacher- Mr Fisher</p>
Inclusion/ Special Educational Needs	Miss Borgeat
Looked After and Previously Looked After Children	Mrs Cracknell
Payments/Finance	Miss Byrne Mrs Tilbury
Admissions	Miss Byrne
Complaints	Please refer to school complaints policy on the <u>website</u> .

Upcoming Events

2025
2026

December

Monday 15th	Rock Steady Concert
Friday 19th	Tales together
Friday 19th	End of Term finish 1:15pm

January

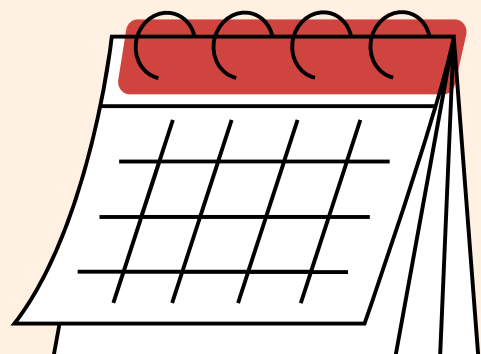
Monday 5 th	Back to school
------------------------	----------------

February

Friday 6 th	Year 3 trip to Celtic Harmony camp
Friday 13th	Tales together
Friday 13th	End of half term finish normal time
Monday 23 rd	Inset day - School closed
Tuesday 24th	Back to school

March

Monday 2nd	Y6 Bike ability - all week
Monday 23rd	Rock steady concert
Thursday 26th	Y5 trip to Knebworth House
Friday 27th	Tales together
Friday 27th	End of term 1:15pm finish



NO OUT SIDERS

There are No Outsiders at Hollybush.
Everyone is welcome in our school.
No one is the same, but everyone is equal.

In our assemblies in the last two weeks we have covered:



This is a road crossing in Orlando, Florida. It has been debated a lot.

It was painted in honour of members of the LGBTQ+ community that had lost their lives in a homophobic attack.

The council decided to paint it back to black and this upset the local community.

They decided to get together and colour in the crossing again to show support for all the members of their community.

This is a great example of everyone coming together to show that there are No Outsiders.



Bring 'No Outsiders' to your house this Christmas!
Try some of these activities at home:

1. Create a "Different Together" Family Bauble

Make or decorate a bauble showing something unique about each family member—interests, personality, culture, favourite holiday traditions.

Message: We all bring something special.

2. Share a Story From Another Culture

Choose a winter celebration book (e.g., Hanukkah, Diwali, Lunar New Year) and read it together.

Talk about: "What is the same about how families celebrate?"

Message: Different celebrations, shared joy.



3. Kindness Countdown Calendar

Make a simple 12-day or 24-day countdown with daily acts of kindness: smiling at someone new, helping a neighbour, playing with someone you don't usually play with.

Message: Small actions make a big difference.



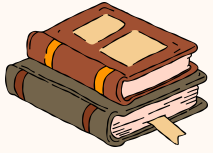
4. Make a "Welcome Wreath"

Create a wreath using paper hands traced from each family member. On each hand write a word that welcomes others: hello, come in, join us, friend, you belong.

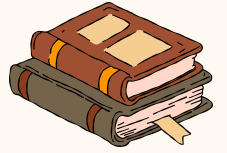
Hang it on the door to show everyone is welcome.

Message: Our home is a welcoming place.





