

Dear Parents and carers



Autumn Term Newsletter 7 – Friday 15th December 2023

On behalf of the whole school community, we would like to wish you a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year. We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support as we aim to provide the best education that we can for each child who attends Manor Court Community Primary School. We look forward to seeing you and your children on Wednesday 3rd January 2024.

Key Dates

December 2023	
Friday 15 th December	Last day of the Autumn Term before the Christmas holidays
January 2024	
Wednesday 3 rd January	School reopens for the Spring Term.
Monday 8 th January	After School Enrichment Clubs begin
Thursday 11 th January	Foundation phonics course (see previous letter sent home)
Friday 19 th January	FMCA Quiz at 6pm in the school hall



Manor Court Magical Christmas Tour – A message from Mr Clode

What a day we all had on the Magical Mystery Christmas Bus Tour! All the children were buzzing with excitement, and it was great to see them so happy and excited all the way round. It was also great to see so many familiar faces on our journey around the town for us to wave to – thank you all for your support.

Mr Talmage's 'Ho Ho Ho's!' were ringing out across the town and so many people were wishing us all a Happy Christmas in return. A huge, big thank you to Lisa at Barrons for arranging Father Christmas to join us and a big thank you to Father Christmas himself – it made it so special for all the children.

Also, a big thank you to the FMCA as well for providing the gifts the children received from Father Christmas. It's also fair to say some of the staff enjoyed it as much, if not more, than some of the children!

2020 Reindeers on the playground....2021 The Living Nativity on the field....2022 Advent Alpacas and Father Christmas landing on a field in a helicopter....2023 Magical Christmas Bus Tour...2024...????



Key Stage 2 Carol Services

On Monday 11th December the Key Stage 2 children led us in two fantastic Carol Services. The children led us so wonderfully through the Christmas story; they sang with gusto, read the Bible readings clearly and confidently and listened to the Christmas message shared by Reverend John. The choir, led brilliantly by Miss Prater and Miss Smith, also sang a fantastic new repertoire of Christmas carols and songs to the busy audiences.



Christmas lunches

Last week over 332 delicious Christmas Dinners (on Thursday and Friday) were provided by our catering team for the children in Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 whose parents ordered one for them. The children enjoyed sitting together in the school hall, listening to Christmas music, telling jokes from their Christmas crackers, and getting into the Christmas spirit. We are extremely grateful to the FMCA who agreed to pay the price of the additional meals.

A message from Dr Reed – Chair of our local governing body

Christmas at school is always a special time, not only the nativity play, the jumpers and glitter but the children's enthusiasm for a time that can be a bit of a strain on adults. I hope the in the whirl of arrangements and worries of quite how the season will work you get a moment to reflect on your past year with your children or child.

At the school we always try to remember that time is different for children, as they are developing at such a pace and they have so few years. I'm now old enough that a fifth of my life is decade, rather than the year it is for some of the younger children. Please take a moment to reflect on all you and your family have achieved in this year, the good times and that you are here at another Christmas. As a festival of birth and hope, it is a good time to look forward to all that is to come.

On behalf of all the governors I would like to thank you for all your support, all the kindness and consideration you have shown the staff and for trusting your children's education to us. I don't know what 2024 will bring but I'm confident that together we will be successful in nurturing and educating all the children involved in our school community. Our very best wishes to you and those you love.

We take child protection extremely seriously at our school. If you have a concern, you can speak to any of the school's designated and trained Child Protection officers: Mr Clode, Miss Gregory, Mrs Terry, Mrs Wilkins, or Mr Talmage. Alternatively, you can ring Children Social Care on 0300 123 2224 or email childrens@somerset.gov.uk

2024-2025 Term Dates

We have set our term dates for the 2024-2025 academic year. These can be found at the end of this newsletter and on the parent section of our school website.

Christmas Holiday Club

We appreciate that the Christmas holidays have fallen early this year and that many parents will need to work in the week proceeding Christmas. For the past few school holidays our staff have been running paid for childcare for Manor Court children alongside holiday provision sponsored for FSM children by Healthy Happy Holidays.

