



# Meadows Newsletter

Issue 5

December 1st 2020

The Meadows  
Primary School

## Forthcoming dates

**Please do check the website regularly.**

**Full Term dates are on the website.**

<b>Christmas Activity Day</b>	Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> December (Non-uniform)
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Christmas Holidays	<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December - Friday 1<sup>st</sup> January</b> Staff INSET <b>4<sup>th</sup> January</b> Closed to pupils
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<b>Half Term</b>	<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February</b>
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December has arrived with all our minds understandably now looking forward to Christmas with mixed emotions I imagine. Whilst it is so uplifting to see the decorations and reminders of our much loved traditions, it will be a very different Christmas than we had hoped. Each and every family continues to face their own challenges, which we understand do impact your daily life. Here in school, the current restrictions mean that we have needed to reflect carefully on how we can celebrate the festive season, whilst adhering to all the government guidance.

Regrettably one of the most special traditions that we will all miss greatly this year is the Nativity play. This will be the first time in over 20 years that I have not had the pleasure of watching such a magical childhood moment. Both as a parent and a professional, I really do understand just how much these mean to parents, they are a milestone which we treasure for a lifetime. Clearly, we are unable to hold any type of performance currently as we remain under Tier 3 and the restrictions regarding singing are still in place. We of course face a further significant challenge with not having a school hall to use for singing in smaller groups. The classrooms are not large enough for any type of performance, which potentially could be recorded for parents.

However, our collaboration as a staff to find a compromise continues. We are determined to ensure the Christmas cheer and magic spreads far and wide in our school community.

## Christmas Video

We are planning to produce a short and improvised video, where all the children will sing a song. We will be decorating the undercover area on the Reception playground to create a festive scene for the children to enjoy. Our specialist music teachers: Mrs HB and Mrs Gault will assist us with a musical performance too. The restrictions do allow small groups of children to sing outside, so we shall endeavour to maximise this opportunity, however it is not intended to be a polished performance. The staff will also be appearing to add to the festive cheer! There will be next to zero rehearsal time, it will be intended to be improvised and a natural Christmas sing along that we can share with you through a recorded video link. We do have a handful of children who currently do not have permission to appear on our videos. I urge those parents to reconsider on this occasion, otherwise we will regrettably be unable to include them on the video footage. Of course, they will still participate but won't stand in shot of the camera. If you would like to amend your data consent, please do get in touch with Mrs Cooper. A reminder that the email address is: [office@meadowsprimary.shaw-education.org.uk](mailto:office@meadowsprimary.shaw-education.org.uk). The video recording will take place on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December.

## Christmas Activity Day

This will take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December during the school day. All children are invited to come dressed in festive clothes. As we are unable to accept donations of party food, we have reconsidered how we can still make the day special whilst adhering to Covid safe procedures.

Lunches will take the form of a plated party lunch consisting of sandwiches, crisps, a cake etc. Our catering provider will be able to provide this to all our children if they choose. Alternatively, children can bring a similar party packed lunch in from home. Regardless of if a child orders a lunch from school or not, they will eat together in their class bubbles. We will make the lunch extra special with crackers, party hats etc. We also shall purchase additional festive savoury and sweet snacks for the children to enjoy throughout the day. We shall also provide drinks for the children too and seeing as it will be Christmas, we shall on this occasion ensure there is a selection of drinks that we know the children really enjoy ....

We've got lots of party games and activities planned also. As we can't ask children to bring in small amounts of money to purchase a raffle ticket or have a go at one of the games, instead we are asking parents for a contribution of £3.00. This will cover the cost of all the activities and treats. Please note that for children in Key

Stage 2 who wish to purchase a school party lunch, there will be an additional cost of £2.15. Both the party donation and the lunches should be paid on Parent Mail as usual. Any money left over from donations will be used to buy additional reading books for the classroom collections.



### Christmas Card Reminder



We really do want to facilitate the sending of Christmas cards. We know the children really do enjoy this tradition, so again we have reflected on how we can do this safely. You will be aware of the procedure we have put into place.

Cards can be sent into school starting from Tuesday 1st December until Thursday 10th December. They should place them into the allocated post box. Then the cards will be given to the correct classroom on Monday 14th December. **Please note we can't accept cards after this date.**



HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO A CHILD'S LIFE:

# OPERATION CHRISTMAS

JOIN SHAW EDUCATION TRUST IN ENSURING ALL CHILDREN HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS BY DONATING GIFTS TO LOCAL VULNERABLE FAMILIES

WHAT ITEMS ARE WE COLLECTING?

