

## The Owl - December 2019

Time flies is a phrase pertinent to school at the moment! The staff and children while clearly looking forward to a well-earned rest, have often commented about how quickly this term has gone. I feel so fortunate to be part of Reed First School. I have had a wonderful first term and feel very much at home.

I would like to thank every single member of our school community for the wonderful support they have given me. Change is never an easy part of life but with change comes many exciting opportunities. The children and staff in particular have been very open to welcoming new ideas and initiatives. We are very excited about the future of our school. To achieve our aims, we really are working together in order to help every pupil learn for life.

Each month, I will be reporting in the Owl on some of our priorities which will continue to raise standards in the school. The first of these can be found later on in this issue. By understanding what we are working on and why, I hope that you will feel a deeper connection to the school and your child's learning journey as we look towards a new year.

Best wishes,

Mrs Wittich



### Values in Action

Thank you to all of those children who noticed after a blustery weekend that our chess pieces and toys had blown around the playground. It was a pleasure to see so many of our children showing **independence** and tidying up without being asked to. You also showed great **respect** for our school by wanting to keep it tidy.

Thank you!



## DIARY DATES

### **December 2019**

17<sup>th</sup> GenR8 assembly 1.30pm

19<sup>th</sup> Party day and a visit from Santa

20<sup>th</sup> Celebration assembly with mince pies and mulled wine at 9.15am

20<sup>th</sup> Christmas service at St Mary's 1.15pm

Term ends after church at 2pm

### **January 2020**

6<sup>th</sup> INSET day school closed to pupils

7<sup>th</sup> Term begins for pupils

7<sup>th</sup> West End in Schools Pantomime

8<sup>th</sup> Parent forum 6pm – 7pm

11<sup>th</sup> Community Library 10-12 noon

13<sup>th</sup> FoRS meeting 9.15 – 10.30am (school hall)

14<sup>th</sup> PE club begins

15<sup>th</sup> Swimming begins

17<sup>th</sup> Sting club begins

### **February 2020**

8<sup>th</sup> Community Library 10-12 noon

10<sup>th</sup> Parent consultations

10<sup>th</sup> Feeling Good week

14<sup>th</sup> Home-Start Dress Down Day

17<sup>th</sup> Half term

27<sup>th</sup> Fruit workshop

## **Parent Forum**

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm**

We will discuss the communication between classes and home and also how to encourage more parents to get involved in school life.

As usual, we welcome any feedback whenever you have something to say!

## **Sleepy Shepherd**



What a wonderful show the children put on to tell the Christmas story. The children really enjoyed themselves and I am sure will be singing the songs well into the new year to keep you entertained!

As usual the children showcased our school beautifully and the staff showed what a brilliant team they are. I had so many lovely comments from the audience many of whom now feel ready for Christmas!



We were so proud of all of the children - from our Year 4s who did a fantastic job of welcoming our audience and showing them to their seats to our very youngest sheep and shepherds who sang their little hearts out!

It takes a huge amount of courage to sing or speak on your own in front of an audience so particular congratulations to our narrators, soloists and duets.

### **School admissions**

Parents wishing to take up a Reception place for their child here must apply by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020 regardless of whether they are already accessing our Nursery. Please make sure you complete the online application in good time. Similarly, parents of children in Year 4 need to apply for a place at their chosen Middle School by the same date. Apply online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)



### **School Priorities**

Part of the leadership of a school, involves identifying areas to develop which lead to the improvement of the school. One of the areas which we have been working on this term is to raise standards in the teaching and learning of writing across the school.

We have developed a sequence of teaching for writing across Key Stage One and Two which can be found in the English curriculum section of our school website. It will ensure the children are immersed in quality language rich texts and experiences to inspire a range of writing experiences.

While the expectations set by the teachers are rising, so are the expectations the children set themselves. They are making super use of resources which are found now in every class, such as common word flash cards to check spelling themselves. They are also responding well to verbal and written feedback from the teachers and are enjoying seeing the difference a bit of editing makes. They understand that feedback is to help not criticise and that we all learn from our mistakes!

### **Aha, aho, it's a Gruffalo!**



### **Studies show that reading for pleasure makes a big difference to children's educational performance.**

Every child at Reed First School is expected to read at home five days each week. In order to enjoy reading, the texts your child brings home with them should be one which they are able to read with near fluency. Struggling to read is not fun and so not enjoyable. If your child struggles with a book from school, please let their teacher know.

Reading for pleasure in children is inspired by experiences. Does your child choose to read? Do they enjoy stories read to them? Do they have favourite picture books which they can 'read' from memory? I can recite *The Gruffalo* (as can my children), having read it at bedtime repeatedly to them many years ago! Remember though, reading doesn't have to involve a book. If they love to cook; they will need to read a recipe, if they love to build lego; they will need to read and follow instructions, if they support a rugby team; they will want to read how they got on in news articles in print and online.

We are trying to give the children as many opportunities as possible to be inspired to read at school. For example, enjoying a pantomime to inspire the reading of the retold tale, plans to meet a real author, daily story telling sessions where teachers share their passion for reading and use of children from the Junior class to be our resident librarians to recommend books to borrow.

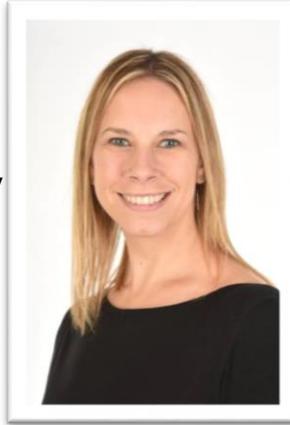
What could you do to inspire reading for pleasure at home?



## Governor News

Hello, my name is Shelley Ward and I have been a Parent Governor for nearly three years.

I am the Chair of the Curriculum and Standards committee and am also the Safeguarding Governor for the school.



I work in the Early Years sector and have a real passion for working with young children. I love getting children outdoors and muddy which has probably come from my many years as a Cub Scout Leader.

I live in Royston with my husband and three boys, one of whom is at Reed in Year 3 at the moment. I love to travel, read and eat biscuits!

## PARKING

Members of the school community are increasingly concerned by the number of times we have seen inconsiderate and at times dangerous parking. Please respect the no parking signs and staff only parking signs at all times of the day.



Although the children are not allowed to run out of the school gate, there are small children coming and going both on foot and wheeled vehicles. No Parking signs show the dangerous spots.

Please park further up the road away from our gates and our neighbours' driveways.

### Adverse Weather

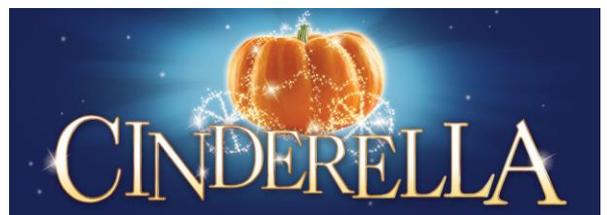
Closure of the school is always a last resort and any decision will be taken after an assessment of risk and any guidance given by the local authority. If it is possible to give advance warning, you will be contacted by ParentMail or letter. Out of school hours, parents will be notified via the school closure notification system, if parents have not yet signed up for this new system, please do so as soon as possible, at:

[member.everbridge.net/index/892807736725489](https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736725489)



## And finally...Oh no he didn't...

Don't forget our exciting start to the new year when we spend our first week in *Fairy Tale Land* enjoying the story of Cinderella. Thanks to FoRS for the opportunity.



We would like to wish you all a restful holiday and we look forward to seeing you all in 2020!