We will once more be offering this to all parents (not entitled to FSM) at a cost of £15 a day, for the hours between 09:00 and 15:00 on Monday 18th, Tuesday 19th, Wednesday 20th and Thursday 21st December. This provision includes breakfast and a day of activities, including sports, baking and crafts. If you would like your child to attend, please book through the office and give your payment to the staff on the day.

Remote learning in case of the need to close our school this winter

We are approaching the time of the year when the weather becomes more unsettled and schools may require closing because of poor weather, treacherous driving conditions or heating failures. If we do require to shut the school at any point, work packs are available for all children to complete at home (printed copies were sent home last week in the storms) and can be found in the year group specific page on our school website to be downloaded and printed at home.

Please make sure that your child is equipped with the correct clothing for cold weather.

<https://www.manorcourt.somerset.sch.uk/remote-learning-in-case-of-school-closure/>



Holiday breakfast scheme

Our friends at St Mary's Church and The Lords Larder are offering free breakfast bags that will last each week of the school holidays. This initiative will be held in every school holiday and will start on Monday 18th December. Please see their poster at the end of this newsletter for further information.



Y1 and Y2 performance of the Higgledy-Piggledy Nativity

We are so pleased that the Y1 and Y2 children were able to perform each of their three scheduled performances of their Christmas Show – the 'Higgledy-Piggledy Nativity', as a result of the storms last Thursday, we were a bit worried, but thanks to the staff members the shows were able to go on. The children have all performed brilliantly, singing and acting with great confidence to over two hundred audience members.

Foundation Stage Nativity

We witnessed a lot of 'Razzle and a Dazzle' this week as the Foundation Stage children confidently performed their nativity to two large audiences (on Monday and Tuesday afternoon). We are extremely proud of how clearly they said their lines and sang to the audience, and we were delighted that the children had no stage fright at all.



Pupil Premium

The pupil premium is additional funding that the Government provides for each child who they believe may be disadvantaged in achieving their best in education. At Manor Court Community Primary School, we provide high quality education and enrichment opportunities for each pupil regardless of ability or background. However, it is useful to receive this funding for all children entitled to it. If your children are entitled to free school meals or a member of the household is currently in receipt, or has been in the last six years, of Universal credit then please do apply through this hyperlink or ask in the school office for a form that we can send off for you.

https://secure1.somerset.gov.uk/forms/PortalShowForm.asp?fm_formalias=freeschoolmeal

Online safety news from Miss Hamilton

This is a really useful toolkit for parents/carers who may be unsure about what parental features are available on their children's devices. Put together by Internet Matters and Tesco it takes around 8 minutes to answer a few questions and then receive a tailored toolkit.

All details about the toolkit can be found at <https://www.internetmatters.org/little-digital-helps-toolkit/>



Y1 pantomime trip

Each of our Y1 children enjoyed a trip to the theatre in Yeovil on Monday where they watched the performance of the pantomime Cinderella. The children had front row seats and enjoyed participating in the pantomime in all of the traditional ways.

We take child protection extremely seriously at our school. If you have a concern, you can speak to any of the school's designated and trained Child Protection officers: Mr Clode, Miss Gregory, Mrs Terry, Mrs Wilkins, or Mr Talmage. Alternatively, you can ring Children Social Care on 0300 123 2224 or email childrens@somerset.gov.uk



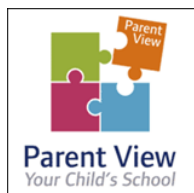
Santa Dash

Last Friday each child from the Foundation Stage to Y6 participated in the inaugural Manor Court Santa Dash. The children had to run two laps of the school building, from the KS1 playground across the KS2 playground and finishing at the KS1 playground. The children loved chasing our two Santa's and completing some friendly competitive sport. The children participating in this together will be excellent evidence as part of our next application for reaccreditation for our Sports Award.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everybody. In terms of keeping children safe, please "Don't think "What if I'm wrong Think... "What if I am right" If you have any concerns about a pupil, you should report this to a member of staff immediately. If you feel a pupil is at risk or a subject of abuse, you must contact the Designated Safeguarding Team immediately. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Clode and Deputy Designated Safeguard leads are Miss Gregory, Mrs Terry, Mrs Wilkins, and Mr Talmage. The school Safeguarding and Child Protection Governor is Mrs Sue Wakeman.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility



Ofsted Parent view

Parent view is a way in which Ofsted surveys the parents of children within a school to find out their views of the school and how it can be improved further. These opinions become part of the overall judgment of the school. If you would like to pass on your opinions to Ofsted, please complete the survey on the parent view website. The website can be found at www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk

Have we got your correct details? – A message from the school office

To keep your child safe, please make sure that if you have changed your telephone number, email address or home address that you remember to let the school office know so that we can update our records.