TOYS CLOTHES STATIONERY

\*PLEASE NOTE ONLY NEW ITEMS CAN BE ACCEPTED\*

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

DROP OFF DONATIONS IN THE OFFICE FOYER ON 8<sup>TH</sup>/9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER.

CONTACT MRS COOPER FOR MORE INFORMATION

Shaw Education Trust  
We believe your actions

We are proud to be joining our family of schools in this thoughtful initiative. I must stress that items donated must be new as they will be gifted, firstly to those children in our school who need extra kindness from Santa this year. I know how generous our families are here at The Meadows and will enjoy purchasing an additional gift this year suitable for a child. Therefore, once we have ensured those families who need the help receive it, any surplus gifts will be shared with another primary school in our Trust. Sharing really is caring especially at this time of year when so many families are facing financial challenges due to the Covid pandemic.

As with all our collections and charity initiatives, they are entirely voluntary and we understand that not all families will be able to help on this occasion.

*Gifts will be distributed with discretion to our vulnerable families.*

## Doodle Maths Update

As many of you are aware, during lockdown we purchased Doodle Maths, English, Times tables and Spell as part of our approach to blended learning. These engaging programmes allow your child to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in Maths and English by assessing your child, then creating a tailor-made electronic learning programme for them.



We have continued to use these resources as part of our new approach to home learning this year in CI2, 3 and 4. We have been so impressed with the progress the children have made in their programmes this term due to their regular use at home. As we say in Class 4, 'Practice does make progress.'

Whilst we do want children to make the most of these programmes to support their learning, please do bear in mind that the daily tasks they are given should only take a maximum of 10 minutes to complete. We are conscious that we do not want children to overuse them, as this could have a detrimental impact on their wellbeing and enthusiasm.

It is for this reason that we are working with Doodle to try and disable the leader boards. We want children to focus on the value of completing their task to support them and nudge them on in their learning, rather than to compete with their peers, which can lead to an unhealthy sense of competition with some pupils and indeed parents!

Rest assured that access to Doodle is monitored every week. The children are regularly praised for their home learning and are rewarded with dojos, according to our behaviour policy. Keep up the excellent work children!

Mrs Kuffour



## Parent Consultation Appointments

We have received a great deal of positive feedback regarding our new virtual meetings. It was a new challenge for us here in school as whilst we have come accustomed over recent months using this method to meet with colleagues and undertake various training courses, it was a new way of meeting parents. The booking system was faultless and we had the

highest uptake of appointments ever!

Lots of you commented how it worked well around your schedules and meant parents could join the meeting together, even if physically you were in different locations. There was understandably a handful of technical glitches, but it certainly demonstrated our agile response to an unprecedented situation.

I would like to take this opportunity for your engagement, patience and determination to learn new skills in many cases!

## Online Safety

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

**Fortnite: Chapter 2** has finally landed! With a whole host of new in-game features including a brand-new map, more water-based activities, upgraded character skins and a more streamlined arsenal of weapons, this Fortnite is promising to be the best yet. Almost all of the changes are cosmetic which means the concept of the game remains the same, with players still aiming to be the last man standing. Players will no doubt find the game much more enjoyable with so much more to explore. For parents and carers however, it pays to remain vigilant.

**AGE RECOMMENDATION: 13+**

### What parents need to know about FORTNITE CHAPTER 2

**BATTLE ROYALE**  
Battle Royale games have become very popular over the last couple of years, and most tend to follow a very similar setup. Taking Fortnite as an example, 100 players drop into a map, loot buildings for weapons and armour and attempt to be the last of the other players to be crowned victor at the end. If you've ever seen the Hunger Games movies, you'll have an idea of what this entails. Each game can take up to 20 minutes (assuming you last to the end) and can be restarted relatively quickly once 100 free players have been found.

**IS FORTNITE ADDICTIVE?**  
Fortnite is at the forefront of gaming addiction discussions because it is so popular with young people. But whether it actually contributes to gaming addiction is up for debate. WHO (World Health Organisation) have classified gaming as a legitimate addiction, but this is not solely a concern with Fortnite. Signs of addiction can include irritability when not playing, lying about the amount of time played and a preoccupation with thoughts of the next gaming session. Realistically, it must be down to parents and carers to recognise these symptoms and act accordingly if they think they are developing.

