

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2025

2025/26 No: 13



01904 768325 (option 3)



[www.ralphbutterfieldprimary.co.uk](http://www.ralphbutterfieldprimary.co.uk)

## Acting Headteacher's Message

What a wonderful week it has been in school, filled with festive cheer from start to finish. Our EYFS and KS1 Nativities were absolutely delightful, the children shone on stage with expressive acting, confident musicianship and singing that filled the hall with joy. The choir represented the school wonderfully when they performed at Haxby Hall, spreading warmth to everyone who attended. Across the school, rehearsals are well underway for next week's Carol Services and the sound of singing has drifted through the corridors all week. We were also delighted to welcome Generation Groove, a community band based in Haxby, who led today's assembly by playing Christmas carols and sharing the different instruments within the band with the children. To top it all off, we ended the week with 'reindeers' dashing around the playground, bringing huge smiles and excitement. A truly magical week full of laughter, music and Christmas spirit!

### Plea - Christmas Cards by Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December



We are keen to continue strengthening our relationship with the residents of Haxby Hall and to help spread some Christmas cheer this year. If parent, carers or children are writing Christmas cards, we would be grateful if you could write an additional card and place it in an unsealed envelope. These can then be left in the basket at the office. We will then take some children to Haxby Hall to share the cards with the residents and brighten their day.

### Grandparents' Christmas Crafts Morning

To support the practicalities of having a large number of additional people in the school building, we are inviting grandparents to attend **either**:

- Session 1: **9:30am – 10:30am**
- or
- Session 2: **10:50am – 11:50am**



Grandparents will be welcome to move around the school within the session times if they have more than one grandchild to spend time with. Staff will be on hand to direct our guests between classrooms when requested. Grandparents are, of course, welcome to attend both sessions but would need to leave the school site at 10:30am and return at 10:50am, perhaps enjoying a coffee in the village in the meantime.

We also ask that grandparents do not use their mobile phones whilst on the school site. Thank you for sharing this request with them ahead of the day.

In order for us to efficiently support grandparents to the right classrooms and entrance door to the school on arrival, please ensure that they know **the class number and/or name of the class teacher** of their grandchild/ren's class. Here is a helpful reminder:

Year Group/s	Class	Teacher Name/s	Entrance Door
Reception	<b>1</b>	Mrs Daniel & Mrs Greenwood	Normal reception class entrance.
	<b>2</b>	Mrs Greenwood & Mrs Robinson	
Year 1 and Year 2	<b>3</b>	Miss Griffiths & Mr Merrall	Normal morning entrance.
	<b>4</b>	Miss Tattersley	
	<b>5</b>	Mrs Atkinson	Main school entrance.
Year 3 and Year 4	<b>6</b>	Miss Clapham	Main school entrance.
	<b>7</b>	Miss Hodgson & Mr Carpenter	
	<b>8</b>	Mr Daniel	
Year 5 and Year 6	<b>9</b>	Mr Tod	Entry to the left hand side of the school near the bike sheds.
	<b>10</b>	Mrs Aspery	
	<b>11</b>	Mr Bennett	

We look forward to meeting your child/ren's grandparent/s on the day, if they are able to come along.

I hope everyone is able to enjoy a lovely weekend.

Best wishes

*Helen Stephenson*

## A Message from our Governing Body

I am writing this after a visit to a very festive Ralph Butterfield! The decorations looked wonderful and I had the great privilege to watch the Year 1 and 2 nativity, complete with dozens of shepherds, excellent dancing angels, the eight kings and clear and confident narrators! The children were brilliant - confident and so clearly striving to do their absolute best. It was also wonderful to feel the school come together as a community, with parents and carers packing the hall to support their children and see the magic for themselves. Those little waves and shy smiles are what it's all about really. Magic.



In what feels like another world, in the streaming sunshine of July, I visited the school to discuss the PE curriculum with the brilliant Mrs Atkinson. Although there was much to be celebrated about the existing provision, not least the Platinum School Games Mark, the most exciting conversation was about the plans for the outside play at Ralph Butterfield, something that Mrs Stephenson and her team are also very busy planning behind the scenes. New play zones, equipment, training for staff and most importantly immense amounts of fun are all on the way in 2026...

Finally, on behalf of the Governors, I will take this chance to wish all our families and school staff a wonderful Christmas holiday. I hope you have a joyful few weeks and return happy and rested ready for the new year ahead!



Hugh Richards  
Parent Governor



A reminder that Christmas Dinner will be served on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, to those who have pre-booked. If you have not already pre-booked a school dinner for your child on this day you will need to send them with a packed lunch. Thank you.



[www.parentcarerforumyork.org](http://www.parentcarerforumyork.org)

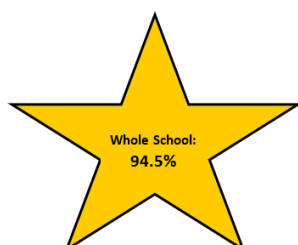


# NEWS LETTER

✉ [Connect@pcforyork.co.uk](mailto:Connect@pcforyork.co.uk)

Attached to this Newsletter

### This Week's Attendance











Thank you for supporting your child to attend school as much as possible.

