



Burbage Junior School Newsletter December 24

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Executive Headteacher's Message



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the festive season, it is the perfect time to reflect on what has been a truly remarkable term. Our school community has been a hive of activity, and I am incredibly proud of all that we have achieved together.

The highlight of this term has undoubtedly been the glowing report from Ofsted. This recognition is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and passion of our staff, pupils, and families. Together, we have created a vibrant learning environment where children can thrive.

Christmas has brought a magical touch to the school, and our Christmas performances at St Catherine's Church were simply wonderful. It was heart-warming to see the Year 3, 4, 5, and 6 children perform with such confidence and joy. These events truly showcased the spirit of togetherness and the incredible talents of our pupils.

Throughout this term, the children have demonstrated exceptional effort and enthusiasm in all areas of school life. Year 3 children have embraced the challenges of their new routines and excelled in their Forest School sessions, showing resilience and creativity. They are rising to the high expectations set by their teachers and making great strides in their learning.

Year 4 and Year 5 have been engaging in Mastering Maths sessions, which have proven to be a great success. These sessions are helping the children to deepen their understanding and retention of multiplication facts, thanks to the innovative and enthusiastic approach of our staff. I am excited to see how this foundation supports their progress in the months to come.

Year 6 children have been immersed in the world of photography during their Art lessons, producing final pieces that are nothing short of professional. Their creativity and attention to detail have been truly inspiring.

I would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks and best wishes to Mrs J Cox, our part-time teacher in 3CG, and Miss Y Brennan our teacher in 4B. They have been members of our team, for some time, and leave us in December. We wish them every success in their future endeavours.

As we prepare for the New Year, we are thrilled to welcome a new member to our support staff team. After the Christmas holiday, we will be joined by Miss L Coley, our new Learning Support Assistant. We have had a really successful recruitment round, with an overwhelming number of teachers expressing an interest in joining Burbage Junior School. Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome Mrs L Moore to the team, as of January 2025. She is an experienced teacher who will be joining Class 3CG as part of a job-share with Mrs G Grantham. This arrangement will ensure a smooth transition for the children, as both teachers will work collaboratively, each spending 2.5 days in class. We are also pleased to announce that Mrs J Adshead will be joining us as the new teacher for Class 4B April 2025. As Mrs Adshead is having to honour her existing school contract, the children will be taught by one agency teacher- Mr O Jones- who we have used in 3G this term. Our new permanent teachers are enthusiastic and eager to contribute to our school community. I am really looking forward to see what they both bring to our Burbage family.

A reminder that school reopens for children on Tuesday, 7th January 2025, at 8:45 am. Until then, I hope that you all have a peaceful and joyful Christmas break. On behalf of all the staff and Governors at the school, I wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kind regards,

Mrs Zoe Driver- Executive Headteacher



Thrive



Understanding the Thrive Approach: Supporting Your Child's Wellbeing

At our school, we recognize that a child's emotional and social development plays a vital role in their ability to learn and thrive. To support this, we use the Thrive Approach, a research-based program designed to help children develop the confidence, resilience, and emotional skills they need to succeed in school and beyond. Thrive focuses on fostering positive relationships, supporting emotional wellbeing, and removing barriers to learning. This ensures children feel secure, valued, and ready to engage with their education.

Through the Thrive Approach, we offer tailored one-to-one support delivered by our two licensed Thrive practitioners. This personalized support helps children who may need additional guidance to build emotional resilience and overcome challenges. Whether they are dealing with anxiety, difficulties with friendships, or other personal challenges, the one-to-one sessions provide a safe space for them to grow and develop essential coping strategies.

We are also excited to be trialling whole-class Thrive sessions with our Year 4 class. These sessions aim to create a shared understanding of emotional health, promoting a positive and supportive classroom environment. Both teachers and students have given us encouraging feedback about how these sessions have improved their classroom dynamics, boosted confidence, and supported the children's overall wellbeing.

By embedding the Thrive Approach across our school, we aim to create a nurturing environment where every child feels supported, confident, and ready to learn. We look forward to continuing to develop this program and seeing the benefits it brings to our school community.

Burbage Junior School's Therapy Dog



Introducing Winnie, Our Therapy Dog in Training

We are thrilled to introduce Winnie, a 4-month-old Cockapoo owned by Mrs. Moore, who is currently undergoing training to become our school's therapy dog. Winnie is participating in

the PAWS Therapy Dog CPD Certification Programme, a comprehensive course designed to ensure she can safely and effectively provide animal-assisted therapy in our school environment. Once fully trained, Winnie will play a key role in supporting the wellbeing and emotional development of our pupils.

At the moment, Winnie comes into school a couple of times a week as part of her training. She absolutely loves visiting and is already forming wonderful bonds with the children. Spending time with Winnie helps children feel calmer, more relaxed, and ready to learn. Whether it's listening to a story or simply having a quiet moment with her, Winnie's presence brings a sense of comfort and joy to our school community.