Staff book review



By Mr Mallick

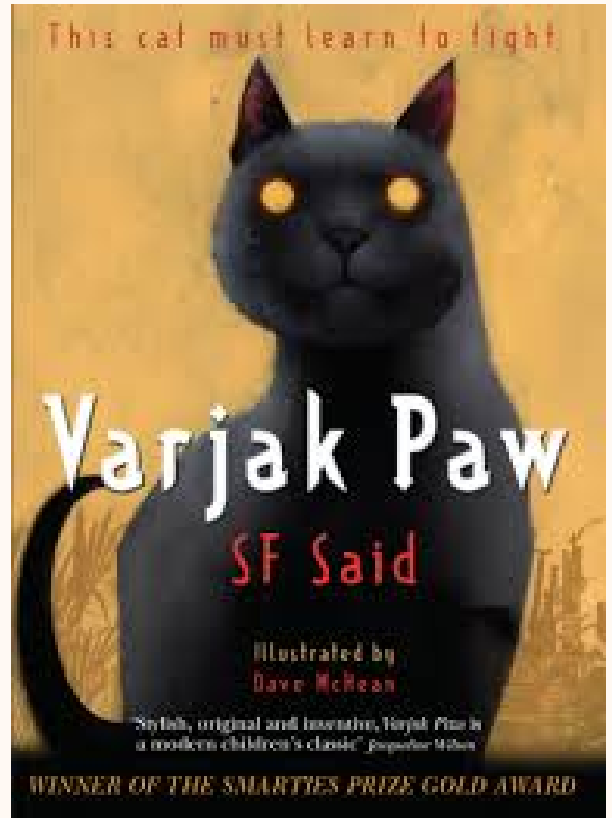
Varjak Paw - SF Said

When I first picked up this book to read to my class about eight years ago, I didn't really know what to expect. A student named Teddy told me it was good so I thought I'd give it a go. A Kung-Fu fighting cat; what's not to like?!

The story starts slowly, the scene being set with a once proud family of cats grown lazy and complacent through a life of luxurious indulgence in the Contessa's house. Young Varjak, an outsider in his own family, always felt that he was destined for a life of adventure like his ancestor Jalal.

When the Contessa dies, the mysterious 'Gentleman' moves in with his sinister black cats and Varjak must leave the family home to embark on the adventure of a lifetime to find a strange creature called a 'dog' who can save the family from a fate worse than death.

The story is beautifully written and the motley crew of characters that Varjak meets on his odyssey, are fully realised



with unique personalities that help him on his quest to become a 'true Mesopotamian Blue' imbued with the seven skills of 'The Way'. The story's antagonist, Sally Bones, is truly creepy and the story ends in a satisfying way with enough left in the tank for a compelling sequel that does not disappoint. I have never read a book where the class have actually cheered the ending but Varjak Paw really is that good!





Star readers



Year 3

Robyn
Shay
Elliot
Aleks



Year 4

Ashton
Darcey
Aizah
Jake
Elenao
re
Isobel
Ava
Maisie
Maria



Year 5

Marni
Alex
Jake T
Fearne
Mia
Ruzhdi
Ava
Riya



Year 6

Adam
Ylli
Kason
Connie
Freddie
Nieve
Riyad
Lily-Rose
Cait



Well done
everyone



The Nest

In the Nest, we've been quite busy celebrating Christmas! The children really enjoyed creating some beautiful Christmas masterpieces in art, and we had a wonderful morning with parents on Christmas decoration day. As part of our design technology topic, 'I wonder what we eat at Christmas?', the children had the opportunity to make mince pies which they really enjoyed and took them home to share with their family. During our food tasting session, the children were given the chance to try some mince pies but most weren't too keen!

Throughout history topic, the Nest children have been examining toys from the past as well as present day, investigating the different materials and their functions. As part of this topic, we took a trip to Van Hages to explore the various light displays and the model village, and we even got to enjoy riding on the carousel. The children had a fantastic time seeing the singing reindeers and exploring the displays, there was a lot of laughter, especially while riding the carousel.



Reception

Over the past few weeks we been lucky enough to have some more visitors to school. Our local PSCO, Mandy, and her sargeant came to visit us and talked all about the ways the police help to keep people safe. We also had a visit from a local paramedic who shared with us times when we might need to call 999 for an ambulance. We looked at some of the equipment paramedics use to help people. Our favourite part of our visits were having a chance to look at, and go in the police car and the ambulance!



In Maths we have been looking different kinds of patterns. We have been completing repeating patterns, copying repeating patterns as well as making patterns of our own. We have also been looking at how numbers can be split into parts, just like we can! We have explored the composition of 3, 4, and 5.



