



Horsmonden Primary School

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Mr Malcolm E. Hayes

12th December 2008

Dear Parents,

We're almost there! What a week it's been, with children and staff all falling like flies (a huge thank you to Nicki Allen for covering duties in the school office) and somehow it's all come together for the infants with their wonderful production, "**Too Busy For Christmas**". With support from the West Kent Performing Arts Students and a great deal of hard work from staff, the children have lived up to expectations with their songs, dances and acting in giving us all a bit of Christmas magic. Special Mentions go to Sam and Philip who operated the lights and most importantly the entire Infants for their sparkling performances.

Before I go any further I must save the school budget from thousands of pounds in litigation costs by giving you the following Health and Safety warning. **Icy paths can be slippery**. I know it seems like stating the obvious, but on these icy mornings I can't guarantee that pathways will be gritted so it's wise to keep yourselves and your children free from the desire to practice dancing on ice.

Next week there's little let-up as we head towards the holidays. Monday and Tuesday will be party times for all; Tuesday morning is junior practice in the church; on Wednesday after school some of the juniors will be heading across to the Village Hall to entertain the Over 60's with carols; on Thursday morning Year 6 will be singing carols in the Hospice; Thursday evening is Carols by Candlelight at St Margaret's Church; Friday is Christmas dinner followed by Sing-along-a-sir in the afternoon. Other than that we're in for a quiet week!

Tuesday, for the **Carols by Candlelight rehearsal** with juniors, means the mammoth undertaking of shifting 120 juniors to the church and back. It's actually quite straightforward, but then I've done it 16 times before! For those of you with children in infants, drop them at school first and then head for the church. We need to fill up cars with as many children as possible because the lanes are narrow and we don't want to waste petrol. Teachers will check on Monday who has lifts and who doesn't, but if you've got spaces, please let your child's teacher know. To keep the roads as safe as possible, please head for the church via Lamberhurst Road, turning left at Spelmonden Road and returning to the village via Brick Kiln Lane and the Goudhurst Road. This may cause some of you to have a slightly longer journey, but the roads may well be very slippery and it's better to avoid incidents than to drive like a maverick. If you're able to assist with the return to school at 10:45, that's excellent.

Carols by Candlelight itself will start at 7 p.m. Some pews will be reserved for infants and I will also reserve a few seats for those who've recently had leg operations or who are heavily pregnant (we'll find room at the inn!). If you've got a special reason for needing a reserved seat, please let me know and I'll organise something – man-flu is not a valid reason, nor is "My child's in it and I want to have the best view". There will be a retiring collection for Hospice in the Weald, who we have supported in our carol service for a number of years. Please bring a torch; this will not only be useful to see your way from the car parking area, but it will be handy for singing the last carol once the lights are down and the church is lit purely by candlelight. Having said that, if you've got one of those million candle torches, it might be best not to use that to read the words as a) you risk temporarily blinding several rows either side of you, b) a "My torch is bigger than your torch" attitude is unseemly at Christmas and c) the sheer power of the light could cause your carol sheet to spontaneously combust. We're extremely grateful to Mr Michael Hague, who will be our organist for the evening and who will be known to many of you as an excellent supply teacher.

Friday is **Christmas Dinner** day. I hope you've booked one if your child wants it! So far we've had a limited response on the volunteering front, but I know there are still a number of you who are willing and able; don't delay, let me know and be a part of the excitement on the last day.

Friday night is **Disco Night** in school. Disco Dave is guaranteed to give a great night's entertainment and end the term on several high notes. There will be competitions and games as well as the opportunity for children to demonstrate their mastery of dance routines (isn't it great to know that The Birdie Song is still as popular as ever) all for the small cost of £2.50 – excellent value on a Friday night. The disco runs from 6 – 8 p.m. and there will be crisps and soft drinks available for sale. We still need some volunteers to assist with supervision on the evening, for which no sense of rhythm or special training is required. Please flood the office with your generous offers of help and they will pass your name on to the Friends.

Speaking of the Friends of Horsmonden Primary School, I'd like to give you a reminder in advance that the Annual General Meeting is on **29th January** and that you should book your babysitters early to avoid disappointment. Many parents have commented in the past that the **FoHPS AGM** proved to be such an entertaining evening they only wish they'd attended more. Okay, I may not have been totally sincere with that last sentence, but every child benefits from the efforts of the Friends and for all those extras in life it's no bad thing to show our thanks by turning up.

Small practicalities make the end of term run smoothly. On Thursday, please ensure your child brings home their **P.E. kit** for its winter wash. That enables you to check the lost property box on Friday morning for all the bits they've mislaid during the term. If you don't know where the lost property box is, it's just inside the main entrance door under the table. All left items will be taken to a recycling skip during the holiday so that we can start afresh in the new term.

Once term ends, opportunities for children in the village still continue. E-letter subscribers have an attractive attachment to give you the following information, which is:

Come to St Margaret's Church at 4.30pm on Christmas Eve and join in our candlelit service around the crib. We act out the nativity story so come dressed as your favourite character and be part of the action. Also Puppets, live music and traditional carols round the crib – do join us for this very special service

And so, on that suitably festive note, it's time to wish you and your children a fantastic final festive week in school.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm E. Hayes
Headmaster

