

Tickhill Estfeld Primary School



Headteacher: Miss D M Risley BSc(Hons)

Telephone : 01302 744275

e-mail address: admin@estfeld.doncaster.sch.uk

Web site : www.estfeld.doncaster.sch.uk

Common Lane
Tickhill
DONCASTER
South Yorkshire
DN11 9JA

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Dear Parents and Carers

As the first term of the school year draws to an end I hope that events in school have lifted your spirits. We have had wonderful performances from our younger pupils in "Letters for Father Christmas" and the Nativity, and from our older pupils in "Follow the Star". The outside world can seem full of doom and gloom and there is much uncertainty in our country at the moment. But what does endure is our love for our families and friends and it was lovely to see you at school and at church supporting your children.

I am always extremely proud of the achievements of the pupils and staff at Estfeld, and I am sure that you are too. They work exceptionally well together, not just on occasions such as these but throughout the year, making Estfeld an exceptional school in which to work and learn.

Our school is a happy place and everybody gets along well for most of the time. We do, as do all schools have occasions when there are upsets or misunderstandings, but we do our best to make sure that these are minimal and sorted out as quickly as possible. Our unstinting message is consideration and respect for others and the belief that if you are being considerate and respectful then others will be considerate and respect you. By the time that you read this the children will have enjoyed their parties – and yes he did come. Thank you once again Father Christmas for finding the time to visit our school at your busiest time. We are now looking forward to the pantomime "Sleeping Beauty" and Christmas Dinner on our last day. Happy times and happy memories to be made.

I would also like to thank those who contributed to the retiring collection at church on Tuesday evening. A total of £290 was raised – half for the church's Tower Appeal, and half for Bluebell Wood Hospice. As we celebrate Christmas this year with family and friends, surrounded by all of the comforts of home, let us spare a thought for those less fortunate and be grateful for all of those things that we may sometimes take for granted.

Our children as always have enjoyed the Christmas preparations and activities and will have brought home their Christmas cards and calendars that they have crafted and sewn to brighten up not only Christmas, but the year ahead too.



From time to time we receive questions about the value of making calendars and other sewing and technology based activities in school. We have always valued the skills and objectives involved; yes, it can be fiddly for little fingers and the measuring, checking, following instructions, correcting an error can sometimes test even our older pupils (and the staff and volunteers in school too), but we are resilient, we persevere. All good lessons for life, and pride in a job well done once they are completed.

I was therefore delighted to hear the comments made recently by Roger Kneebone, professor of surgical education at Imperial College, London. He was lamenting the fact that some academic students, aspiring to be surgeons often lack crucial practical skills. To quote him:

"It is important and an increasingly urgent issue," says Prof Kneebone, who warns medical students might have high academic grades but cannot cut or sew.

"It is a concern of mine and my scientific colleagues that whereas in the past you could make the assumption that students would leave school able to do certain practical things - cutting things out, making things - that is no longer the case," says Prof Kneebone.

People responding to the article also point out that these skills are necessary in a wide range of professions, including the space industry and cite NASA as an organisation where precision engineering is still often done by hand.

The full article can be read on the BBC news website at the following link.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-46019429>

I know that as you look at your calendars in the coming year that you will rightly value them and be proud of the work and skill that they required and the love with which they were given; but you are also looking at the earliest examples of precision engineering that your child produced, and who knows where that may lead?

We would like to wish all of our pupils, families and friends a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the New Year on Monday 7th January 2019.

Happy Christmas
Miss Diane Risley and all at Tickhill Estfeld