To help Winnie with her training, the children have been learning how to interact with her in a calm and gentle manner. This not only supports Winnie's progress but also teaches the children important skills like empathy and patience. We are so excited about the positive impact Winnie is already having, and we look forward to seeing her develop into a fully trained therapy dog who will bring even more happiness and support to our school.

[BBC 500 words competition](#)



Several of our pupils entered the 500 Words Writing Competition in November.

We are pleased to announce that four of them have made it through to the next round of judging: **Martha (3CG), Olivia (3W), Thomas T (4P) and Olivia (4H)**.

The BBC had tens of thousands of entries so this is an amazing achievement!

Well done to all the children who submitted a story; we are proud of you all. The names of the shortlisted entries will be announced in January.

Fingers crossed for our young authors!

Sports update

We have had a fantastic first term of sports here at Burbage Juniors. As always, all of the children have worked really hard developing their skills and achieving their goals in PE covering our 'invasion sports' topic, including Football, Tag Rugby, Basketball, Netball and Dodgeball.

We have continued to have great success in all of our out of school competitions against other schools.

Highlights include:

Our year 5/6 girls football team won our local competition and went on to represent us at the county finals.

Our year 5/6 boys football team have won their first four fixtures of our league competition.

Our year 6 Basketball team came runners up in our local competition and will now go through to the next round in January.

As always, we had a fantastic showing from all four year groups at the local cross country event, with numerous children finishing in high places.

Our year 4 Tag Rugby team won all their matches at our local festival.

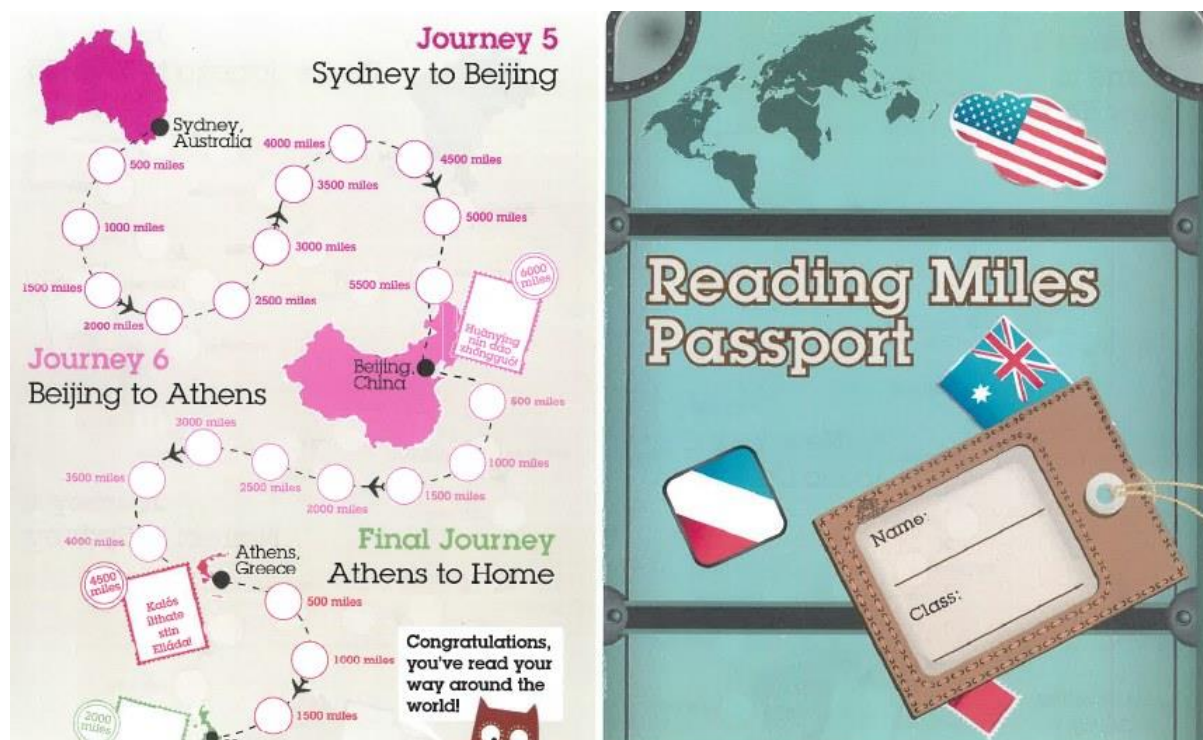
And our year 5/6 Table Tennis team won our local competition and went on to compete in the area finals, eventually finishing runners up.

We are so proud of all our children throughout school, for how hard you work towards your sports, and how you always represent us with such a great attitude and enthusiasm towards everything we do.

Well done team Burbage.

