



December 2020

Dear parents,

I can't believe that we are at the end of the Autumn term already. School has been very busy and we have had a lovely run up to Christmas with all of your children.

Staff and children have worked so hard to produce Christmas performances, parties, Christmas arts and crafts and much more, and we hope that the children have had as near to a normal Christmas as we can provide in these strange times. I will provide some more information below of what has been going on in school in December.

Children have worked hard all term and are already making very good progress towards their targets. Please encourage all children to read over the Christmas holidays and to enjoy reading for pleasure if you have any spare time. We will be sending information in January about how to further support your child in reading as this is crucial to their development and progress in Primary school.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank every member of our school community for helping and supporting in such difficult times. Positivity from parents has been overwhelming and staff could not have worked harder with all of the children. I am sure everyone deserves a good rest before the Spring term.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday with your children and whilst I know everything is strange for all families, it still is the most magical time of year and we sincerely hope you enjoy every moment.

We wish all families the very best for a peaceful and healthy 2021.

Mrs Hair

Nursery and Receptions visit from the Donkeys.

We had a very kind donation from a Reception for EYFS that would stand out and make a

The staff got in touch with Blackberry Donkeys Reception met **Bandit and Hobo** jackets. This was a fantastic experience for our it brought a ray of sunshine to us all.



parent to do something magical with our children difference.

Donkey Hire and all children in Nursery and and even got to sit on them in their Christmas children and even though it was terrible weather

Christmas Productions

This has been a huge undertaking for all involved, much bigger than we anticipated. We decided to use a professional company for Reception and Year 6 as this is the children's very first and last Christmas performance in school.

All other year groups filmed their own very small versions. Staff did this without fancy equipment, ICT support and hardly any time to film in the hall spaces. 11 classes needed to share hall space and they could only be in the hall singing for a certain amount of time before we needed to leave the hall space and ventilate before another group of children came in. The versions filmed by school are just a small insight to a Christmas performance. There will be small errors, but we felt some footage of Christmas was better than no footage.

As a school we have honestly tried our hardest and hope that everyone sees their child in some of the footage and enjoys the Christmas songs as a year group. We look forward to being able to share children's performances in real life as soon as we can. Thank you for all the positive comments so far.

Christmas parties

Each year group / class held their own Covid secure Christmas parties ensuring we kept to our very strict Risk assessment whilst also ensuring that everyone enjoyed their party with their teachers and their friends. We even managed to squeeze them all in after the new guidelines from the government for early closure before Christmas.

Visit from Santa

On the very last day of term Santa decided to stop off at East Herrington Primary Academy and deliver every child in school a small Christmas present.

This was truly magical and the younger children were amazed; their faces were a true delight spreading lots of Christmas magic!

Christmas Windows

We tried to do our very own version of a Fenwicks Christmas window and were recognised by Fenwicks in their thank you Christmas post. We took a different children's Christmas story for each year group and made decorations to match it on all class windows. Pupils also read the story and decorated a tree that remained in our KS2 hall for all pupils to enjoy at lunchtime. We even had a trail for each class and they had to guess the story! A past pupil, Jay Collins filmed the windows and some of our beautiful choir recorded the music. What a huge success and thank you to everyone involved from, home Christmas wishes to all the elves who helped put everything in place one magical evening.

Other activities

Children have also carried out their usual cards and calendars and Christmas crafts ensuring they were covering parts of the Art and DT curriculum whilst also sharing these with families. I would like to say a special thank you to all families for their support with our Christmas cards and gifts this year - the children's work was lovely. We have also raised some extra funds for FOS which will be supporting school over the next year to further enhance all play and outdoor areas whilst we carry out OPAL.

Children also continued with the full curriculum up to the end of the term ensuring we are catching pupils up to their targets and from previous lost learning due to School closures.

Be safe online

Can everyone please check their child's phones and tablets regularly over the holiday period to ensure that all the children are safe on the online platforms they are using. I sent a letter with information to support parents to check their child's online devices in the last week of term to all KS2 parents. Please check our website for more information to support parents and whilst we know that children love youtube and TikTok (even though there are age restrictions) , these are two platforms that need to be checked by parents to see how your child is using them and what and who they are sharing information with online.

Can I kindly request that parents do not contact staff on class emails during the holiday period. Staff will not be looking at these emails until the Inset day on Monday 4th January.

If you need to communicate with school, please use the ehpa@balmorallearningtrust.co.uk email and I will check these at various points in the holiday.

Returning back to school January 2021

We have had no further information from the Department of Education as of yet and so we **will be returning to school for the children on Tuesday 5th January**. The online learning information in the news is for secondary school children only.

I will be in touch with you if I receive any further information and all that remains is to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all in 2021.

From everyone at EHPA