

## Message from the Executive Headteacher



Nebula  
where stars are born

Nebula  
Newsletter

December 2022

### 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 Kirsty Anatola -

Horsford Primary

Miss Emily Emrick -

Old Catton Junior

Miss Kat Wilson-

St. Faiths' Primary

Mr Daniel Richmond -

White Woman Lane Junior

## It isn't Christmas until ...

### all of these 10 things happen at school ...

*still holding a grudge that I never got cast as Mary!*

Christmas is a magical time. Whilst I appreciate Christmas this year is going to be very difficult for many adults due to the current economic climate; for our children Christmas is still just exciting! And it really doesn't really get more exciting than at primary school. We don't need advent calendars - the increasingly louder squeals from the children as excitement mounts as it get days closer to the end of term and the big day is the give-away!

Christmas is officially coming when these things happen ...

1. The stage goes up and the preparations begin in anticipation of the Nativity or Christmas production. Then the whirlwind of emotion that happens when finding out the roles for the Nativity or Christmas production. I agree it isn't applications for Drama school but nonetheless it is a tense emotion that invariably triggers both trauma, tantrums and excitement. And of course, there is always the awkward moment when the school realises they have forty pupils vying for nine roles, meaning for example that the whole of reception have to be angels and a few extra roles have to be thrown in; Emma Thompson in 'Love Actually' and her infamous lobster – need I say more?

2. Christmas carols begin to be sung in assembly - cue 'Away in a Manger' sung very out of tune, very high pitched and breathily – and that's just the staff!

3. The Christmassy accessories begin to emerge, little Christmas hair bobbles, the teachers who have ear pierced coming in with dangling novelty Christmas puddings, tinsel scarves and the full blown Christmas jumpers being worn on Christmas jumper days.

4. The tree goes up adorned with multiple (old and slightly shabby) un-coordinated decorations, and the Christmas Post-box arrives.

5. The Christmas fair happens giving everyone the ultimate chance to spend all their pocket money on some Christmas Brownies (aka regular brownies covered in icing sugar), pre-loved cuddly toys and hot squash!

6. Letters go home to parents informing them to ensure their children come to school with hats and gloves and scarves because its turning cold, and all about what they might like to contribute to the Christmas party food - just to make sure the party food doesn't end up being a selection of either pink wafers or party rings. And of course what costume, props their children may need for the upcoming performance.

7. Christmas music is on repeat as children eat their annual Christmas lunch, (remember the soggy sprouts?) complete with crackers and staff acting as waiters.

8. Every Christmas craft activity under the sun (environmentally friendly glitter only please) is being offered as staff provide the educationally-appropriate challenges by the stocking load.

9. Christmas-themed stories are read in classrooms and these always get pupils listening and positively engaged.

10. The performances. The teacher in charge of the Nativity or Christmas production finally has a breakdown at the dress rehearsal, usually complete with cries that no-one has learnt their lines. The wise men keep coming in from the wrong side, and the angels keep pushing one another off the stage. The angels will look radiant and then one will wipe her nose on her sleeve. Mary hangs baby Jesus upside down and often drops him on his head. And, finally, the Three Kings, after a long and arduous journey to the stable, keep forgetting their gifts. But, the concentration as the children deliver their lines at the actual performances is adorable, as is the one child who always likes to shout the words over everyone else. The pleasing amount of encouragement and support from the older children and their joyful cheers as the production finishes - is pure magic. It doesn't matter how old you are, it's easy to get swept up in the festivity of the winter season and it is a truly magical time of year to work in school; it always makes me appreciative and grateful for the young people we get to spend our days with. Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas!



