

# Newsletter

11<sup>th</sup> December 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the final week of term I would like to take a moment to say a heartfelt 'Thank You' for all your support this term; it has been a challenging few months for everyone and we really do appreciate the support we have received from everyone in our school community. Silsoe VC Lower School is blessed to have staff and parents that work so hard and care so much about our children and each other. Thank you!

Despite the challenges we have been able to enjoy many wonderful experiences at school this term. In just the last few days children in Year 3 have experienced a visit to Hayfields to bury the Time Capsule, everyone had the opportunity to join in with our Nativity story, all children have participated in our Christmas Around the World Day and we have had lots of fun today whilst wearing our festive jumpers!

Next week we have even more exciting events to look forward to. Please see all the Christmas event information below.

Many people across the UK have celebrated this week as the Covid 19 vaccine has begun to be rolled out. There is light at the end of the tunnel and we hope that with the arrival of Spring we will all be able to be closer to our friends and family. However, now is not the time to be complacent and I ask you all to help us to keep our school community safe and to continue to follow the guidelines. I am sure that many of you are aware of the local spike in positive Covid cases. It has been necessary for our local Upper School to close and other local schools are struggling with significant case numbers. Please thoroughly read the Covid Information section below to understand what we have in place in school and to be clear about how you can help us if a member of your family becomes symptomatic over the next week or during the Christmas holiday.

I also have to mention our wonderful advent window. I hope that you have all had the opportunity to see it at night, if you haven't seen it yet it is definitely worth walking or driving by one evening. The children have worked really hard with Mrs Coles to create it. We hope that this Christmas time everyone is reminded of the birth of Jesus and his light and love does indeed bring "Joy to the World"!



With my very best wishes to all our families, hoping that everyone can keep safe and stay well.

Sarah Boyle  
Headteacher

## STUDENT NEWS

Please look at the Student News section on our website to keep up to date with some of the things that have been happening this week in school such as the Year 3 visit to Hayfields to bury the Time Capsule, Christmas Around The World Day etc. <https://www.silsoeschool.co.uk/student-news>

## COVID UPDATE

I'm sure many of you will have seen the government announcement early this week suggesting that schools may wish to make Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December an INSET day and use the day for staff training. However, we have decided **not** to do this. We feel that this is too short notice for parents and that the benefits of closing would not outweigh the inconvenience caused. **Therefore Silsoe VC Lower School will be OPEN on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December.**

The national guidance indicates that schools are being asked to be available to support track and trace for 6 days following the last school day (18<sup>th</sup> December). We ask for your help with this to enable any contacts to be contacted swiftly and to enable all of our staff to have a break at Christmas.

If your child becomes symptomatic you and your family must self-isolate and arrange to be tested as soon as possible. Delays to being tested and then awaiting test results could put others at risk.

**If your child subsequently has a positive test it is essential that you contact school as soon as possible and we will contact trace for the 48 hours prior to symptoms starting or from the date of a positive test if they were asymptomatic.**

If your child becomes symptomatic on or after Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December school will not need to contact trace within the school setting as symptoms will have begun more than 48 hours after last school contact. Parents must follow advice as per NHS Covid-19 <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

If you need to contact school please do so by emailing [admin@silsoelower.co.uk](mailto:admin@silsoelower.co.uk). This is the only school email that will be checked. Please put 'COVID POSITIVE CASE' in email subject. We will be regularly checking the emails for the first 6 days of the school holiday. Emails will not be checked on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and then will be checked intermittently until January.

To keep you updated following a review of our Covid 19 Risk Assessment, all adults in school are now wearing a face covering of either a mask or visor in all communal spaces and in classes when social distancing is not possible. We continue to ensure all classrooms and areas of the school are well ventilated throughout the day. Our enhanced cleaning programme is extremely robust and continues before school, throughout the day and after school. All adults and children are following rigorous hand hygiene procedures and hand washing and sanitising regularly throughout the day.



# CHRISTMAS

## PANTOMIME

It's panto time! Oh no it isn't, Oh yes it is! (Sorry, it had to be done!)

We have purchased tickets to a virtual pantomime, The Belgrade's 'Jack and the Beanstalk', written and directed by Iain Lauchlan. All children will have the opportunity to watch this in their classrooms and we hope there will be much fun and laughter in our final few days of term!



## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE



All children who requested a Christingle kit will be bringing it home with them this evening.

On Sunday 13th December a short video service will be posted on the 3 churches website, <https://3churches.uk/virtual-christingle-13-december-2020/>

containing instructions on how to make your Christingle, featuring an animation for Christmas and offering simple thoughts and prayers on the theme of light & hope. We're inviting all who take part, if they are able, to make a donation to the Children's Society – you can donate online [here](#).

We'd also love to see a photo of your Christingle – email your picture to [VirtualVicar@3churches.uk](mailto:VirtualVicar@3churches.uk) and we'll post them in our Christingle gallery. The Vicar will award ten festive choccie oranges to the senders of the best ten pictures!

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

This year our Christmas lunch will take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December. We are really looking forward to Children sharing in this festive celebration.

We will be eating in the hall on this special occasion however there will be robust procedures in place to mitigate any risks. We have rearranged the day to enable one year group at a time to be in the hall. Children will sit with their own class with a clear 2m plus space between the two classes in the year group. The hall will be well ventilated and robust cleaning procedures will be in place between sittings.