Mr Probert

Burbage Junior School's Reading Passports



A huge thank you to all the parents who have heard their children read aloud during this term, helping them to read around the world with their reading passports and achieve their country stickers and badges.

Thank you to the PTFA for their funding of the new initiative. Hearing your child read improves their reading fluency (ability to read accurately and quickly), which is incredibly important. Year 6 pupils require a reading speed of at least 185 words per minute to be able to read the SATs reading paper successfully and achieve the expected standard. All the reading support at home is so beneficial for your child - thank you.

Year Groups- Curriculum Update



Year 3 News

Another fantastic half term for the Year 3's!

They have adapted well to the new routines and are now thriving in their new school environment.

In English, we have written a diary entry of a child based in Africa whose grandmother is poorly and looked at the social context of paying for medical care in comparison to the NHS. They have dramatized freeze frames of the story and used their background knowledge to enrich their writing.

We have also spent time reading 'The Snowman' by Michael Morpurgo (perfect for Christmas) and have written a narrative using direct speech, adding extra detail to make our writing super interesting and full of rich descriptions.

We have embarked on investigations on Forces and Friction, in Science. Flicking bottle tops down the hall, timing cars down ramps, and looking at the uses of forces in the real world such as brakes on bikes and tyres in Formula 1 – let's get those engineer brains working!

The children's work in Maths has been amazing. We have learned formal methods for column subtraction and addition and we are working on multiplication and division. The children approach their work enthusiastically and resiliently – well done Year 3.

We had the best time learning about the local area and how Burbage has changed over the years. We went on a field trip, where we walked around the village learning about the pubs (the children were very eloquent in their knowledge of pub gardens), new developments and discussing how we can further improve their locality. They loved looking for their houses on Google Earth and panning out to show their environment in relation to the UK, Europe, Earth and Space. Minds were blown! We created a messy map to depict the field trip, making a key to show the age of buildings and the expansion of the village over time.

3W and 3G have finished their Forest School and 3CG are mid-way through. The children are learning further skills in teamwork, and perseverance and are thoroughly enjoying their outdoor experience.

In music they have been learning about notes and their value, developing their skills on the glockenspiel, and are now learning 'Three Little Birds' by Bob Marley. Classic!

They are honing their skills in Art, where they have been experimenting with different mediums to create pictures from nature.

ICT has been the most fun. Year 3 has embraced emailing on Purple Mash, learned about email safety, and emailed a safety quiz to King Charles who lost his game-playing apps due to an email virus!

The last week of term is full of festive fun, from the church service and creative crafts to a Panto in-school performance, which is set to be filled with laughter, high jinx, and quick changes.

We want to say a sad farewell to Mrs Cox who is leaving 3CG, a much-valued member of our Year 3 team, and to take this opportunity to wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Keep up the great work Year 3 and here is to a brilliant 2025!

The Year 3 Team







Year 4 News

What a busy half term it's been!

The children took part in a national live lesson as part of our Anti-Bullying week and wrote an acrostic poem. We also visited Pughes' Paddock for the annual Remembrance Service alongside other local schools and the local community. We have been impressed with the children's writing especially our narrative based on Michael Morpurgo's 'Coming Home'. The children have worked extremely hard to learn a poem for the Christmas service at St. Catherine's Church - we are proud of them!

In Art, we have been exploring various textures with wax-resistant crayons and black paint. We also 'drew with scissors' in order to plan our compositions.

A small group of children represented the school at Green Towers for an interschool sporting event. They were a credit to the school in the way they keenly participated in a variety of sporting activities such as kickboxing; smoothie making and dodgeball - they were a credit to the school and to their families.

We are very proud of how the children have participated in and challenged themselves throughout this term. Well done, Year 4!







Year 5 News

We have had a very busy second half term in Year 5!

In English, we have designed and then described our own chocolate bar based on 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'. We then moved onto the Titanic where we researched about the different classes on the ship and what experiences they had on board. Every child was given a ticket of a passenger who boarded the ship and created 3 diary entries (boarding the Titanic, when the ship was hit by the iceberg and the sinking). We then looked at writing a letter of complaint and a newsletter based on the sinking. Children then participated in a heated debate to decide who was at fault for the catastrophe!

In Art, we have created self-portraits using mixed media art. To help us with this, we researched the artist Child Kumari Singh Burman.

In Design and Technology, we are starting to look at bridge structures (we will continue this after Christmas) by learning about 3 different designs and even making a truss bridge from spaghetti.

In History, we have looked at the Maya and compared it to the Anglo-Saxon civilisation. We looked at their gods and goddesses and how they were created from animal and human characteristics.

In Geography, we are starting out topic on rainforests and we are pleased with how much the children have retained from learning about the Amazon in Autumn term 1.

We ask you to encourage your children to continue playing on TTRS and reading over Christmas as it will support with what they will be doing within school.