Ashley Best-White  
Executive Headteacher  
The Nebula Federation

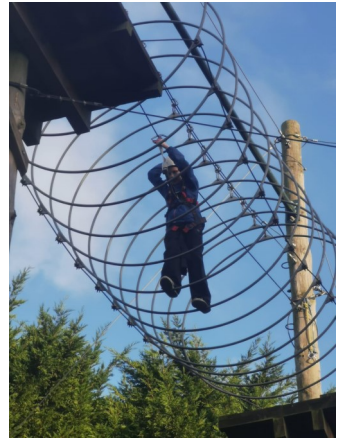
# School Visits and Residentials ...

In November, Year 5 pupils at Old Catton Junior and White Woman Lane Schools made their way to Hilltop, for their residential trips. Lots of the children were nervous as it was their first time away from home, but their nerves soon fell away as they enjoyed their home for the next few days. They experienced tree climbing, zip wire, assault courses, the Tree Top Trail, archery, biking, night walks, Air Jump and team tasks to name a few of the activities.

A great time was had by all and big thanks go to the teachers who organised it and of course all the staff who gave up so much of their time and volunteered to support the trip outside of their working hours.



Miss Cooper and Miss Strange with Year 5 OCJS



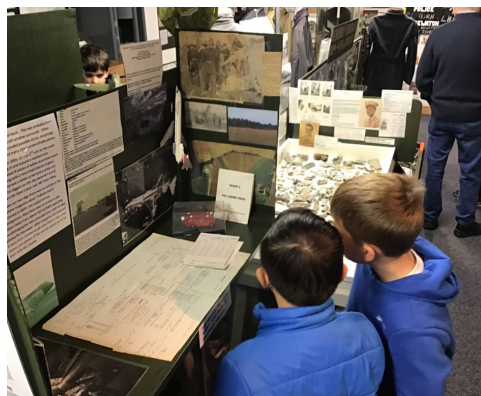
At Hainford Primary, Class 2 visited the Henry Blogg museum and the RNLI lifeboat station at Cromer, this was linked to their history and geography curriculum. The children really enjoyed trying both past and present day life-saving equipment and were amazed at the differences between the old wooden lifeboats and their modern day equivalent.





## More School visits and Visitors ...

Linked to their topic of the Second World War, Class 3 at Hainford Primary visited the New Farm Aviation Heritage Museum in Frettenham to learn all about locally important archaeological sites where artefacts from the Second World War could be found. Many of these artefacts were linked to military aircrafts which had crashed during the World War and children had the opportunity to handle and ask questions about these finds.



### Bookbugs and Dragontales visit

At Horsford Primary the Reception and Key stage one classes enjoyed a visit from Bookbugs and Dragontales. The children in key stage one took part in drama workshops inspired by the book 'Look up' by Nathan Byron. The children then used what they had practiced in the drama workshops to write their own short poems. In Reception the children enjoyed a traditional tale workshop, where they became active story tellers and took on the roles of different characters within the story.



Horsford Primary

At Frettenham Primary School, as part of their History studies this term, Class 3 went to Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse Museum, to help find out all about The Victorians.  
Class 2 visited the Henry Blogg Museum in Cromer to find out all about Henry Blogg and the history of Cromer. They also went to the new Lifeboat Museum to compare how things have changed.



### Mad Science

Horsford were joined by the team at Mad Science Norfolk this term to demonstrate some of the exciting things you can do with science. Laura and her team used a Van de Graaff to generate different types of electricity. It was so exciting - it left us with our hair standing on end! Old Catton Junior enjoyed a Mad Science Assembly and then an After-School Club that ran in the first half term.



# Advent, Nativities and performances ...

We have enjoyed so many festive activities during the last couple of weeks. Thank you to everyone involved!

At Old Catton Junior School the Year 3 pupils enjoyed an Advent Day. During this time, the children learnt about who Jesus is and how different cultures have interpreted him. They also learnt about what Advent and Christmas means to Christians.

The Year 3 and 4 classes at Horsford Primary visited Horsford All Saints Church during the week before Advent. Each class had made white Christmas decorations to hang on the Church's Advent Tree. Rev. Margaret explained what Advent was before the children placed their decoration on the tree.



