

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Dear Families

We are now well in to the period of Advent, and it is beginning to look a lot like Christmas! The Year R Nativity in St. Matthew's Church was wonderful, with the children performing their roles brilliantly and with great enthusiasm – the cute dial was well above 10 by the end! Thanks have to go out to the team in Year R for putting on such a good show.

This was followed by the second Otterfest Christmas Festival, and it was great to see so many of you enjoying it. The FOS team worked hard to bring this together...thanks to all involved!!! As we look ahead at other events in the diary, I need to make a little appeal for more helpers. Sometimes, it's as simple as signing up as a volunteer to spend 30-minutes on a stall, or you might like to be more involved and help organise events, either way we would love to hear from you.

There are just under two weeks of the term left, and the learning continues apace. I hope you have enjoyed the photo updates of what is happening around school. It's fair to say that the children are starting to show some signs of tiredness though, and the little colds that we always see at this time of year are starting to be more prevalent. I just want to remind you that we 'fog' the school on a regular basis to reduce the risk of illnesses spreading, and there is guidance from the NHS about when children should be kept at home.

Kind regards

Mr Geraghty

Coats

Now it is December, please ensure your child has a coat with them every day. We are asking all children to wear a coat out to play, especially since the rain can come on suddenly. Please can you provide this whatever the weather is like in the morning, thank you.

Christmas Disco

DJ Jazzy G, DJ Zo J and friends, are looking forward to entertaining the children with some popular tunes and Christmas Classics on Wednesday 17th December. Dress code is 'all things Christmassy'. There won't be a charge for the disco but if you would like to make a donation, this will go towards buying new sound and stage equipment for the school which will be used for years to come.

Keystage 1 and Year R: 4:45pm to 5:45pm

Keystage 2: 6:00pm to 7:00pm.

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Visit from MP Danny Chambers



On Friday 28th November, Winchester MP (Danny Chambers) came to visit Year 5/6 to hear their persuasive speeches asking for increased protection for our chalk streams. All of Year 5/6 practised and perfected speaking with passion, clarity and volume and we are very proud of all of their efforts. Two children from each class represented their peers by delivering their speeches to Danny during his visit. He was astounded by their professionalism and use of persuasive techniques, stating that they were better than any of the speeches he had heard in parliament that week! At the end of the speeches, Danny answered a range of questions from the children and they were able to learn about our system of democracy and how laws get passed. He has promised to take their views back to parliament and agreed with everything they were advocating. Well done Year 5/6!

During his visit, Danny also took a tour of the school and he was very impressed to hear about our Pupil Parliament. We are hoping to see more of him as he is keen to return soon to attend one of the meetings.

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Sharing the Good News

Worship Council introduced our Posada in whole school worship last week. Posada (a Spanish word meaning 'inn') is an old Mexican tradition where young people, dressed up as Mary and Joseph, travelled from house to house asking for a room for the night and telling people about the imminent arrival of Jesus in the weeks leading up to Christmas. On Christmas Eve they would visit the local church to re-enact the nativity and place figures of Mary and Joseph in a crib.

In school, each class acts as host to the Nativity figures throughout Advent, and at the end of term these figures are placed in the school crib during a whole school assembly. As the figures move between classes, a short 'handing over ceremony' takes place between the giving and the receiving representatives.



Advent Service

On Thursday, Year 6 confidently led our Advent Service in church where we learnt about the four candles of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The singing from across the school was wonderful as we enjoyed 'Light a Candle in the Dark' and 'As We Wait for Christmas Day'. We will now begin practicing the hymns for our Christingle Service on the 18th December.



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Year R Nativity Service

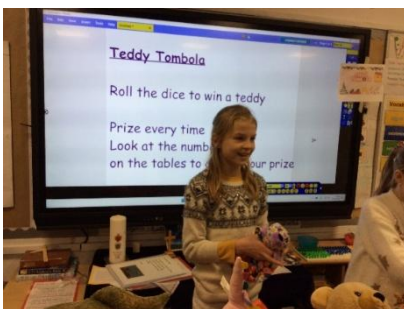
Otter Class delivered their version of the Nativity ("Snuggle Up Stable") on Friday afternoon to parents and their buddies in Year 5/6. They looked incredible in their costumes and the songs were sung brilliantly.

