

# Swallowtail News



## The Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools



*Our Federation's mission is to work together to create successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.*

*With friendship, trust and kindness we fly!*

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## December 2023 Newsletter

### Message from the Executive Head

Dear all

Welcome to the last newsletter of 2023!

As I write, I have viewed one Nativity this morning, will be seeing one this afternoon and another one tomorrow. Later in the week I will be attending the Key Stage 2 Carol Service at Catfield church. Whilst it is a particularly busy time for me, I feel really blessed to share in the joy these Christmas events bring. I always feel these are where the uniqueness of being part of small schools really shows, with each and every child getting an opportunity to shine. None of this would be possible without the hard work of our staff and I know you will join me in thanking them.

All that leaves me to say is I hope you and your loved ones have the merriest Christmas!

*Kind Regards*

*Natalie Butcher*

*Executive Head, Swallowtail Federation of Church Schools*

### Message from the senior teacher

This half term has been a special one, busy, full on and a little bit chaotic at times, but so incredibly magical. My first thanks goes to the families, more and more seems to be crammed onto the calendar each year, but just like your children, you take it all in your stride! Thank you for being a part of our festivities in the lead up to Christmas: providing the most gorgeous nativity costumes, helping the children to learn their lines, attending the nativities, bringing and collecting from the disco and movie night and much much more!

The nativity is always one of my favourite things about the autumn term at school, being super organised and learning songs just before October half term (shh, don't tell anyone!) but then before you know it, it's performance day! Despite the grey hairs it causes, it always turns out to be magnificent and I am sure you will join me in saying how wonderful our little team of nativity characters were.

A gentle reminder of next week's happenings...

Monday 18th December - Christingle at 2pm at the Church - Children to go home from the church afterwards. If you are not attending, please contact Zoey to arrange the collection of your child.

Tuesday 19th December - Carol Singing in the village. Please do come and support us at one or all of our stops!

9.30am - The Village Green

10am - The Chapel car park

10.50am - Broadlands Road

11.30pm - The Community Garden

Wednesday 20th December- Christmas Church Service at 2pm. Children to go home from the church afterwards. If you are not attending, please contact Zoey to arrange the collection of your child.

Wednesday 20th December- Christmas dinner at school.

Friday 5th January - Sponsored Readathon. No morning family worship. Families are invited in at 2.30pm as part of our readathon. We will then be presenting the certificates to the children shortly after the family reading session.

Have a happy, safe and special Christmas. See you on Thursday 4th January.

Festive wishes,

Miss Blake x

## News

- Please can Kingfisher children ensure they have their full PE kit in school each week, including trainers. We will be sending the children's PE kits home for the Christmas break, can you please check everything still fits and is labelled before returning in the New Year.
- Mr. Jones has some Christmas decorations he would like to donate to a good cause. If you know of a charity or any individual that would benefit from them, please let the school office know.
- Afterschool clubs are now available to book on for next year. Please ensure you do this no later than Wednesday 20th December to secure a space. The clubs are Yoga on Monday, Art club on Tuesday and Tennis on Thursday. These can be booked and paid for on Pupil Asset.
- Tuesday 23rd January we have a company called Bags2schools coming to collect clothing, paired shoes (tied together or elastic band around), bags, hats, scarves and ties, belts, soft toys, small amounts of bedding (bed sheets, pillow cases and duvet covers). If you have any of these items, you would like to donate to raise money for the school please drop these items off at the school office between 8.30am-11.30am from 15<sup>th</sup> January. The company will be providing us with bags in the New Year, but they will also accept items in black bags.
- **Sponsored Readathon**  
We will be holding our sponsored readathon on Friday 5th January. The children will participate in a variety of reading activities throughout the day, including reading maps, instructions and recipes! Please ensure you send your children into school with a small named tupperware tub for them to bring their baking home in! We wish to invite you into school at 2.30pm, to read with your children, as part of our readathon day. Shortly after this, we will be presenting the children with their readathon certificates to celebrate their achievements from the day. The children will be bringing home a sponsor form; this will allow them to try and collect some sponsors for their 6 hour readathon, over the holidays.

## This month's curriculum focus: Music

Our Music curriculum is personally crafted by our Music Subject Leader, following the National Curriculum and is supported by the Charanga music scheme. This blend of planning is personalised towards the excellent musical resources we have in our Federation, the interests of the children, and provides them with a wide scope of exposure to international, generational and historical music genres.

Over the course of their journey at Swallowtail, the children will explore learning to play and compose their own music on a variety of tuned and untuned instruments, as well as dipping into digital composition in Key Stage 2. Untuned instruments include: percussion and djembes. Tuned instruments include: glockenspiels, Garage Band for digital music and the ukulele. Music theory and music history is woven into each unit, but is also taught explicitly as a unit in each year at school. The children are encouraged, but never pressured to perform what they have learned or composed in class. Their musical experiences outside of school are also celebrated, should they wish to share this with us!

Music work is recorded in samples by the teacher and kept in a digital file by the Music Subject Leader. Once a year, when the children study Music History and Theory, their recorded work is kept in a treasury tagged folder, that will be passed up through their years at school.

This Autumn, Year 1 and 2 have listened to an array of rap music and have been using the djembes to create rhythms as well as to lead and participate in community drum circles. Year 3 and 4 have listened to various spiritually influenced music from a range of genres and used percussion instruments to convey emotion and supplement story lines. Year 5 and 6 have listened to rock music from various decades and have been using the glockenspiels for the 3rd time in the Primary musical experience, which has progressed to include reading music on a staff to play familiar and unfamiliar pieces. The second half of the Autumn term is always reserved for singing practise, in preparation for their Nativity performance in Key Stage 1 and Carol Concert in Key Stage 2.

In the Spring, Year 1 and 2 will use percussion, Year 3 and 4 the djembes and Year 5 and 6 will delve into the Romantic period in music history (1820-1900), in particular, looking at the work of Chopin and Tchaikovsky.

Mrs Pell

Forest School, MFL and Music Subject Leader  
Swallowtail Federation

## Diary dates

Monday 18th December - Christingle at 2pm at the Church - Children to go home afterwards.

Tuesday 19th December - Carol Singing in the village

Wednesday 20th December- Christmas Church Service at 2pm. Children to go home afterwards.

Wednesday 20th December- Christmas dinner at school.

Thursday 21st December - 3rd January - Christmas Holidays

Thursday 4th January - Start of the Spring term

Friday 5th January- Sponsored Readathon at school. Parents invited to attend from 2.30pm.

Tuesday 23rd January-Bags2school collecting unwanted clothing.

Monday 16th February– Love disco 3.30pm-5.00pm. £3.00 a ticket including a small snack. Bookable on Pupil Asset.

February 19th to 23rd– Half term.

Thursday 7th March– World Book Day, more information to follow.

Saturday 16th March - Easter Fayre



Thank you all for coming to watch our Nativity, the children were amazing!!

### Safeguarding Some links for e-safety:

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

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/digital/5-a-day/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

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