At Horsford Primary, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 held their Christmas Performance during the last week of term. The children told the Christmas Story through readings and the singing of a range of Christmas carols.

In Reception they told the story of the Nativity.

At St Faiths' Primary, this year's interpretation of the Nativity is 'Not Such a Silent Night'. It told the story of the stable from the viewpoint of little Larry Lamb. They had a great cast made up of the children in Years 1, 2 and 3 with the wider school community making up the ensemble.

Hainford Primary

Mill Lane Horsford Primary

Hainford Primary invited their audience to see their Nativity performances in the church.

At Frettenham Primary, both Classes 1 and 2 performed their Christmas productions to family and friends.

Years 3 and 4 at Old Catton Junior School worked hard to present their Christmas Play 'Fireside Nativity' that they were excited to perform on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December to their friends and family.

At White Woman Lane, children's voices could be heard in the community as Year 3 and 4 pupils rehearsed and then performed a variety of festive songs for their parents during the final week of term.



St. Faiths' Primary

# Performances 2022 ...

The Mill Lane Singing Club visited Grenville Court Care Home in Horsford on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December to sing Christmas Carols to the residents. Everyone enjoyed it and several of the residents and staff joined in with the singing. At the end, the children were given a drink of milk shake and a Christmas biscuit.



Year 3 White Woman Lane



Class 2 Frettenham Primary

Old Catton Junior School's Year 3 and 4 Christmas Play

**Date**  
Tuesday 6th December 2022  
Wednesday 7th December 2022

**Time**  
6pm



Mill Lane Horsford Primary Holt Road

# Festive Fun 2022 ...

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.



Old Catton Junior School has held its first Christmas Fayre since December 2019. They had a number of external stalls such as Bucket List and Annex Accessories, as well as stalls run by Year 6 pupils and staff. During the event, many children and families came to support us and the Friends of OCJS raised an incredible £1000.



Old Catton Junior School Christmas Fayre & Preparing Reindeer food ...

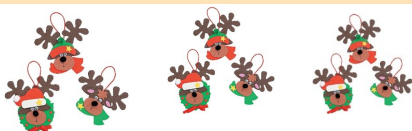
The festivities at St. Faiths' also included their 'Christmas Crafternoon' where the children completed a range of Christmas crafts in house teams. This year they had a selection of activities including Christmas tree decorations, fun snacks and handmade cards.



At Frettenham Primary the whole school earned a trip to the Cinema to watch a Christmas film.

Class 3 also made Christmas games for everyone to play and raised money for charities.

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!





# More ...



St. Faiths' Christmas Jumpers



During the final week of term children in some of our schools also enjoyed watching a virtual live-streamed performance of 'Peter Pan'. This was arranged by Norfolk Music Hub in partnership with St. George's Theatre. The children joined in with the songs with some gusto - apologies to all the schools, parents, carers and teachers who will now have Baby Shark stuck in their heads for the foreseeable future!

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



Christmas Lunch at Hainford Primary

The Year 1 and Year 5 children at Horsford Primary took part in a Carol Concert at Horsford Church led by Rev. Margaret. The Christmas story of Jesus' birth was told through the use of knitted figures of Mary, Joseph and the other important characters; readings by some of the Year 5 children and the singing of some traditional Christmas carols. It was lovely to be joined by so many of our parents and see Horsford All Saints Church full of songs and joy.



Old Catton held their Christmas Service at St. Margaret's Church.



## Y5 Charley Charley 1

Our first cohorts of Year 5 children have completed the Charley Charley One programme. They particularly enjoyed the team building sessions which involved learning how to make a campfire and building their own shelters.



