



St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

Prepare the way of the Lord

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19 November 2024

Dear Parent / Carer

I am writing to let you know about the incredible Christmas charity initiatives we have planned for this year. It would be lovely if any families who are willing and able to help in any way could donate what they can to the following causes over the festive period.

- ❖ Firstly, our school has been approached by Home Instead Care Company in Leigh and asked to take part in their Christmas initiative '**Santa for a Senior**'. The initiative seeks to ensure that our elderly community members experience the magic and warmth of the Christmas season. It is a simple, yet effective concept that involves collecting and delivering thoughtful gifts to senior citizens living within our local community.



Senior citizens tend to experience loneliness and isolation during the Christmas season especially if living alone. The thoughtful gifts that are donated will be delivered to seniors who live in assisted living facilities, nursing homes or living in their own homes, but might be feeling isolated during the Christmas season.

Examples of gifts that we are looking to collect include: warm blankets, cozy socks, puzzles, crossword books, hats & scarves, non-perishable food items such as chocolates, toiletries or any other thoughtful item that would brighten a seniors day.

It would be absolutely amazing if you would consider donating to this cause. Any gifts dropped into school will receive a gift tag that the parent or child dropping off can write a small message on if they wish to make the gift giving a personal experience. We are asking that all gifts are donated unwrapped – this is so the charity knows which gifts are suitable for which senior etc but the gift tag will be kept with your kind donation.

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- ❖ In addition, we have partnered up with Byrchall High school for an amazing **Chocolate Orange Challenge** – whereby we collect Terry's Chocolate oranges and donate them to our fabulous NHS workers! This is a positive movement started by a man named Chris Lamb from St Helens whose son sadly died just before Christmas in 2010. The following is a quote from Chris:

[St Helens Chocolate Orange Man sets off to hand out more than 7,000 treats - Liverpool Echo](#)

Elliott was afflicted with Congenital Cytomegalovirus, which meant he spent much of his short life in the hospital. During Christmas 2008, while Elliott battled pneumonia, I gave a chocolate orange to one of his physiotherapists as a token of appreciation. When word spread about this gesture, I found myself purchasing more to thank all the healthcare workers caring for him. As I shared this story with others, they too began buying chocolate oranges for me to distribute. When Elliott passed away just before Christmas in 2010 at the age of 4, I didn't want to celebrate anymore. I didn't believe there was a future. Over time, however, I found new ways to cope with his loss and decided to honour his memory positively. Elliott's resilience and impact on my life shifted my focus to helping others, practising kindness, and being grateful each day. Approaching the first anniversary of his passing, I launched an appeal to collect as many chocolate oranges as possible for the following Christmas, aiming to thank those who dedicate their lives to caring for others.

We are therefore asking for donations of **Terry's Chocolate Oranges** to be dropped off in the chapel or into reception whereby we will join with Byrchall for the distribution of these. Last year Byrchall collected 721 oranges – they've challenged us to beat this number in our first year!

Come on team Eddies!!!!

- ❖ And finally, we are looking to collect new, unwrapped gifts in their original packaging to be donated in partnership with **Family Welfare Toy Appeal**. This initiative aims to bring extra joy to children and young people who may otherwise go without gifts at Christmas. Toys can be for any age but must be unused and still in original packaging with all safety labelling attached.



Families identified by school as being most in need will be prioritised when allocating gifts so any donations suitable for teenagers may directly benefit some of the pupils in our own school community this festive period.

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Further information can be found on the individual charity's websites, along with our school twitter feed over the coming weeks. We would kindly ask all donations to be dropped off either in reception or by pupils into the chapel by **Friday 13 December 2024** so that they can be organised into the relevant charities and dropped off intime before we close for half term.

Thank you so much in advance for your kindness and generosity in giving

We look forward to making a difference to the lives of those most in need over the coming weeks leading up to Christmas.



M Ruane

J Melling

Maria Ruane
School Chaplain

and

Janine Melling
Head of Drama