



Message from the Executive Headteacher



Nebula
where stars are born

Nebula Newsletter
Issue 4

December 2016

THE SCHOOLS IN OUR PARTNERSHIP

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 Porter - Executive Deputy for SEND

Heads of School:

Mr Paul Cross -

Hainford Primary

Mr Gyles Longhurst -

Frettenham Primary

Mrs Tanya Kirton &

Miss Tracy Anderson -

Horsford Primary

Mrs Kate Connelly -

Old Catton Junior

Miss Lesley Rix -

St. Faiths' Primary

Mr Daniel Richmond &

Mr Nick Johnson -

White Woman Lane Junior

Christmas festivities ...

It's that time when parents become costume designers, teachers become directors and school children put on near - BAFTA winning performances.

In the wonderful world of school nativity plays there will be the thrill of playing Mary or Joseph but just as much excitement in playing the important role of sheep or shepherd. The angels will look radiant and then one will wipe her nose on her sleeve. Mary will no doubt hang baby Jesus upside down and on occasion drop him on his head. And the Three Kings, after a long and arduous journey to the stable, have been known to forget their gifts.

The history of today's sometimes disastrous, always funny, school nativity play is thought to date back to St Francis of Assisi, who created a nativity play in Greccio, Italy around 1223. During this time many people were illiterate, so were unable to read the Christmas story in the Bible. St Francis wanted to tell the tale to these people in a simple but memorable way, so set up a manger with hay and animals to recreate the scenes of Jesus' birth.

As the popularity of the nativity grew, so did the cast of characters involved (although Saint Francis probably didn't suspect that one day there would be fairies, footballers, Elvis and aliens taking part too...).

I love the spontaneous reactions that children have when

faced with the applause from a real audience. They suddenly decide to "expand" their parts to amuse the eager crowd, which was not quite what was practised in rehearsal!

I have also enjoyed watching the class "expert" on stage, insisting on playing director. Throughout the performance, this child will tell all the others what they should be saying and where they should be standing.

The roles of Mary and Joseph, although often the smallest of parts, are also often the most sought after. A little girl announced that she was going to be Mary. After further discussions with her teacher, I realised that actually she had only asked to be Mary, as had half the girls in the class!

Gender can also sometimes be an issue. One little girl once refused to play the part of one of the kings. She was mortified that she was going to be a boy even though it was an important part in the production.

But the Christmas nativity, complete with shepherds with tea towels on heads (and hopefully a 'You've been Framed' moment or two) is very much part of our cultural heritage, and if schools want to do a nativity then that's fine. But pantomime is also an ancient British tradition, and some of our schools may choose to do a performance less religion-focussed, and this is fine too. Part of the curriculum is already set aside for

religious education. The story of Jesus and his birth is the foundation stone for learning about Christian beliefs, and you're unlikely to find a school that doesn't teach that. The narratives may evolve, but stories, legends, and myths will endure as an important and valuable way of transmitting values from one generation to the next – and the vast majority of schools will no doubt use their Christmas plays to promote their pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

So whether you are the parent of the boy that insisted on coming to his nativity as a dinosaur, or the Mary that sat in the stable doing the ironing, or the parent of the girl selling matchsticks or the boy playing Tiny Tim, one thing is for sure – everyone will think it is the best production ever seen.



Ashley Best-White
Executive Headteacher
The Nebula Partnership



Images of Christmas ...

I have enjoyed many Christmas concerts, Carol Services, Christmas plays and Nativities during the last couple of weeks. Unfortunately, I have not been able to make **every** performance but I have seen at least one event in each school. Thank you to everyone involved!

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful New Year.



St. Faiths' Primary



Old Catton Junior

Horsford Primary
Mill Lane



Horsford Primary
Holt Road



Frettenham Primary
School



More images of Christmas ...



Old Catton Junior



White Woman Lane



Hainford Primary



The 4 gift rule ...

Are the days of rampant spending on children at Christmas coming to an end? A trend which has gained traction over the past few years on social media is the "four gift rule".

Every Christmas parents struggle with what to get their children for Christmas. It can be a challenge to find or often, afford the 'perfect' gift. It can also be easy to lose sight of your budget when you're out shopping and come home with considerably more than your children need. Whether you're on a budget or just trying to discourage materialism in your family this holiday season, would you consider the four gift rule this Christmas?

The 4 gift rule has been circling the Internet the past few years. I don't know the origin but there are a few

variations of it. The idea is that you buy your children no more than four gifts for Christmas, and they fall under the following categories:

1. Something they want
2. Something they need
3. Something to wear
4. Something to read

I wonder what you think? Is this idea sensible, stingy or merely sanctimonious?