Thank you to the parents who came to watch and the Year R team for bringing it together so well.



Otterfest

To complete a very busy and exciting week in school, Otterfest took place on Friday and was a huge success. It was wonderful to see so many families attending this festive community event. The Year 6 children worked enthusiastically making their signs and setting up their games; Miss Whitbread and Mrs Simmons were very busy elves getting the children ready for Santa's Grotto and there was an incredible team of staff and parent volunteers running stalls and serving food and drinks in the hall. Thank you to everyone who donated items or gave up their time and an extra big thank you to Mrs Ainsworth and Mrs Tear from FOS who worked incredibly hard behind the scenes.



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LEARNING IN ACTION PHOTOS



Year 5/6 children got to meet a real trout in science whilst exploring its evolution and adaptation.



Year 5/6 children have been busy sharing their Rivers Homework Projects. We have been astounded by the efforts that have gone into these projects and the children have enjoyed learning about rivers all over the world from their fantastic presentations in class.



Year 2 children have been looking closely at our school building as part of their local history study and sorting photos of our school from oldest to newest.

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Wrens class had a treat when solo guitarist, Jacob, played them Camera by Ed Sheeran.

We Need Your Help!

'Be Happy, Be Healthy' 2026

We would love to hear from any parents, carers or family members who might be willing to come in and talk to the children. This could be linked to:

- Physical or mental wellbeing
- Careers related to health, fitness, safety or care
- Neurodiversity or disability awareness
- Or any aspect of living a safe, healthy or happy life

In previous years we have welcomed personal trainers, yoga instructors, doctors, dentists, artists, mental health advocates, first aiders, lifeguards, fire and police services, road safety teams and parents sharing lived experiences including around neurodiversity. Truly, anything goes if it helps our children broaden their understanding of how to look after themselves and others.

If you, or someone you know, would be interested in contributing, please get in touch. Even short/online sessions/prerecorded sessions can make a huge difference.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

Best wishes

Mrs Simpson

z.simpson@otterbourne.hants.sch.uk

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SECRET SANTA

FRIDAY 12TH DECEMBER

Let your child experience the joy of giving this Christmas!

Children will visit our Secret Santa Shop during school time to choose a special gift for someone they love – all beautifully wrapped and ready to surprise.

Each gift costs £3, and you can purchase as many as you like.

Please pay on Classlist by **8pm on Thursday 11th December**, stating how many tickets you need, your child(ren)'s name, and their class.

We'll send labels home the week before. Please return them filled in on the day, along with a bag for your child to carry their gift.

£3 PER TICKET ● TICKETS AVAILABLE ON CLASSLIST

**BRING NAME LABELS AND A
CARRIER BAG ON THE DAY!**



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SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

Roblox Security Changes - South West Grid for Learning

The introduction of the Online Safety Bill earlier this year has brought welcome controls over what we and our children can access online. As internet speeds have increased and the digital world has expanded, the ability for anyone of any age to reach almost any content has grown at a pace far beyond our capacity to safeguard against it. The risks have become unmistakable. Adults now face increasingly sophisticated attacks from hackers and scammers, while children remain acutely vulnerable to online predators.

Although some internet services initially resisted tighter regulation, the government's commitment to reducing online harms has ultimately prevailed. For children, one of the most persistent avenues for predatory behaviour has been online video games. These are spaces where young users gather, communicate, and interact, often with limited verification or oversight.

Roblox, a platform widely associated with younger players, is now beginning to address this by introducing facial analysis age checks and optional ID verification for users over 13. These real-world verification measures are designed to confirm a user's age more accurately and to restrict interactions that could place children at risk. In practice, they signal an important shift in how major platforms are starting to manage online safety and respond to the expectations set out in the Bill.

You can read more about these checks on the SWGfL website:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/roblox-announces-facial-age-checks-for-chat-features/>