



Monkton Church of England Primary School

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Thursday 14th December 2023

Dear Monkton Family,

In 20 years of being in education, I can honestly say I've never known a more challenging couple of terms than the ones we have just had. Lack of funding from the government plus a dire need for more SEN provision in Kent has led to the landscape in mainstream schools looking very different to how they once were. However, despite this, I can also honestly say that the last couple of terms have been the most rewarding of my career. I am so so proud of what the children have achieved and I'm so very proud of the staff, helpers and parents here, who work tirelessly to ensure our children flourish and get the education they deserve both academically and socially.

At the beginning of the year, the staff discussed how we could make this year extra special for the children. The common consensus was that we need our curriculum to be inspirational and ambitious and flood it with as many experiences as we can to help the children learn from the awe and wonder that they see first-hand. I'm in no doubt that we are achieving this and well on our way to surpassing our targets! So far this year, we have had Ancient Greek workshops in school, a trip to the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, a morning out at the theatre to watch *The Gruffalo's Child* and a visit to Dover Museum to see the bronze age boat and craft our own out of clay. We've had grandparents in school to play old, traditional games with the children, as well as the children getting the opportunity to play the newer games such as Dobble! We've also been shelter building in the playground and demonstrating to families how the shelters stay waterproof. We've even zoomed in to the V&A museum for a live 'Aladdin dancing' lesson. Honestly, this is just the tip of the iceberg! It's been a great couple of terms and the staff here are really looking forward to what 2024 will bring (we're not wishing Christmas away though!).

Staffing

Unfortunately, due to personal reasons, Mrs Toland will no longer be with us as our Pastoral TA. I am however, delighted to announce that Ms Susan Allen will be starting this role in January. Her job will be a hybrid role as she will be a class TA in the morning and then will take groups in the afternoon focusing on well-being and helping children feel happy about themselves and everything around them. This has enabled us to appoint a new Teaching Assistant. Mrs Kelly Hodgson will be starting with us in January and will be a TA in Years 5 and 6 in the mornings and then in EYFS during the afternoons. We are very much looking forward to January and Mrs Hodgson starting with us.



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Monkton's Got Talent

I couldn't write a letter to you without mentioning yesterday's Monkton's Got Talent. Everyone here has been blown away by the incredible talents of the children. The heats were fabulous and the final yesterday was absolutely breath-taking. The staff were beaming from ear to ear afterwards and I hope the children who took part, whether winning or not, can hold their heads up high and be incredibly proud of themselves for not only getting up on stage in front of hundreds of people, but also for being brave enough to share their talents. We will definitely now make this a yearly Christmas event! Well done to everyone involved. I wonder if the children could perform in front of parents in the new year at some point?! The Monkton Variety Show!!!

PTA

I want to say a special thank you to Mrs Rebecca Tanner and the PTA team as they have made significant contributions this year which has enabled us to make our curriculum even more inspirational and ambitious. The PTA have donated money towards all trips and experiences in order to keep costs down and events more feasible. Thank you so much!

I think that's enough from me. From all of us here at Monkton Church of England Primary School, have a lovely Christmas and we'll see you in January! Oh, and thank you for our gifts - amazingly generous and you really don't have to but it is lovely to receive a little Chrimbo bonus - we'll be eating choc for breakfast, lunch and dinner and for the next 6 months, which we are all loving!

Kind regards,



Mr C. Marston

Head of School



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