



PALACE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

What a term!

And so, the Autumn term comes to an end. When we returned to school in September, I don't think any of us could have predicted how things would have developed.

When the school opened for this academic year, there had already been some significant changes. We had staggered starts, small bags, PE kit days and social distancing. Despite all of this, school felt more 'normal' than it had done at any time since March! Seeing the children come running back into school reminded us all why we do our jobs. Their happy, smiling faces were a joy to behold and this has been the case from that day to this.

Over the term, the team at Palace Wood have worked tirelessly to support the children's social, emotional and academic needs. You should all be incredibly proud of what they have achieved in the face of growing local and national challenges.

Although we have had to continually monitor, review and amend our procedures, you have always been right there to support us and make sure that your children are ready for another day of learning. We can't thank you enough for this ongoing support.

In amongst the ever-present challenges, we have also shared lots of fantastic news. Mrs Fullagar and Mrs Finch will soon be adding to their families and we are delighted for them both. We look forward to meeting the new arrivals when it is safe for us to do so. Miss Ridout also announced her fantastic news that she will also be becoming a mummy for the first time and I know that everyone could not be happier for her.

I also had to share the bittersweet news that I will be accepting a new challenge in April. I was grateful for the kind words and support you've all given (and the social distancing perhaps did me a favour and saved me from a bruised arm or two!).

It can be easy to be drawn into the negatives considering what we are exposed in the media. However, that isn't the Palace Wood way – we are all about the positives. Here are my top five positives for the Autumn term (not in order!)

1. Attendance for the Autumn term was the highest we have ever had – maybe all that hand washing kept some of the other bugs away!
2. Children have run into school every day since September – they love school and love learning and it's a joy to see.
3. Children's learning is progressing really well. Despite what you may read in the papers, we are really happy with how the children are learning.
4. We've found a new mode of communication! Live meetings and video recordings have proved really popular and so our messages are reaching more people.
5. The community spirit is stronger than ever! To quote (steal!) a line from Stuart Russell, our Chair of Governors, *'seeing Palace Wood as the Allington lighthouse in stormy seas is just inspirational!'*

So, as you can see, despite the challenges, anxieties and ever-changing local guidelines, it's still been hugely successful term.

COVID updates

Please take a watch of my Christmas message for all the latest updates.

<https://youtu.be/ty3P9bliH-g>

PALACE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spelling League Table



This week, our top three classes are:

1st position - Rhinos

2nd position - Monkeys

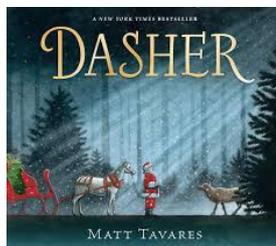
3rd position - Lions

(As of 16/12/20)

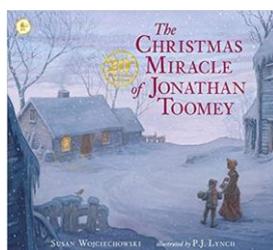
Well, Rhinos, you are undefeated! Rhinos are our crowning champions for the year! Huge well done, to them. Well done to Monkeys, you have re-entered the top 3 this week, and last but by no means least, Lions for maintaining 3rd position for many weeks running. Don't forget, even though spelling assignments may not be set over the holiday, your children can still

Book Recommendations! ★

'Dasher' written by Matt Taveras is the story of a brave little doe who meets Father Christmas and changes Christmas forever. Suitable for EYFS and KS1.



'The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey' written by Susan Wojciechowski is best suited to our KS2 children. The illustrations are so vivid and the story speaks the true



meaning of Christmas. This is certain to become a firm favourite.

Christmas Character Trail ❄️

Have you been on Palace Wood's Christmas Trail yet? If not, it's not too late. Why not take a wander this weekend to see our eleven Christmas-inspired characters, made by the school. Thank you so much for those you that have already donated to our fundraising, we have raised £176 already! Please don't forget to use the hashtag #christmasatthepalace in your photos.



Friends of Palace Wood

As you may have read from the letter on 7th December, The Friends of Palace Wood have continued to offer huge support through these challenging times.

We are currently fundraising for new laptops to improve the curriculum for the children and also support us with our remote learning as and when it is required.

If you are able to help and make a one-off donation of £5 via Parentmail, we would be extremely grateful. It would enable us to be able to help the School to fund the new laptops they so desperately need. The donation can be found in the Payments tab under shop. Donations are set at £5 but you may donate as much as you like by increasing the quantity. The payment window is open now until Friday 15 January 2021.

Good Luck Mrs Finch and Mrs Fullagar

Mrs Finch heads off on her maternity leave today, following Mrs Fullagar who started hers a few weeks ago. We wish them all the best and fingers crossed their new arrivals understand how hard they have worked this term and repay them with lots of sleep! Mrs Doyle has already made a brilliant start with Monkeys, and Crocodiles have been working with Mrs Nolan-Neylan this week.

Community Thanks!

We would like to say a big thank you to Dunelm again for including us in part of their Christmas campaign. The campaign invited shoppers to buy and donate items for the school such as cooking and craft equipment, toys and games. As you can see from the photos the customers were extremely generous and we have already distributed the goodies to areas around the school including EYFS, books for the library and craft materials and games to the breakfast and afterschool club.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Nandos. They kindly supplied us with all the cutlery for our Christmas dinner and because we needed so much, they arranged for it to come from 3 different restaurants.

And finally

I wish all of you a very happy and safe Christmas. We look forward to overcoming even more challenges in the new year, and will welcome the children back on **Tuesday 5th January**.

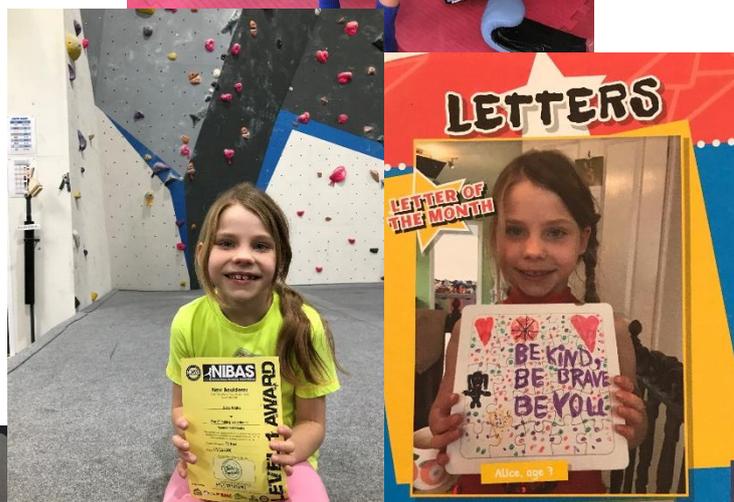
Merry Christmas

Mark Chatley



Dates:
4th Jan & 7th June 2021 INSET days.
5th January Return to School
Letters sent home (parentmails)
All Holiday Club
Access to Assembly
Covid updates
Christmas Jumper info ☺

We have an additional phone number for school: **01622 584825**, so add this to your safe list so you don't miss a call from us.



Superstar Corner

Arijus from Giraffes had his grading in kickboxing and he received red belt and certificate. Sticking with the martial arts theme, Zach Liston (Panthers) achieved his black belt! Alice from Monkeys was selected as 'Letter of the month' by Brilliant Brainz Magazine after she wrote to them about equality and made a jigsaw about it. Her photo was put in the December magazine and she has won a surprise prize. Not finished there, Alice also passed her first grade in climbing called 'Nibas Grade 1' with flying colours.