



17 November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you, your family and friends all safe and well.

### Christmas Productions 2021

As things continue to be a little different this year, we still want to give the children the opportunity to be involved in a Christmas production celebrating the birth of Jesus. We would love to share this with you all as we know that these events can create precious memories. The productions will look much the same as last year because we are still not inviting large groups into school (following Public Health England and Newcastle City Council advice) but we hope you enjoy them and that they add to your own Christmas preparations and celebrations.

This year, as last year, we plan to share our productions online using YouTube. We already have permission from most of our families to share their child's image using this medium but if your child is in our Nursery or joined our school in Reception or another class during this academic year, we will need your permission to include them in the production which is shared online. If this applies to your child, or you would like to remove the permission privileges you agreed last year, please complete this [survey](#).

### Poverty Proofing the School Day – No Gifts Sent into School Initiative

We began poverty proofing the school day at St Cuthbert's a few years ago. Poverty proofing is a means of identifying and overcoming the barriers that children and young people from families with less financial resources can face at school. We have achieved this at St Cuthbert's in a number of ways, for example, we have removed the use of distinctive white paper bags from our free school lunches when children go out of school on trips and we have bought every child from Year 2 to Year 6 the same pencil case and set of resources to use to support their learning in school. We also continue to heavily subsidise residential visits so that all families can afford for their children to go.

This year and moving forwards, as part of our poverty proofing initiative, we are asking parents/carers not to send any gifts into school for any members of staff at Christmas or at the end of the academic year. We introduced this approach during COVID-19 to prevent the spread of infection. One of the huge positives we noticed was the impact it had on our children and families who struggle financially. Children feel under pressure to bring gifts into school because other children do and this pressure is then passed onto our families causing unnecessary distress at home. Some families also have more than one child on roll at school and the cost of buying several presents soon mounts up. The giving of gifts to school staff has somehow over time become an expectation and it really shouldn't be. Never has poverty proofing our school been more important than it is now and this initiative is something we have discussed at length and which all staff feel very strongly about. We will be discussing this approach with our children and asking them not to bring in gifts and explaining the reason why. We don't want to upset anyone with this decision and we genuinely believe this is the right thing to do for all of our children. We would really appreciate everyone's support with this initiative. **In agreement with all staff, any gifts which are sent into school in the future will be donated to local charities. Please do not send any gifts in.**



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If parents/carers want to express their thanks to staff then please send in a card, a letter or an email. This feedback is so valuable to our well-being and has such a positive impact on our morale and really is very much appreciated.

This is a lovely and exciting time in school and we plan to celebrate Christmas in style at St Cuthbert's. We've loads of festive activities planned and a surprise or two up our sleeves for the children to enjoy.

If you would like to discuss this further or have any other queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Mrs Bullerwell  
Headteacher

**Dates for your Diary November 2021 – December 2021**

Monday 22 November	Photographer in School
Tuesday 23 November	Photographer in School for Nursery (yellow group)
Friday 26 November	Non-uniform day and donations for Christmas Hampers
Monday 29 November	Raffle tickets go on sale for Christmas Raffle
Friday 3 December	Little Red Riding Hood Theatre Production
Wednesday 8 December	Christmas Lunch Day
Friday 10 December	Final day for Mission Christmas Toy and gift donations into school
Monday 13 December	Christmas Film Night – Reception and KS1 2-4pm
Tuesday 14 December	Christmas Film Night – KS2 2-4pm
Wednesday 15 December	Christmas Party Day – Nursery and Reception
Thursday 16 December	Christmas Party Day KS1 & 2 Last day of term
Friday 17 December	School Closed and will reopen Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January for teaching purposes

**Please note that we do our best to adhere to the dates set in the diary however the above may be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.**