



**From all of us at Crowle Primary Academy.
Christmas 2023**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to wish you a very happy Christmas break, whatever you and your family are doing, and hope that the New Year brings lots of lovely things.

It has been a very busy term in school. We would like to send out a few thank you messages, celebrate some lovely things that have happened this term and update you with some things coming up.

A few highlights of the term

Our new Nursery and Reception children have settled into school life brilliantly. We are looking forward to meeting some more new nursery children in January.

We have had some very successful parent events including the forest school curriculum afternoons and reading workshops. Thank you for giving your time to support us and your children with these.

We have taken part in a large number of sporting events this term including; a tour of the Ethiad stadium, fun runs, dodgeball tournaments, orienteering, table tennis tournament, boccia tournament, cricket, football tournament and a bowling tournament. The children look so smart when they go out in the school team kit and always represent us, you and themselves brilliantly.

We had some great Money matters talks from a visiting speaker, helping the children prepare for their future.

The Rocksteady concert was a resounding success again, the children are so brave to perform in front of such a large audience and it is clear to see how much progress they are making in their lessons. Music has been proven to benefit children in so many ways. If you would like your child to join one of the Rocksteady bands please contact the main office for further details.

We are so proud of the members of the academy who joined other children from our Trust schools to sing with the Trust choir at the Music For Youth concerts in Birmingham and The Royal Albert Hall. They took my breath away!

The spelling bee was a success again with children trying really hard to learn their spelling and getting very excited for the finals! It was great to see so many parents join us to watch the finals.

Year six children are each assigned a job to help around school, this may be hearing readers, helping in the hall, being sports leaders at playtimes, running a homework club or being IT monitors. They have taken on these roles very well and have shown how responsible they can be, well done year 6!

A few special thank you messages

A huge thank you to our new cook Vicky, who made cooking Christmas dinner for more than 450 people look easy (although we know it wasn't). Thank you to all of you who came and joined us for lunch and had such kind words afterwards. It has been lovely to receive thank you emails from a few of you, it means such a lot.

A thank you to you, as parents, for continuing to support your child's education by supporting with homework, reading and making sure they are at school every day and on time. I would also like to thank you for supporting our community events like the curriculum afternoons and the reading events. It is great to see you in school.

For the first time ever we asked the school community to come together to contribute to the food hampers to

give to our families who need a bit of extra help at the minute. You were so generous and we were able to make some wonderful hampers, thank you.

We are very lucky to have some amazing people who are willing to give up their time to come and help on school trips and sporting events, without these people we would not be able to run these. Several of them help out even when their child is not involved. We also have some wonderful people who give up their time to hear readers in school, this is invaluable for the children who need that extra bit of help. If you have some extra time and would like to help in school please see the main office.

Finally, a personal thank you to the staff team for their hard work this term. I am very lucky to work with such a fantastic group of people.

Pupil voice

We have new head and deputy head pupils who meet with myself several times a term to discuss how we can continue to improve our academy. Our new school council has also been elected, the council is supported by Mrs Jones. They have already started to discuss ideas for this year.

A group of children have now received training from The Diana Anti-bullying Association and are now our anti-bullying ambassadors. Their first job was to rewrite the children's anti-bullying policy. They are now working on an action plan to show the work they plan to do.

We also have two wellbeing ambassadors. They work alongside With Me In Mind to ensure that we are doing all we can to support children's wellbeing. They have been running a wellbeing Wednesday club where children can drop in to talk through any worries they have. We are looking at how we can further extend this over the academic year.

Moving our curriculum forward

We are always looking at ways that we can develop teaching and learning at our academy. This year has seen the introduction of Mastery number in early years and key stage one. The programme is really helping the children with the basics of number that then supports them in their daily maths lessons.

All of our staff received Read, Write Inc. training. This has helped develop our daily phonics session. Following this training we have reviewed how we teach phonics, relooked at some of the interventions we put in place for children and changed the process for sending home reading books in key stage one.

Celebrating Christmas

It has been such a lovely Christmas in school! Year 5 and 6 conducted their carol service at St Oswald's church and all of the other year groups entertained their friends and families with their carol services at school. We are very proud that every child is given the opportunity to be involved in a performance at this time of year and we think they all did brilliantly. We were overwhelmed by the number of family members who came to see the carol services, thank you for coming to celebrate with us.