Choir performance at the Mayor's Christmas Concert

Our school choir had a busy Monday performing in venues around Chard. They spent the afternoon performing for the residents of OakLodge and in the evening they performed at the Mayors Christmas concert alongside students from Holyrood, Coombe St Nicholas, and Redstart. The choir performed four songs: The Winter Song, When Christmas comes to town, One Moment, and Afraid of Heights.



Appointment of a Sports Coach – A message from Miss Kitto

We are delighted to inform you that after an interview last week, we have appointed Louis McCarten (formally of Yeovil Town Community Sports Trust) as our new PE coach. He will start with us from January and will be with us initially until the end of the academic year. It is extremely likely that this will be extended past this point. Louis will teach sports throughout the school, oversee a number of clubs, continue our application for the Sports Mark Gold and hopefully use his coaching skills to help the children win a few football matches!

EYC news from Sophie

Thank you to everyone who attended our Christmas party! The children had a wonderful time, and we hope that they enjoyed our special visitor. It has been lovely to see all of the children get stuck into all the different Christmas crafts and activities over the last few weeks. We were very lucky to watch the two nativities in the main school and every preschool child impressed us with how well they sat and listened. Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year. We will see you all from Wednesday 3rd of January!



Come and join us in September 2024

The application process for starting Foundation Stage in September 2024 opened recently through the Somerset County Council portal. If you would like your child to join our happy, caring, fun and high academically achieving (the highest in Chard for several consecutive years) school then do apply through this link <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/apply-to-start-school-for-the-first-time/> If you would like to look around before making your final decision, please contact the school office to make an appointment with Mrs Terry, Mr Clode, or Mr Talmage



Canal and River Trust Assembly

Our pupils all had a special water safety online assembly on Monday hosted by Eliza from the Canal and River Trust. They were taught to always remember to stay SAFE near water: Stay Away From the Edge.

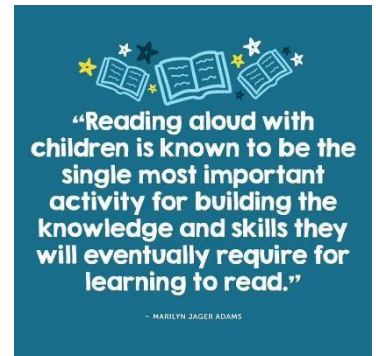
Reading expectations – A message from Mrs Terry

At Manor Court Community Primary School, we seek to ensure that children are supported to be confident, lifelong learners with a love of reading. Reading plays a very important role in developing children culturally, emotionally, and socially and we believe literature plays a key role in such development. Reading enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and build on what they already know.

In school children in KS2 are heard reading on a 1:1 basis at least once a week by their class teacher and Learning Support staff and this is much more frequent in Foundation Stage and KS1. Those pupils not at an expected reading level are heard daily. The EYFS and Key Stage 1 reading books follow a clear progression of banding, ensuring fluency is developed. This academic year, you may find your child has a book sent home that they have already read at school, and this is something that is now promoted in all schools. The more a child reads, the larger their vocabulary becomes. When a child reads or hears the same book multiple times, they become familiar and comfortable with a greater number of words. Fluency is the ability to read text “accurately, quickly, and with expression.”

Repetitive reading allows a child to read without stumbling or stopping, and reading time becomes more pleasant for everyone. Once a child masters one book, it makes moving on to another more appealing. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand all the components of a story — from plot to character development to symbolism. Comprehension is “the essence” of reading. Each time your child reads or hears a book read to them; they learn more about the story itself. Each passage through the text or illustrations allows them to dive deeper into the story’s meaning, preparing them for more complex narratives down the road. Children who progress from the banded scheme to ‘free readers’ can access their class library, and the school library, and can be supported to select appropriate books by staff. Pupils are encouraged to take home fiction and non-fiction texts.