Going to school **every day** can help your child experience new things.

For more information on school absence in York visit:  
[www.york.gov.uk/SchoolAttendance](http://www.york.gov.uk/SchoolAttendance)



## Seasonal Celebrations

w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Jumpers</b> We welcome children to replace their school sweatshirt/cardigan (only) with a Christmas jumper throughout the week. 
w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec 8.55am	<b>Christmas singing each morning</b> (8:55am) Parents/Carers are welcome to wait in the playground, after drop off, and listen to their child(ren)'s year group sing on the following days (weather permitting): <b>Reception:</b> Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> <b>Year 1 &amp; 2:</b> Mon 15 <sup>h</sup> <b>Years 3 - 6:</b> Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> 
w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Parties</b> <b>Please send your child in non uniform on the day of their party</b> <b>Reception:</b> Weds 17 <sup>th</sup> <b>Year 1 &amp; 2:</b> Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> <b>Year 3 &amp; 4:</b> Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> <b>Year 5 &amp; 6:</b> Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> 
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Grandparents' Christmas Craft Morning</b> (9:30am -10:30am <i>or</i> 10:50am - 11:50am) <b>Please send your child to school with something old and long sleeved, to cover their regular uniform.</b> <i>An old long sleeved top or an oversized shirt would be perfect.</i> 
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec 9.30pm	<b>UKS2 Carol Service</b> (Yr 5 - 6) <b>At St. Mary's Church, Haxby</b> 
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec	<b>Christmas Dinner</b> <b>Pre-booked meals only.</b> 
Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> Dec 1.30pm	<b>KS1 Carol Service</b> (Yr 1 & Yr 2) <b>At St. Mary's Church, Haxby</b> 
Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec 1.45pm	<b>LKS2 Carol Service</b> (Yr 3 - 4) <b>At St. Mary's Church, Haxby</b> 

Reminder: Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025 is the last day of the school term.

Children return to school on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

## Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)



We are so very proud of all the children's performance of A Wiggly Nativity, they certainly put on a sparkling performance. Their singing was beautiful and they have done an amazing job of learning their roles. Thank you again for all your help with the costumes and your kind messages after the show.

In **phonics**, we have been revising and consolidating the learning of the forty sounds taught since the beginning of the autumn term. What an achievement! We continue to work very hard to learn how to sound out and blend words so we can read them and segment words into different sounds that we can hear when writing.



In **literacy**, the children have used their fantastic segmenting skills to write a list for Father Christmas. Some children have also written captions and sentences, for example, **a red hat** or **It is a rag doll**. They are becoming much more confident at segmenting words to spell them and recognising sentences/phrases. Maybe they could write a Christmas list for you at home!

Christmas activities have continued in the Reception classrooms this week and we have enjoyed lots of Christmas learning in our independent play. The most popular activity this week has definitely been a scissor control activity where the children had to cut Father Christmas' beard following the lines carefully.



We are looking forward to lots more Christmas activities next week, including our Grandparents' Christmas craft morning (on Monday), and of course Christmas dinner and our Christmas party (on Wednesday) and don't forget Christmas singing on the playground (on Thursday)!

We will collect all reading books in next week for the holidays. Please return all **Little Wandle** reading books and **Reading for Pleasure** books on Monday. Thank you.



### Reminder

**Class 2** will **NOT** be visiting Haxby library next week. However, if families would like books returning before the holidays, please bring them into school on Thursday and we shall arrange for these to be returned on your behalf. Thank you

### Can you help?

Next week, we will require small cardboard tubes (toilet/kitchen roll sized) for a Christmas craft. If you are able to bring any to school, please hand them to your child's class teacher. Thank you

Thank you for your continued support.

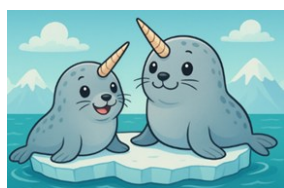
**Mrs Robinson, Mrs Daniel, Mrs Greenwood and the  
Reception team**





## Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2)

Wow, Key Stage 1! Weren't you fabulous during our nativity performances? It was wonderful to see all of the hard work and practice come together so well when we performed on Monday and Tuesday to our families and friends. There was music, signing, dancing, acting and narrating and we really shone like the Christmas stars that we are. The children who narrated or acted had such loud, clear, confident voices in front of an audience. The dancers were truly dazzling and the musicians did a fantastic job of playing in time with the music. It was a truly magical performance and we were all so proud of you. Thank you to all of the families who helped by supporting children with learning their lines and by providing such amazing costumes.



This week hasn't only been about the nativity story, though. In English, we have continued to be inspired by the story "The Runaway Iceberg". We created our very own versions by selecting our own arctic animals that could go on an adventure at sea when their iceberg cracked and broke off. The children have really enjoyed this story and worked independently on these versions. Their enjoyment really shone through in the language choices and sentence structures that they used. They wrote fabulously engaging stories that were a joy to read. Well done key Stage 1!