Have a lovely Christmas break and a Happy New Year!

Year 6 News

Year 6 have been very productive this half term, learning about the Ancient Egyptians and visiting New Walk Museum to handle genuine artefacts and examine mummies. We all had a great day; the children were very well-behaved and impressed the guides with all the knowledge they have retained.

Writing lessons have also been based around the Egyptian topic: pupils have produced mummification instructions, a job application letter, a desert cinquain poem, a newspaper report about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb and a persuasive brochure to promote the New Walk Museum.

In maths, our pupils have worked hard in our decimals, fractions, and position and direction lessons. They have completed the Light and Sight units in science and have begun their study of classification. The art lessons led to great collaborative work, when they used technology

to produce some stunning photographs. In addition, we have been using the iPads in music lessons, giving opportunities for pupils to compose their own pieces and layer sounds.

We have been very proud of how hard our Year 6s have worked this term. Many thanks to the support from parents with the Maths Watch, reading and English writing homework.

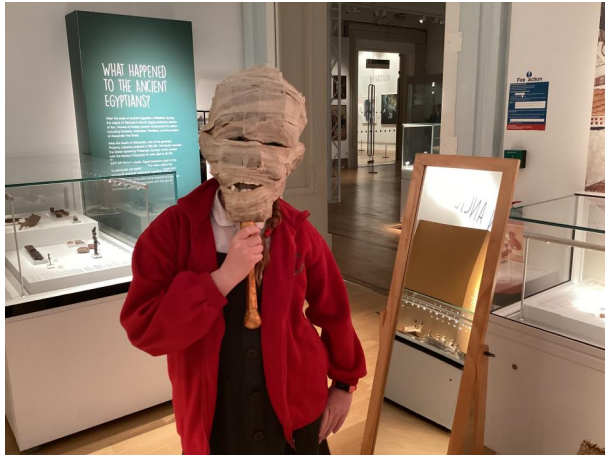
A merry Christmas from the Year 6 Team!

Best wishes,

Mrs. Almey, Ms. Paterson, Mrs. Rees and Mr. Ward.









Message from the PTFA



It's been a busy term with lots of fun events for the children to enjoy. From annual events like the Fund 'Raisin' Challenge and the Christmas discos, to new events like the Christmas craft sessions and festive biscuit decorating.

As usual the children absolutely loved our Elfridges shop and it was a joy for us volunteers to see their happy faces as they carefully selected your presents - we hope you like them!

There are more fun events to look forward to in the Spring term which we'll be emailing about in the new year.

In the meantime, the PTFA would like to thank everyone for their support in 2024, especially our amazing volunteers without whom the events couldn't take place.

We wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and look forward to seeing you for another busy year of fundraising events in 2025!

Winter Reading Challenge



Take on the Winter Mini Challenge now!

Read anything you like between 1st December – 20th February, review books on your profile and UNLOCK REWARDS along the way!

Achieve something amazing this winter.

Make your own penguin and more with the Marvellous Makers – click on each character on the News page to find fun how-to's.

[Create your profile](#)

Winter Mini Challenge
Marvellous Makers

READING Celebrating 100 years CREATE! The Reading Agency

Illustrations by Natalie Quirk and logo artwork by Louise Everett. All © The Reading Agency 2024.

Leicestershire libraries are running a Winter Reading Challenge. The Winter Mini Challenge continues with the theme of Marvellous Makers from the summer challenge. The challenge has already started and runs until the 16th of February.

The Winter Mini Challenge is an online reading challenge you can join from 1 December 2024 to 20 February 2025! Are you ready to take it on?

Taking part in the Winter Mini Challenge is easy: Sign up at [Summer Reading Challenge](#) to create an online profile (if you took part in Marvellous Makers online this summer you might have a profile already)

Read at least 3 books over the holidays. Rate and review the books on the Winter Mini Challenge website to unlock a limited edition virtual badge and a special Winter Mini Challenge certificate to print off and keep.

Upcoming dates



Tuesday 7th January- School open for Spring Term 1

Wednesday 15th January- Young Voices performance - BP Pulse Birmingham

Saturday 18th January- Cross Country Event: Brookvale Groby. 9.30-12pm

Monday 20th January- PTFA Meeting at Burbage Infant school- 7.30pm

Monday 27th January- PTFA Quiz

Tuesday 28th January- Year 6 trip to Warning Zone.

Wednesday 5th February- PTFA Movie Night

Friday 14th February- PTFA Non- uniform day

Friday 14th February- Last day of term

Monday 24th February- School re-opens for Spring term 2.

Wednesday 26th February- SEND reviews

Wednesday 5th February- Share our learning- 3.30- 4pm.

Wednesday 12th March- Parents Evening

Thursday 13th March- Parents Evening

Wednesday 9th April- PTFA Egg rolling

Friday 11th April- Last day of term.