**FREE TO PLAY... OR IS IT?**  
Fortnite is technically free to play (in that you can download and play it without paying) it does come with the caveat that spending money on things like skins and emotes in-game is heavily pushed to players. The currency used in-game is called 'V-Bucks' and can be bought with real money through the game's online store. It's worth remembering that these purchases are absolutely not necessary, are cosmetic only and that V-Bucks can be earned in-game with enough play time.

**SEASONAL UPDATES**  
Every 10 weeks or so Fortnite is updated with a new season. This essentially adds new things like skins and emotes to the game, while also sometimes changing up the game map in interesting ways. These updates are free for everybody and don't require additional money to play, though battle passes for each season can be bought with V-Bucks. A battle pass will typically allow a player to earn experience faster and gain fun in-game items by completing a host of daily challenges.

**CROSSPLAY IS AVAILABLE**  
One of the wonderful things about Fortnite is that it can be played cross-platform. This means that on PlayStation 4, Xbox One etc they can play with their friends who play on a different platform. To do this, an Epic Games account must first be created and linked to the account on the platform you don't have the same console and spends up a whole new world of playing online with friends.

**IS FORTNITE VIOLENT?**  
Fortnite has been rated by the ESRB (Entertainment Software Ratings Board) as being 'E' for everyone. This means that the weapons and acts depicted in the game are more mild than those in other games. Characters don't draw blood when shot and instead of dying, they are simply beamed off the map. Naturally, players aged under 13 will not be able to play because you don't have the same console and spends up a whole new world of playing online with friends.

### Top Tips For Parents

**BUYING V-BUCKS**  
As mentioned, Fortnite does contain in-game purchases and microtransactions in the form of V-Bucks which can be bought with real money. If you do decide to let your young one spend money in the game, make sure you discuss your card information afterwards as it can be very easy to purchase more items without your consent. It's important to set a limit on any purchases and to be clear that any purchases made are not necessary for playing the game and are not necessary for enjoying the experience at around £10-15 this is the normal retail price of a game.

**GAMING WITH STRANGERS**  
Fortnite Battle Royale is an online game, and as such, there is a chance that young children could come into contact with strangers who may randomly meet into their groups in a game. It's difficult to predict what another player might do in a game, so it's a good idea for friends playing together to be grouped together. The only real countermeasure to identify and report suspicious behaviour is to report it to the game's support team. Being outside of the game while playing is a great way to make sure you know who you're talking to and that nobody else is listening in.

**LIMIT TIME, BUT BE FLEXIBLE**  
A game of Fortnite can last up to 20 minutes, so be flexible when it comes to it. The more you play, the more you'll know about the game, so it's a good idea to play with your child for a while and see how they get on. If you're not sure about the game, it's a good idea to play with your child for a while and see how they get on. If you're not sure about the game, it's a good idea to play with your child for a while and see how they get on.

**TALK TO OTHER PARENTS / CARERS**  
If you're concerned about play time or spending money in the game, talk to other parents and carers of your child's friends. If you approach as a collective, it will be easier to know when their friends are online and you may have more influence. It can also help to share ideas on how to limit money on battle passes and skins if you stick together.

**CAN DEVELOP SOME IMPORTANT SKILLS**  
It's often overlooked just how good gaming can be for young people. Fortnite encourages team play, and complex problem solving and communication. It's not just the lightning fast in-game games that develop children's skills, but the social skills. There are benefits to screen time which might not be immediately obvious.

**PLAY THE GAME YOURSELF**  
There's no substitute for sitting down and playing the game yourself to learn about it. Fortnite is a complex game for those on almost anything you can think of. It's not just about the game, it's about the social skills that come with it. You can learn a lot about the game and the social skills that come with it. You can learn a lot about the game and the social skills that come with it.

**Meet our expert**  
Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor at two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UKG2 Gaming and GAMINGCUBE. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) Twitter @natonlinesafety Facebook /NationalOnlineSafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 16.10.2019

In school we continually remind children of age ratings on games, apps and films. This is because there is very strict guidance regarding content and its suitability.