As you know, the children have been enjoying their dance lessons with Mrs Topliss this half term. This week, we were looking at the skill of artistic abstraction as we drew inspiration for our movements from watching a silk scarf and the way it fell to the floor. We worked with a partner to create a dance "sentence" of 6 elements, including all the things that we have worked on so far. This included balances, shapes, circular movements and pathways. We then watched each other's sequences, all the while thinking about how we could challenge ourselves and think creatively.



We would like to remind everyone that on Monday morning, adults are invited to stay in the playground after morning drop-off for a special Christmas singing performance from our Key Stage 1 children. They will be performing some of the nativity songs to help get us in the Christmas mood. Then, after that, we will be inviting our families into school to work with the children for our Grandparents Christmas Craft morning. We are really excited to share such a lovely experience with so many members of our families.

Well done Key Stage 1. There is just one magical week left to go before the holidays.

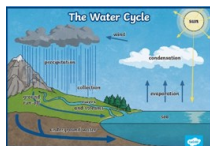
**Mrs Atkinson, Miss Griffiths, Miss Tattersley & Mr Merrall**





## Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 & 4)

In the penultimate week of the Autumn Term, despite the appearance of one or two mischievous elves and tinsel, the children have continued to display positivity, enthusiasm and focus towards their learning.



In geography, the children have continued to deepen their understanding of rivers. This week, the focus has been on the water cycle. The children learnt the various steps of the cycle including evaporation, condensation, precipitation and collection and they recalled the different states of matter

occurring in each of these stages. To demonstrate how the water cycle works, the children drew the steps on a sandwich bag. The sandwich bag was then taped to the window. Whilst on the window, the water began to evaporate and form droplets on the inside of the bag. When the droplets became large, or joined together with other droplets, they ran down the inside of the bag (precipitation) back into the water at the bottom (collection). The children thoroughly enjoyed seeing the process in action and now realise that puddles on the playground don't simply disappear by magic!



In English this week, the children have really impressed us with their independent writing skills. They were set the challenge of writing their own non-chronological report all about the River Nile. After writing a really engaging introduction to hook the reader, they then went on to write paragraphs, remembering to include appropriate sub-headings, about the

River Nile's location and the African countries it flows through, its two tributaries, the source and mouth and, finally, the flooding season in both Ancient Egyptian times and nowadays. To complete their written work, they wrote a conclusion which reminded the reader what they had learnt about and encouraged them to impress their friends with their knowledge of the longest river in the world. Well done to everyone for trying their very best to showcase what they have been learning about in lessons over the last few weeks.

This half-term, all three Lower Junior classes have visited Haxby Hall. They have shared songs, dances and even their best jokes and the residents have loved hearing all about what the children have been learning about back in school. Just watching two different generations coming together to chat and laugh with each other is a truly magical and heart-warming experience and the positive feedback received from their staff about all our children was lovely to hear. After Christmas, other classes throughout the school will have an opportunity to visit as well and I'm sure they will get as much out of it as the Lower Junior children clearly have. A big thank you to all the adult volunteers who have accompanied us - we couldn't do it without your support!



As always, please do come and speak with us if you have any queries, questions or would like to share any news with us.

**We hope that you have a lovely weekend.**

**Mr Daniel, Mr Carpenter, Miss Clapham and Miss Hodgson**



## Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 & 6)

As part of our work in RE, we have been learning about how different faiths use their place of worship and why these spaces matter to the people who visit them. This week, we focused on Christianity and explored the many reasons a church holds such importance for Christians. We discussed how a church is not only a place where believers gather to worship, pray and celebrate key festivals, but also a centre of community life. We found that churches often act as community hubs, offering emotional and physical support to those who need it. Activities such as food banks, support groups, charity events and social gatherings all help to bring people together and strengthen the sense of belonging within the local area. Additionally, we learnt that some Christians feel close to God not only in a church building but also in places of natural beauty. For them, landscapes such as mountains, forests or the seashore can hold a similar spiritual significance, providing a peaceful space for reflection and a sense of connection with creation.



In our DT sessions, we have been focused on bringing our own steam locomotive designs to life. Before we could begin building, we spent time creating detailed technical drawings and blueprints to guide our ideas. Once our plans were complete, we moved on to the practical stage of the project. We have been busy measuring materials with accuracy, cutting each piece to size and assembling the different parts of our design. A great deal of care has gone into shaping the boiler, cab and wheels so that they not only look realistic but also fit together securely. After this, we used glue and other joining techniques to construct our 3D steam locomotives, watching our sketches gradually transform into solid models. The project has challenged us to develop precision, patience and creativity.

As we come to the end of reading the Oliver Twist novel in our guided reading sessions, we have spent time reflecting on the journey we have taken through the story. Over the past few weeks, we have followed Oliver from the harsh conditions of the workhouse to the dangers of Fagin's gang and finally towards the safety and kindness he deserves. Along the way, we have explored Dickens' language, examined the historical setting and discussed how the characters' actions shape Oliver's fate.



On the afternoon of Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December, we will be having our UKS2 Christmas Party

Please do not hesitate to contact us or speak to us directly if you have any questions or concerns.

**Mrs Aspery, Mr Bennett and Mr Tod**