Our choir visited Greenacres to sing for the residents. The children thoroughly enjoyed this and a few asked if we could make this a regular occurrence, they would like to visit throughout the year to spend time with the residents, possibly doing craft activities or playing games. We are going to see if this can be arranged for later this year.

A great night was had by all at the Panto at the Baths Hall (even if a few parents fell afoul of Annie Fanny's tricks)! I love going to the panto with the school community and seeing everyone have such a good time. We sell tickets for the Panto every year in June or July. If you would like some more details of this, please contact the school office.

Sad goodbyes

We say goodbye to Miss Adams who has completed her first term of teacher training in Mrs Highton's class. She continues her journey in another school after Christmas. We wish her well in her next placement.

Our growing team

We have welcomed two new members of our teaching assistant team, Miss Meechan and Mrs Sherwood. We are very pleased to welcome them both to our school community.

We also welcomed our new site manager, Mr Knight. He has already made such a difference to our academy.

Online safety at Christmas

Technology is now a very popular item on many children's Christmas lists with tablets, smartphones, game consoles and smartwatches likely to be asked for this year.

Whilst we want children to enjoy their presents, it is also important that parents look at ways **to ensure that their children use these devices safely.**

This includes setting parental controls and understanding that video games have PEGI ratings similar to the classification for films.

Other things that you may want to consider is managing screen time so that you can monitor the amount of time being spent on each device and set boundaries such as not letting your child take the device into their rooms at bedtime as this can affect their sleep.

Finally, make sure that you find time to talk to your children about online safety.

Mrs Fawcett has put together a list of useful websites and information (including leaflets to support you) on the academy's website under the safeguarding tab.

<https://www.crowleprimaryschool.com/page/online-safety/88834>

Communicating with you.

We continue to communicate with our parents via the following methods in order to reduce our carbon footprint and cut down on our paper use.

Email – updates and letters are emailed. Please check your emails regularly and let us know if you change your email address or have problems with getting emails from the academy.

Text message – we will text you with urgent alerts or reminders. If an important letter is sent which requires immediate attention we will also send you a text message however, we will not do this for every letter.

Website – Each class has a class page on the website, they update this half termly with a curriculum overview, this will allow you to see what your child is learning that term. The class teacher will also post a weekly class news item which will contain pictures and information about what the class has been doing that week. It is a good way for you to see what is happening in school on a regular basis.

Any letters that are sent to parents will also be put on the website. These can be found in the Parent tab.

<https://www.crowleprimaryschool.com/page/letters/71803>

X (formally Twitter) – Every class puts an update on X weekly, this is another way to keep you up to date with things happening in the academy. It is also a good way to see what is happening across our multi-academy

trust. Our twitter handle is @PrimaryCrowle

Moving forward/ coming soon

Next term we are starting a Wiggle and Giggle toddler group for children who will be joining our academy in the future. This will be run by Mrs Howden and Miss Fields. If you know anyone who would like to come along with their child and join the group please contact Mrs Howden for further details.

This academic year we are having an increased focus on reading for pleasure, we want our children to love reading and become lifelong readers. Look out for some more parent events that may be coming up.

We are also establishing our reading mentors, a group of year 5 children have received training and are all ready to start supporting the younger children with their reading.

Mrs Howden and Miss Fields are very busy ladies and will also be reinstating our parent/ teacher group. This is a group of parents who would like to get involved in school life, supporting with fund raising and school events. If you think you would like to be involved with this please contact Mrs Howden.

In the summer term we are again looking at how each child can support the local community. Classes will be planning community events like litter picking, singing for local residents and perhaps a bit of fund raising for a local charity. Look out for more details which will come out towards the summer term.

We are currently waiting for a delivery of table top steel drums which have been bought for school by The Jean Friedman Music Foundation. This follows the popularity of the steel drum that has been in my office this term.

I am going to start our very own steel band during a lunchtime club next term (I have never played a steel drum in my life but am willing to have a go)! Ask your children to look out for more details of this.

Special wishes

We know that it has been a tricky time for some of our families recently with friends and loved ones who are poorly, are in hospital or are recovering after events that have happened. All of our thoughts and love go to you, we are here if you need us.

We would like to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas break and look forward to seeing the children back on Tuesday 9th January.

Kind regards,

RBlakemore

Rhonda Blakemore

Headteacher