Fortnite continues to be popular amongst some of our children and we are finding it creeping into their conversations, which can become of a violent nature. This is not appropriate. At school we actively discourage such talk and remind children about its unsuitability given their age. Please do take a look at the guidance opposite so you remain informed.

## Our School Ambassadors

After a period of six months away from school, we delayed the announcement of our Ambassadors this year to give the Y6 chance to settle back into school and demonstrate their leadership qualities. We've also had to reconsider the role to ensure their duties are within our Covid safe procedures. For this reason, we are unable to appoint Behaviour Mentors currently due to the interaction this role involves. We will review this decision when the guidance enables us to.

Hello, we are the new school Ambassadors Dylan and Tizzy. We were appointed three weeks ago by Mrs Procter and the other staff to represent pupil voice. For our role, we need to show our Secrets of Success and encourage outstanding behaviour throughout the school – on the playground, in classrooms and during online assemblies.

As school Ambassadors, so far we have had the opportunity to create certificates and choose who we think has gone above and beyond in their learning, following our school motto: 'Learning by caring and sharing'. On Fridays, during our online celebration assemblies, we then present our awards to students across the school, sharing their success with everyone. We love doing this because it is helping us to develop our self-confidence and leadership skills. We have already had to learn to speak in front of an audience with confidence, develop our computing skills and manage our time so we get everything done in time for assemblies.

From Dylan and Tizzy

## Extra-Curricular Clubs

We await further clarification from the Department for Education regarding resuming our clubs. With the end of term now quickly approaching, we shall recommence after the Christmas Break.

Finally, on behalf of all the staff team, I would like to once again express my sincere thanks to you all for your continued support to the school. Your generosity in supporting our charity activities, donations to school projects such as The Santa Cause book tree are never assumed. We appreciate that 2020 has been a year of tremendous challenge. We've faced months of relentless difficulty which have tested our resolve to remain positive. For us here in school, we are blessed to work with children who each and every single day, make us laugh and smile. It is an escape from the reality that lies beyond our school doors. The children are a credit to you all as parents and to our school community for their resilience and acceptance of the new norm.

MEETING FRIENDS AND FAMILY	-bars, PUBS AND RESTAURANTS	RETAIL	WORK AND BUSINESS
No mixing of households indoors, or most outdoor places, apart from support bubbles. Maximum of six in some outdoor public spaces (e.g. parks, public gardens).	Hospitality is closed, with the exception of sales by takeaway, drive-through or delivery.	Open.	Everyone who can work from home should do so.
EDUCATION	INDOOR LEISURE	ACCOMMODATION	PERSONAL CARE
Early years settings, schools, colleges and universities open. Children, other supervised activities for children, and childcare bubbles permitted.	Open. Group activities and classes should not take place.	Closed (with limited exceptions)	Open.
OVERNIGHT STAYS	WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS	ENTERTAINMENT	PLACES OF WORSHIP
We advise against overnight stays other than with household or support bubble.	15 guests for weddings, civil partnerships and wakes; 30 for funerals. Wedding receptions not permitted.	Indoor venues closed.	Open, but cannot interact with anyone outside household or support bubble.
TRAVELLING	EXERCISE	RESIDENTIAL CARE	LARGE EVENTS
Avoid travelling outside your area, other than where necessary such as for work or education. Further exemptions apply. Reduce the number of journeys where possible. Plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport. Avoid car sharing with those outside of your household or support bubble.	Classes and organised adult sport can take place outdoors, but people should avoid higher-risk contact activity. Group exercise activities and sports indoors should not take place, unless with your household or bubble. Organised activities for elite athletes, under-18s and disabled people can continue.	COVID-secure arrangements such as substantial screens, visiting pods, and window visits. Outdoor/night visits only (rollout of rapid testing will enable indoor visits including contact).	Events should not take place. Drive-in events permitted.

**Find out what support you can get**

For example, if you're out of work, need to get food, or want to take care of your mental health.

[gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

**If you have any coronavirus symptoms:**

A high temperature • A new, continuous cough  
A loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

**Get a test and stay at home**

For more information and detailed guidance visit: [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Personal Possessions



I would like to remind all our school community of the following:

*The storage of any personal property or possessions or, where pupils bring in personal property or possessions onto the school premises it is at the pupil's and parent's own risk and the school will not be liable for any loss or damage to personal property or possessions.*



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