



Thursday 19th December
2012

Head's desk

It has been a packed month with highlights. The fabulous Christmas production of 'The Black Shadow' which not only showcased the talents of our children across the age ranges but demonstrated how team work, hard work, dedication and fun are a potent mixture for spectacular achievements. An enormous thank you goes out to all staff, children and everyone at Layston who played their part however humble.



Earlier in the month we had our first 'Parent Chat' of the academic year. A small but ambitious group of parents gave us their ideas for action. Set out below is how we have managed these suggestions.

You told us	As a result we are/have
Keep up the communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending brief text reminders of key events • Mounted a whole school communication white board on the wall of the building between Y1 and Layston pre-school on the bottom playground. We will use this to 'sign post' up and coming events. • Circulated a calendar of key events for next term • Circulated minutes of parent chat session to all participants • Prefacing newsletter with a 'taster' email outlining content
To summarise our achievements at end of each term for parents to read	Including a summary of our achievements in this newsletter
To encourage as many parents to attend /or contribute to 'parent chat' sessions	<p>Offering you the chance to send/email/talk in advance of next 'parent chat' on Tues 4th Feb 2.30- 3.15pm any ideas/ thoughts / questions or queries you might have. We will include these in our meeting even if you are not able to attend.</p> <p>To circulate an agenda in advance to which any parent can contribute, please email head@layston.herts.sch.uk or speak to a member of the senior leadership team (SLT)- Mrs Bloomfield, Mrs Cooper or Mrs McMurrough</p>
To provide opportunities for children to be taught recorders and or fifes	Teaching recorder to all Year 2, 3, 4 children from next term

Summary of Achievement Autumn 2013

- Outdoor learning for each class 1 morning a week for each class (y3/4 once a fortnight) and booklet for parent helpers- thank you Mrs Lomax.
- New brochure for new/prospective parents with up to date photographs-
- Regular updates to website- thank you Mrs Powell.
- Superb whole school Christmas production- thank you Mrs Cooper
- Specialised sports coaching introduced across whole school one afternoon a week- thank you Mr Green and team
- Increase in individualised support for children with special educational needs
- New caretaker Mr Kingsley employed for longer hours already improving quality of site maintenance and associated Health and safety protocols
- Nurture Group accredited training for staff delivering Little Acorns Nurture Group provision- thank you Mrs Strachan and Mrs Scarrott
- Strengthening links with St Peter's Church through Harvest and Carol services, the Rev. Ian Hill leading collective worship in school once a fortnight and joint collective worship planning with head teacher.
- Establishing good working relationships between the whole school and community in the light of changes to staffing and governing this Autumn term.
- Increase in number of children on role. In Jan. 2014 we will be practically full - with 149 children on role out of a maximum 150.
- Securing local authority funding for a new boiler and heating system (we are awaiting details of proposed time scales).
- Extending pre-school provision from Jan 2014 through working with our pre-school providers- thank you Layston Pre School and Buntings
- Mrs Smith now is the Early Years Co-ordinator to oversee all pre school and early years liaison with families, Bramble Hill and feeder pre school settings
- Piano lessons provided by Mr Paul Arnold- thank you.
- Extending and strengthening the walking bus scheme- thank you Mrs Blanchard and crew.
- Fundraising for others less fortunate than ourselves
- Making a professional recording of songs on CD for sale- thank you Mrs Watkins and Miss Bowman
- Developing new style newsletter- thank you Mr Strahan



PTA

The PTA have been busy this term raising money for school and charity

We raised £133 for Children in Need and £113.57 for the Philippines Disaster appeal.

We would like to thank all the parents and staff for their help, support, donations and attendance at the Christmas Fair. A special thank you to all the parents who helped with the preparation, manning a stall or clearing up afterwards. All help is greatly appreciated. We raised just over £1,600 profit. We actually banked just over £1,970, but had some expenses and still have some stocks left so there won't be such an outlay next time.

In addition we raised £197.67 and £43.70 from the play collection and refreshments respectively, which we put towards the Market Theatre's Rumpelstiltskin performance to the children this week.

We would like to thank the whole Layston community for their help in organising the event as well. We think it was a great team effort!! With the proceeds we have presented 6 more iPads to the school bringing the total to 16 this calendar year together with 2 whole class sets of waterproofs for outside learning.

Julia



Governors

On behalf of the governors we would like to congratulate all those involved in this year's concert. What a fabulous performance that brought many of us back for a second helping! Well done all you should all be immensely proud of yourselves.



As a governing body we feel there has been a very positive start to the academic year and we would like to thank Mrs Bloomfield and her staff for their dedication and hard work.

With regards to the recent exercise where we collected your views on what you thought were the schools strengths and weaknesses are, we have collated all your comments (thanks to all who participated) and will provide you with feedback in the new year. Please keep your comments and views coming.

We have 2 vacancies on the governing body, 1 being a parent governor and the other LA governor. If you feel you might be interested or want to find out about the important and valuable work the governing body performs please contact one of us for further information.

Finally we would like to wish you and your families a happy and blessed Christmas and best wishes for 2014

Tina

Looking forward...

And for next term...

As a high achieving school we will be putting in place 2x 1 hour booster maths sessions for our more able children in mathematics across the whole school.

We will be teaching recorder from Y2 to Y4.

January Highlights 2014:

Mon 20th- Tues 21st Jan - Whole School Arts based project over 2 days to create giant sized murals all over the school. *Parent help needed*, no prior knowledge needed just your time and enthusiasm! More details to follow next term.

Thurs 23rd Jan - Grand opening of new pre-school provision 9.30 - 11.30am.

Final thoughts.....

It felt just right to be celebrating Christmas together at St Peters in our end of term 'lessons and carol' service, sharing the wonder and simplicity of that First Christmas with our parent community

On behalf of the staff and myself thank you all for your cards, presents and good wishes and may I wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas and New Year. We look forward to seeing you all refreshed and energised for 2014!

With kind regards

Myra Bloomfield

Headteacher