This term we welcomed ...
Mr Sutcliffe - White Woman Lane

This term we say 'Goodbye' to ...
Miss Caron Turley - Horsford Primary

In January we will welcome ...
Mrs Jackie Andrews - Horsford Primary, Holt Road
Mr Richard Endall - Horsford Primary, Mill Lane
Mrs Carin Pratt - Old Catton Junior

Later in January ...
we will be wishing Ms Becky Gedge much love (and luck) as she goes on maternity leave - Old Catton Junior

Shakespeare Schools Festival

The charity, Shakespeare Schools Festival, is the UK's largest youth drama festival. Four of the schools in the Nebula Partnership took part in the **Shakespeare Schools Festival** this term; Horsford Primary, Old Catton Junior, White Woman Lane and St. Faiths' Primary. Each school performed a half-hour abridged version of a Shakespeare play at the Norwich Playhouse, on the professional stage with a full audience of family and friends.

Shakespeare Schools Festival aims to engage children through an active way of learning. In preparing and performing the plays our pupils learn about Shakespeare's language, themes and characters - but they learn much more besides. They learn to embrace the diverse characters, styles and stories

of Shakespeare and the stories are made accessible to them through this process. This project also unites the cast and performing in a professional theatre on a real stage to a live audience can also make the experience fun, or terrifying, hilarious or deeply moving, and all of the above!

"Every child in every school ought to have the chance to experience this magical process. To bring the enchantment of Shakespeare to thousands of children - there's no more magical process in the whole of education. Long live the Shakespeare Schools Festival!"
Philip Pullman, SSF Patron



Horsford
 'Much Ado About Nothing'



WWL
 'Antony and Cleopatra'



Old Catton
 'Julius Caesar'



St. Faiths' 'Romeo and Juliet'



Horsford Primary School
 Directors: Miss Blythe and Miss Starling

Old Catton Junior School
 Director: Mr Semmens

White Woman Lane School
 Director: Mr Queensborough

St. Faiths' Primary School
 Directors: Miss Wilson and Mrs Baldry





Robotics Roadshow

50 children represented all the schools in the Nebula Partnership attending a Robotics Roadshow at the Norwich City football Club earlier this month. The Robotics Roadshow offers the ability to teach pupils about basic technology and computer science skills and concepts to solve practical quests. The Robotics roadshow was designed to make coding fun, accessible and easy to teach – so several members of staff went along as well to learn! Children had a really enjoyable day learning about the different type of robots used in everyday life and industry and investigating the different types of coding and how to design a robot suited for purpose. They used the fundamental principles of computer science using programmable, quick fit construction kits which can be built into multiple exciting robots as well as 'battling' against others (and touring behind the scenes at Norwich City Football Club)! The partnership is now looking to purchase a construction kit suitable for a class of children

to use at a time so they can continue to be inspired and enrich and support our schools' classroom activities and curriculum enrichment activities including investigating, designing, testing and debugging, algorithms and abstractions, materials and many more. The kit will be shared by all the schools in the partnership and will enhance our **STEM** curriculum - **S**cience, **T**echnology, **E**ngineering and **M**aths.



And ... IET Formula Goblins

IET Formula Goblin is a project designed for schools which inspires children to get hands on with engineering, technology and science in a stimulating and contextual learning experience. The IET Formula Goblin project integrates into the curriculum through science (e.g. friction, electricity and materials, speed) and pupils will also use and develop their mathematical and technology skills. We have also successfully applied for grants from the Greenpower Trust to enable us to buy four 'Goblins' to use across the schools in the partnership.

So ... what will this give the children the opportunity to do?

This project allows children to build their own fully functioning and driveable clean energy electrical kart. They can also then race them against other schools! Regional and national races can then also be entered as part of the Formula Goblin series.

The kits can be deconstructed and rebuilt year after year, making this a completely sustainable project.

This exciting and innovative STEM project is working with Greenpower Trust, who currently work with over 500 schools across the country. We believe constructing and racing Goblin Electric cars will enthuse our children.

For more information take a look at the Greenpower Trust website - <http://www.greenpower.co.uk/racing/goblins>

See in action at:
Greenpower's YouTube video - <https://goo.gl/xRaluM>

We would like to make as many links as we can with local engineering companies and local businesses who can support the real life context of our project and support our children designing and making the fastest, most aerodynamic electric cars to race. If you can help, please contact your child's school - thank you.