Children are expected to read at home 5 times a week, ideally daily, as this helps to develop confident and fluent readers. We would recommend 20 minutes of reading a day. Children’s reading logs are checked to ensure this is taking place. Where children are not reading the required amount in school, they are invited to attend a lunchtime reading club. There is also the opportunity to read to a member of staff at Homework Club and After-school Club.



Attendance our school expectations

Pupil attendance and punctuality is a key focus and priority within our school. Individual attendance will be monitored and reviewed on a bi-weekly basis. We would like to kindly remind parents that the school’s expectations on individual pupil attendance is 95% and above, with the aim of having 100% pupil attendance. Should your child fall behind the school’s expectations a monitoring process is triggered, and we may ask you to come into school to discuss your child’s attendance with us. Should you have any questions or concerns relating to your child’s attendance please do not hesitate to contact me within the school.



Y5 orienteering activities

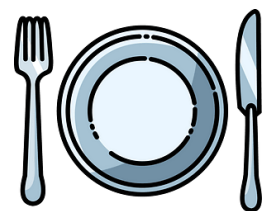
The year five children enjoyed their activities as part of their orienteering learning for this half term on Monday. They had to use teamwork to find hidden letters, which they then had to unscramble to spell key words!

Hot meals parental feedback – A message from Mrs Hunt

Our onsite kitchen is now providing a hot meal for over 190 children each weekday and it appears to us that the children within the school are enjoying the meal that is being offered to them and parents have selected for them through ParentPay.

We would like to ask parents to provide feedback, positive or negative, as to the food that we are providing to your child. If you would like to share this feedback with us, please do email the school office.

If for any reason you are unhappy with the meals provided, please do email the office and we can try to rectify this.





Nut Free School

Can we please remind you that we have children with nut allergies who attend our school and that we are a nut free school and that children should not be bringing nuts or nut-based snacks into school. This does include chocolate spread in sandwiches.

Chatterbooks

Our Chatterbooks groups visited Chard Library yesterday morning to return the books that they have borrowed and select new ones for their Christmas holiday reading!



The FMCA needs you!

The FMCA is a group of parent volunteers who spend time raising money (whilst having fun) for activities or equipment to be used for the children in the school. The work that they do is vital, and the committee needs more volunteers to help them achieve more for the children.

If you would like to find out more about their work and how you can get involved, please do email them on contactfmca@gmail.com or contact them through their Facebook page.



Wrap around care telephone number

The telephone number for our wrap around care provision (breakfast & after school club) is **07471 412147** Please save this telephone number to your phone if you use wrap around care. Breakfast club is held in the school hall and our after-school wrap around care is held in The Den (a room in the Y1 block). To ensure that we have the correct ratios please ensure that you contact the school office the day before you require club. We appreciate that emergencies sometimes happen.

Thank you for your continued support.

We wish you a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Mr Luke Talmage
Headteacher