We have also been busy getting ready for Christmas! Thank you to everyone who came to our Sing and Sign performance this week - we hope you enjoyed it! We have been learning all about why Christmas is a special time for Christians, and have really enjoyed sharing the Christmas story together to find out about the birth of Jesus.

Year 2

It is already the end of our first term in Year 2, and the time has truly flown by! The children have continued to enjoy the curriculum and have shown great enthusiasm for their learning. We are delighted with how well they have adapted and responded to the exciting trips, visitors, and of course, the wonderful nativity performances.

In Computing, the children have explored digital photography. They have learned how pictures can sometimes appear real but may in fact be altered, and they have enjoyed experimenting with changing the appearance of images themselves.

In Geography, the children have loved using globes and atlases to deepen their understanding of the world. They have been learning about the continents and oceans, sparking curiosity about the wider world beyond their classroom..

In Art, we have been developing drawing skills by focusing on creating tones to shade light and dark. The children have practised finding shapes within objects to support their drawings, and have explored textures and details using natural items such as fir cones.

It has been a busy and rewarding term, and we are so proud of the children's progress and enthusiasm. Thank you for your continued support at home—it makes a real difference to their confidence and learning.



Year 4

It's been another non-stop half-term. At the end of each half-term, for each topic, the children complete an end of unit assessment. Some of these have already been done and I'm really pleased with the results. The children have learnt lots of new facts and can remember them! As well as facts they've been developing some great skills. I have been particularly impressed with their armatures and final sculptures which they're looking forward to bringing home. The last few maths lessons have focused on being able to subtract 4-digit numbers with one or two exchanges - we're getting there. In our computing lessons, the children have really enjoyed making their own podcasts and inserting some sound effects. All this on top of performing two carol concerts with Years 5 and 6 - a highlight being Year 4 singing the 12 Days of Christmas! Yesterday, after the Christingle service, Helen from the Baptist Church, asked me if my class was the one she had come to speak to 2 years ago. I told her it was and she couldn't believe how they had grown and matured. Always great to a compliment from someone not directly working in the school!





Year 6



Well we've nearly made it to the end of the year, and what a lot of work we have done to get here. The children are continuing to improve their attitude to their learning and I was really impressed with how they navigated last week when things were so different to their usual timetable, with so many assessments, carol rehearsals, visits from the school nurse as well as cramming in the odd lesson or two!

The children had their first taste of what SATs will be like and found out that they're not as bad as they thought. Many children achieved some great scores and would already achieve age-related expectations for the end of the year if they took them now! This week has seen us come to the end of many of our units of work; learning about the 'Home Front' during World War 2, the practical applications of mirrors in science and writing newspaper reports based on events from 'The Last Bear' by Hannah Gold. We are all beginning to tire but the children continue to try their best and I couldn't be prouder.

I have to say that my highlight of the week was seeing the class giving up their time, in the spirit of the season, to put on a delightful carol concert for the elderly residents of neighbouring Calton Court. We were all in good voice and the audience seemed to enjoy the carols as much as we enjoyed the sweet treats on offer!





Online Safety



Do you know your V-Bucks from your Robux's? I didn't!

Through hard-hitting dramas like *Adolescence* we've seen that there is often a whole new language often associated with children and young people's online activity. When we're not in this world it can feel daunting to keep up with it all.

So what do we do? Through a recent online safety discussion with a colleague one of the most important things we can do as parents and carers is to talk to our children; show an interest rather than automatically assuming the worst. That's not to say we shouldn't set boundaries and be aware of the age restrictions and guidance associated with each online platform.

I'm sure this Christmas time online for many children will significantly increase. For some, they will unwrap new devices perhaps for the first time. Are you ready to set some helpful boundaries? Are you talking to your son or daughter about what they're doing? Are you confident they're doing what they're telling you. When you give a tablet or phone to a young child are they safe from unwanted messages and images? The world wide web has so many good things to offer but we do need to take care and protect our children.

Some helpful information below:

[Conversation starters to understand your child's online life](#) (Internet Matters)

[Internet safety glossary](#) (Internet Matters)

[Talking to your child about online safety](#) (NSPCC)

[9 Tips for staying safe online at Christmas](#) (SWGfI)