All staff and children will eat their lunch together, regardless of whether they order a school Christmas lunch or bring their own packed lunch. I'm sure this will be a very festive and joyous occasion for all.

## CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Classes will have their Christmas Party on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December. Children are allowed to wear non-school uniform on this day. Please ensure clothes are suitable for school and appropriate for the weather.

## CHRISTMAS NATIVITY

Thank you to parents who were able to donate/loan a Nativity costume to school this year. Earlier this week the children filmed their part in the nativity story. We look forward to sharing this with you before the end of term!



## CHRISTMAS CARDS

We understand that children enjoy wishing their friends a Happy Christmas and enjoy writing cards to friends and teachers. We are happy for children to write a card to children in their class but this year we will not be sending cards across the whole school. If your child has written a Christmas card please send it into school on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday and we will quarantine them before sending them home on a Friday afternoon.

## UNIFORM AND PE

Children **do not** need to wear PE kits in the last week of term. Please wear uniform on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Children can wear a Christmas jumper on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> for Christmas lunch.

Children can wear non uniform on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> for their class party.

## SCHOOL OFFICE AND RECEPTION AREA

Thank you very much for your support, following our request last week, to limit people going into the reception area, we really appreciate your help with keeping everyone in our school safe.

To avoid office staff handling lots of items from home and passing them on to classes **please do not bring any items to reception unless it is absolutely necessary e.g. medication.** We encourage all families to get children into the habit of ensuring their bags are packed appropriately before coming to school but if on the odd occasion something is forgotten please don't worry. **Please do not bring forgotten hats, gloves, water bottles or reading/library books to the school office at this current time.** We will ensure they don't miss out in school, if your child has forgotten their water bottle the class teacher will provide a cup and drinking water is readily available in each class. Please don't worry if your child has forgotten something on one occasion but we do encourage all children to be responsible for packing their bag and remembering their school kit.

## VACANCIES

We currently have vacancies for Midday Supervisors (MDSA's), we are particularly seeking people who may be interested in being bank staff MDSA's. We would be delighted to hear from you if you are reliable, nurturing, enthusiastic, enjoy supporting the children in their play and support our school ethos and vision. If you would be interested in this role or are aware of a young at heart grandparent who may be interested then please do get in touch. If you are unable to commit to 5 days a week then being on our Bank register may be the perfect role for you. Please see our school website for more

information or call to speak to a member of staff in the school office. We look forward to hearing from you.

## SNOW SQUAD

We have started to see signs of winter with the frosts and fog this week and although we hope we won't see any snow just yet we are mindful of potential adverse weather over the coming months.

During periods of heavy snow, every effort is made to keep the school open if it is safe to do so. We are looking for a pool of up to 10 local volunteers who our Site Manager can contact at approx. 6am on a snow day to help clear key site areas. We would need up to 5 people to come on the day between 6.30am to 7.30am. Snow shovels will be provided, followed by tea and hot chocolate! If you think that you could help and would be prepared to be added to the list please can you email [admin@silsoelower.co.uk](mailto:admin@silsoelower.co.uk)



Bad weather can result in great difficulties for both children and staff travelling to and from school. Poor conditions on or near the school site, as well as the journey can increase risks to everyone's safety. If we are unable to operate a 'normal day', due to a lack of staff or electrical failure affecting heating, lighting, or if the site is potentially dangerous, then we will be forced to close.

Any decision to close will be communicated via the front page of Silsoe School's website. All parents/carers can also receive an email alert from Central Bedfordshire School's Open Status (SOS system). To register go to <https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/webApps/SOS/> and fill in the text boxes, click 'submit'. You will receive an email containing instructions on how to 'activate' your account.

If we need to close during the school day we will contact your priority 1 contact, please do not attempt to call the School as the switchboard will be unable to handle the call volumes. If your contact details change please let us know immediately.

## COMMUNICATION

Just a reminder that our telephone number is 01525 860247 and our email is

Whilst we try and check the email ([admin@silsoelower.co.uk](mailto:admin@silsoelower.co.uk)) regularly we ask that this means of contacting us should not be used when informing us of things such as appointments or pick-ups relating to that same day. Sometimes events overtake us and emails may not be checked until out of school hours.

Silsoe Pre-school can be reached on 01525 864938.

Using our answerphone – we have had a number of cases of parents saying they have left messages about child absence but no message has been received. We are assuming this is not a system error otherwise no messages would be received at all and this is never the case. Please could you ensure that if reporting a pupil absent you choose option 1 and then option 1 again. At this point you have to wait for the recording asking you to leave a message after the tone. Once you've heard the tone you're good to go with your message. Hope that helps.

## Scopay

Thank you to all those families who have signed up to receive regular communications from the school. Please make sure you open messages, read them carefully and respond where necessary. Bits of paper sent home often get lost and this is not a secure way to liaise with our families going forward.

## Website

For information about our school, our calendar and class news please visit:

<https://www.silsoeschool.co.uk>

Each class has their own page with lots of information about the term ahead, please do take a look.

## OUR SCHOOL VISION

Our vision is to be an excellent, God-centred, values-based, community-focused school where everyone is welcomed, encouraged and included.

Our children will develop as creative, determined learners and responsible citizens inspired to achieve their God-given potential and live life in all its fullness. We will foster understanding, tolerance and forgiveness within our caring Christian community.