Mr Alan Clode
Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Leader



Manor Court Community Primary School School Terms and Holidays 2024-2025

September 2024						October 2024						November 2024								
M		2	9	16	23	30	Mo			7	14	21	28	M			4	11	18	25
Tu		3	10	17	24		Tu		1	8	15	22	29	Tu			5	12	19	26
W		4	11	18	25		We		2	9	16	23	30	W			6	13	20	27
Th		5	12	19	26		Th		3	10	17	24	31	Th			7	14	21	28
F		6	13	20	27		Fr		4	11	18	25		F		1	8	15	22	29
Sa		7	14	21	28		Sa		5	12	19	26		Sa		2	9	16	23	30
Su	1	8	15	22	29		Su		6	13	20	27		Su		3	10	17	24	
December 2024						January 2025						February 2025								
M		2	9	16	23	30	M			6	13	20	27	M			3	10	17	24
Tu		3	10	17	24	31	Tu			7	14	21	28	Tu			4	11	18	25
W		4	11	18	25		W		1	8	15	22	29	W			5	12	19	26
Th		5	12	19	26		Th		2	9	16	23	30	Th			6	13	20	27
F		6	13	20	27		F		3	10	17	24	31	F			7	14	21	28
Sa		7	14	21	28		Sa		4	11	18	25		Sa		1	8	15	22	
Su	1	8	15	22	29		Su		5	12	19	26		Su		2	9	16	23	
March 2025						April 2025						May 2025								
M		3	10	17	24	31	M			7	14	21	28	M			5	12	19	26
Tu		4	11	18	25		Tu		1	8	15	22	29	Tu			6	13	20	27
W		5	12	19	26		W		2	9	16	23	30	W			7	14	21	28
Th		6	13	20	27		Th		3	10	17	24		Th		1	8	15	22	29
F		7	14	21	28		F		4	11	18	25		F		2	9	16	23	30
Sa	1	8	15	22	29		Sa		5	12	19	26		Sa		3	10	17	24	31
Su	2	9	16	23	30		Su		6	13	20	27		Su		4	11	18	25	
June 2025						July 2025						August 2025								
M		2	9	16	23	30	M			7	14	21	28	M			4	11	18	25
Tu		3	10	17	24		Tu		1	8	15	22	29	Tu			5	12	19	26
W		4	11	18	25		W		2	9	16	23	30	W			6	13	20	27
Th		5	12	19	26		Th		3	10	17	24	31	Th			7	14	21	28
F		6	13	20	27		F		4	11	18	25		F		1	8	15	22	29
Sa		7	14	21	28		Sa		5	12	19	26		Sa		2	9	16	23	30
Su	1	8	15	22	29		Su		6	13	20	27		Su		3	10	17	24	31

Key:	
	School Holiday
	Bank Holiday
	Term Time
	Inset Days

Term dates summary:	
Term 1: 03 September – 25 October 2024 (39 days)	
Term 2: 04 November – 20 December 2024 (35 days)	
Term 3: 06 January – 14 February 2025 (30 days)	
Term 4: 24 February – 04 April 2025 (30 days)	
Term 5: 22 April – 23 May 2025 (23 days)	
Term 6: 02 June – 23 July 2025 (38 days)	TOTAL = 195

Bank and public holidays 2024/25			
Christmas Day	25 December 2024	Easter Monday	21 April 2025
Boxing Day	26 December 2024	May Day Bank Holiday	05 May 2025
New Year's Day	01 January 2025	Spring Bank Holiday	26 May 2025
Good Friday	18 April 2025	Summer Bank Holiday	25 August 2025

Academy, Free Schools, Foundation & Voluntary Aided schools can set their own term dates and may differ from ours. Please check with the individual schools for their term dates.

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SCAN ME



ARMONICO
CONSORT

AC
Academy

Octagon Junior Choir

Wednesday | 5pm – 6:30pm | 7-12 years | £5 per week

The Octagon Junior Choir is for 7-12 year olds who love to sing. Come and learn a wide variety of music across different genres from musicals, pop, classical and everything in between! Our Octagon Junior Choir is run by qualified leaders and accompanied by a professional pianist. There are no auditions for taking part, the choir is open to all abilities and everyone is welcome.

The Octagon Theatre have partnered with renowned classical ensemble Armonico Consort, giving our choir the opportunity to perform at the Royal Albert Hall alongside professional musicians and choirs from across the country.


WESTLANDS
YEOVIL

OCTAGON
ACADEMY


OCTAGON
THEATRE
YEOVIL

Holiday Breakfast Scheme.

Holiday Breakfast Bags are arriving this Christmas Holiday.

Do you think it may help you and your family to start the day with a good solid breakfast?

We will give you a free, no questions asked bag/s, to last a week, which will contain everything that is needed, regardless of your family size.

Just turn up at the St Mary's Centre on Monday

18th Dec between 8.00 and 10.00

Saturday 23rd 8.00 and 10.00 and

Saturday 30th 8.00 and 10.00

Anyone from the family can come to pick them up.





Community Fridge Christmas Hours

Monday 25th

Closed

Tuesday 26th

Closed

Wednesday 27th

10am-12pm

Thursday 28th

10am-12pm

Friday 29th

10am-12pm

Saturday 30th

10am-12pm

Sunday 31st

Closed

Monday 1st

Closed