



19<sup>th</sup> December 2018

Dear Parents

The school year seemed to start off at a fast pace with our Ofsted inspection, and the whole term seems to have absolutely flown past. Throughout the term the children have continued to work hard and do themselves and you proud. I hope you were pleased with the work you saw at Parents' Evening and the information you received in your child's end of term Progress Update.

#### Performance tables

Key Stage 2 attainment and progress data has now been made public and can be found on our school website and also on the GOV.UK website - <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk>. I am pleased to report that based on last year's attainment for children leaving us at the end of Year 6, we are now in the top ten of Peterborough schools. We aim to build on this now and really accelerate the rates of progress our children make.

#### Christmas activities

Christmas has certainly been in full swing. The Christmas Disco was very well attended and enjoyed by the children. Discos at Castor are a little more than just a disco, and with such a range of activities on offer, it is easy to see why the children are so engaged in it. A huge thank you to the many members of Friends who put hours of work in to preparing and running this event. A total of £905 for the Friends of the School was raised from this one event alone. Thank you and well done to everybody.

#### Christmas performances

Our Christmas play this year was called 'Tinsel and Tea Towels'. The setting for this play is a Primary school. In the story, it is getting towards the end of term and everyone in the school is incredibly busy preparing for the Christmas nativity play. The unexpected arrival of two school inspectors throws a slight spanner in the works! Thankfully for our school, the inspectors arrived at the start of term and not while we were busy preparing for this play, but it did give an entertaining insight into how much work goes into preparing a performance like this. The children acted and sung incredibly well and I'm sure you were just as proud as their teachers were.

Our Key Stage 2 children put on a delightful performance for their Christmas Concert, and there was so much musical talent on show. 'Silent night' with the first verse in German is a particular favourite of mine and the children certainly did it justice.

#### Pantomime

We were very fortunate to be offered complimentary tickets for all pupils of our school to see Robin Hood at the Cresset. I know many families took these tickets up, and our thanks go to the Cresset Theatre for this kind gesture, to Colin Benoiton-Smith for pointing them in our direction and to Friends for organising the allocation of tickets.

#### UNICEF

In November we were very pleased to achieve the Bronze Unicef award, confirming our commitment to placing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of our ethos whilst working towards becoming a 'Rights Respecting School'. This is the start of our Unicef journey, and our next aim is to achieve the Silver level award. Mrs Green, our Unicef Leader, and her team of Unicef ambassadors have already started to work on this and we look forward to seeing their work through school in the New Year. Well done Mrs Green and her team!

### Fundraising

Recent fundraising events have done very well. For Children in Need, we raised a total of £145. An equally impressive £139.25 was raised for the Royal British Legion through our Poppy Appeal. 'Bake for Syria' was our final fundraiser of the year and was held as part of our commitment to becoming a Unicef school and gaining the Silver level award. A total of £113.35 was raised. The money raised will help provide lifesaving food, clean water, medical care and education centres for Syrian children. It will also provide blankets to keep children safe and warm in the coming winter.

### Bank and Shop update

Our Bank and Shop has been up and running for a few weeks now, and we have been very impressed by how the children have embraced it. It is very early days in terms of judging its long-term impact, but early indications are that this is going to be a success. The children are wanting to do well in their times-tables and spelling tests, and parents are reporting that they no longer have to nag their child to practise them at home!

### Collection at the end of school

Thank you for your support with our change of arrangements for the collection of children at the end of the school day. Having named adults with permission to collect your child reassures us that we are handing over to the correct adult.

### Mrs Salisbury

At the end of this term, we say a fond farewell to Mrs Salisbury who will be leaving us to take up her new post as Assistant Headteacher at St John's Church School in Orton. Mrs Salisbury has been a big part of life at our school, and is a teacher who is very popular with children, staff and parents alike. She will be very much missed by us all and we wish her the very best of luck in her new role.

### ***A message from Mrs Salisbury:***

*"In my 9 1/2 years as a teacher at Castor CE Primary School I have taught over 200 children, some of them for 2 years. I have enjoyed every aspect of my time here and getting to know each of those children and their families. Lots of the memories that will stay with me are of things which have happened outside of the classroom, many dance shows at The Cresset, lots of country dancing festivals, amazing Christmas performances, visits to London and residential trips to Stibbington to name but a few. There have been many changes at Castor throughout my time here, but one thing that has remained constant is the sense of family and community that comes from the children, parents and the wonderful staff I have the pleasure of spending every day with! I will be forever grateful that such a large part of my teaching career has been spent in such a warm and welcoming place and although I am moving onto a new challenge in my career I will never forget Castor and all the happy times I have spent here. I wish everyone all the best for 2019 and keep dancing!"*

### A warm welcome

With Mrs Salisbury's departure, we also welcome Mrs Helen Boulton and Miss Elaine McAllister who will be teaching Year 2 on a job-share basis. Both Mrs Boulton and Miss McAllister are looking forward to joining (or re-joining in Mrs Boulton's case!) the teaching team and I am sure you will join me in welcoming them to the school.

### Pop-ins

'Curriculum Pop-ins' next term will be on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January at 9am or 3:30pm. The focus of these sessions will be on a particular aspect of Reading, Writing or Maths that your child's class teacher feels will benefit their class. Where it is possible for you to, can I please encourage as many parents as possible to attend one of these sessions. Parents that have come have found them very useful in supporting their child's learning at home.

### Car parking

The new Landlord at The Royal Oak has kindly agreed to allow parents to use their car park at drop-off and collection times. We are very grateful to Ludek for allowing us to do this. This will hopefully relieve some of the congestion on the roads around these peak times. Can I please ask that we take particular care when using the car park, especially when leaving and entering. The children are not used to cars coming in and out at this time, and our short-lived experience of using The Fitzwilliam Arms car park demonstrated to us that the children do have a tendency to just walk across the front of the entrance. We will of course talk to the children about this, but ask that you are also extra careful.

### And finally...

Thank you for your continued support of the school and your child's education. I hope you have a lovely Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you back in January.

Yours sincerely



**Mr N Brompton**

Headteacher