## Sporting Events ...

### Tag Rugby Nebula Event KS2

On the sporting front we have had the Nebula Upper KS2 Tag Rugby tournament. Each school sent 14 pupils, mixed year group and gender, for a day's coaching and match play. It was rewarding to note that the standard of skills across all schools has improved, the playing field is certainly more level. Previously, pupils have been coached by NCCSF staff in the morning and matches played after lunch. This year matches were played from mid-morning as the pupils' skills were good enough to enable quality games to be played. Staff from across the schools commented that the children showed excellent sportsmanship to other team members and clearly enjoyed the day.



Horsford Primary

Children from our schools have also participated in a Multi-Skills event at the UEA, Dance Taster Sessions, and various Football leagues and tournaments.

Congratulations to Horsford's Year 5 football team who got through the quarter final of the Norwich Primary Schools FA Under 10's Challenge Cup 2022-23. This will take place in the new year - so good luck boys!

Well done to all of our cross country teams who have taken part in this term's League races at Flacon Junior, Sprowston Junior and Eaton Park. They have had to endure some tough weather conditions and have raced against some formidable competition but all have persevered and are happy to keep trying to improve on their most recent finish position and time. Keep up the hard work everyone!

## In other news ...

One highlight of the Autumn term for St. Faiths' Primary has been renewing their links with companies and groups in the community. Damaged during a storm, a tree at the St Faiths' Crematorium has been turned into an owl sculpture and St. Faiths' Primary was given the challenge of naming them! A big congratulations to Tidus, whose winning names Elizabeth and Spirit, were chosen. Tidus won a year's sponsorship of an owl at the Fritton Owl Sanctuary, kindly donated by staff at the Crematorium.



## Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal 2022 ...

Natalie Brown, our Pastoral Manager, once again this year submitted a request to the Salvation Army to help us provide Toys and Christmas presents to our children and families. This year a request was made to support 81 families and 163 children across our federation of schools. Last year we supported 45 families, including 99 children across our schools and the year before we provided for 23 families with a total of 63 children. Sadly, we can see the significant increases year on year.

All of the families we have nominated will be provided with gifts for the children in the family. Bags and bags and boxes of gifts arrived at White Woman Lane School as the distribution centre, 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. 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 and gifts for the Christmas period.

A huge thank you to Natalie.





# Why it is important for children not to miss school ...

All parents want the best for their children and for them to get on well in life. Having a good education is important to ensure that they have the best opportunities in their adult life. They only get one chance at school, and your child's future may be affected by not attending school or alternative provision regularly. If children do not attend school regularly they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work. In a busy school day it is difficult for schools to find the extra time to help a child catch up.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships; a vital part of growing up.

Setting good attendance patterns from an early age, from nursery through primary school will also help your child later on in their life. Children who have a poor school attendance record may have less chance of securing a job when they are adults.

Being on time is also vital. Arriving late at school can be very disruptive for your child, their teacher and the other children

in the class. Some parents may be finding it difficult to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If this is the case please speak to the Head of School as soon as possible so that the situation can be addressed.

## What might the impact of poor attendance be on your child?

In primary schools less than 65% of children achieve good results in English and Maths with an average of 15 days absence a year compared to almost 90% where the average is less than 8 days. Parents can be very surprised at how quickly their children can accumulate 15 days absence within a year.

Research has also shown that children who are not in school can become vulnerable. For example, children who do not attend school regularly are more likely to be drawn into crime than those who do not. If you would like information about attendance procedures, please ask your child's school for an attendance leaflet or look at the policy on the school website.

## The world is run by those who turn up.

Attending school every day = 100% attendance

Attending 4½ days a week = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year

Attending 4 days a week = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year

Attending 3½ days each week = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.

An average attendance of 80% or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

Being late for school reduces learning time.

If your child is 5 minutes late every day they will miss three days of learning each year.

If your child is 15 minutes late every day they will miss 2 weeks of learning each year.

## Make every minute count

This term we say 'Goodbye' to

...

Mrs Linford

Horsford Primary

Emma Queensborough

Old Catton Junior

And we welcome ...

Rachael Page

Old Catton Junior School



## 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.

Ashley Best-White.

