

Newsletter 19th December 2023

Dear parents and carers



It has been a busy end to the autumn term with Christmas productions, the choir singing outside Roomes and welcoming us into school, Christmas card deliveries to neighbours, parent/carer events, carols by 'candlelight', Christmas lunch and parties... we certainly have not wound down to Christmas! All of these are possible due to the enthusiasm and commitment of our fantastic staff team so I am sure you will join me in thanking them and wishing them a happy, relaxing holiday.



On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank you for your Christmas messages, cards and presents – they are all very gratefully received and mean such a lot.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a lovely holiday – we will look forward to seeing you all again in 2024, on Monday 8th January.

Mrs Sansom, Headteacher



MERRY CHRISTMAS!



REMINDER



THURSDAY 4TH JANUARY AND FRIDAY 5TH JANUARY ARE INSET DAYS

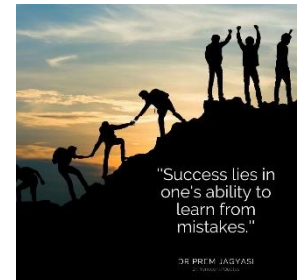
CHILDREN MUST NOT COME TO SCHOOL

Vision for 2021-2026

EVERYONE LEARNING TOGETHER

Branfil is a vibrant learning community where we nurture lifelong learners who embody our school values and make a positive contribution to the world.

Adults and children feel valued and love learning together. Everyone thrives and achieves personal success through being happy, safe and confident learners, who ask questions, take appropriate risks, learn from their mistakes and seek help when needed.



Our value this half term is **EXPLORE**. In our learning community, we are curious, we ask questions and we learn from our mistakes.

Attendance



Children were awarded attendance certificates today. Well done to everyone who received the certificate for attendance of 97% or more.

New website

Hopefully you have now had a chance to look at our brand new website – if not, please take a moment to enjoy the content.

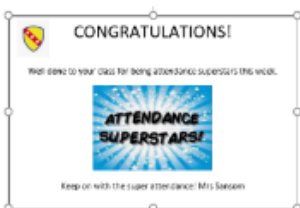


Lead Learners for Autumn Term

One Lead Learner from each class, nominated by their teacher, was awarded a certificate and badge in our termly Lead Learner assemblies. A big “well done” and congratulations go to:

<u>Reception and KS1</u>	<u>KS2</u>
Anneliese - Acorns	Arnie - 3 Hazel
Kawtar - Conkers	Erin - 3 Maple
Archie - 1 Lime	Emilia - 3 Oak
Addison - 1 Pine	Poppy - 4 Birch
George - 1 Willow	Evie - 4 Larch
Charlotte - 2 Beech	Coral - 4 Rowan
Lewis - 2 Cedar	Niamh - 5 Alder
Mark - 2 Holly	Aidan - 5 Aspen
	Madison - 5 Hawthorn
	Jakob - 6 Acacia
	Bailey - 6 Chestnut
	Ben - 6 Hornbeam

Autumn Term Attendance Winners



Each week, all classes who achieve at least 97% attendance receive a ‘certicard’, which is displayed on the classroom door;



at the end of each term, the class with the most ‘certicards’ are awarded with extra outdoor play time.

Well done to 6 Hornbeam who have won a ‘certicard’ 10 times over the autumn term.

Cumulative House Points for Autumn Term



Tylers – 31 points



Pages – 34 points



Belhus – 36 points



Cely – 40 points

Congratulations to Cely for winning the house points across the autumn term!!!

Christmas Dinner

Today the children enjoyed their Christmas lunch served by members of staff. The children were treated to a great festive experience with Christmas decorations and Christmas music playing in the background. A huge thank you goes to the kitchen team who produced a delicious traditional Christmas roast for several hundred people.

Book Fair

Thank you to all the parents/carers and adults who attended our school book fair.



We have raised over £250 which will enable us to purchase new books for our school library and classrooms, providing children with high quality diverse texts. We look forward to hosting another one in the spring term which will be filled with lots of second hand books.

Branfil Choir Singing Outside Roomes

On Friday, our Branfil choir helped to get Upminster into the Christmas spirit by singing beautifully outside Roomes stores. They sang a range of upbeat Christmas classics, wearing brilliant Christmas accessories and had a great audience supporting and joining in (there was even some dancing). Well done choir - you were fantastic!

Also thank you to the choir, who have been singing before school this week, helping to give others some Christmas cheer as they enter the school building. Your energy is contagious and you really help to make Branfil special at Christmas.



Candelight Carol Concerts

Yesterday, KS1 and KS2 joined together to sing Christmas songs and listen to the Christmas story. It was lovely to be together one more time before the Christmas break and to wish each other a merry Christmas.



Some of our wonderful recorder group played too; they played with so much confidence and really put a smile on the staff and children's faces. Well done!

Year 6 Children reading the Christmas Story to KS2

Well done also to the children from year 6 who read out the Christmas Story in the form of poetry in front of the whole of Key Stage 2. Your recital was clear and confident, and some of the children had even learnt it off by heart, which was incredible! You helped to teach the whole of KS2 all about the reason why we celebrate Christmas. Thank you for all of your hard work.

Christmas Cards for Neighbours – House Event



Thank you to everyone who sent in a Christmas card for our neighbours or who came to make one last Wednesday lunchtime. This year this was a house event to earn

some extra house points at the end of term. The results were:

- 4th - Belhus
- 3rd - Cely
- 2nd - Pages
- 1st - Tylers

Well done to Tylers!

Excellence in the Arts Award

This week the award goes to all of our Art Committee. Earlier this half term they worked very hard to make lots of decorations for the Upminster Christmas Tree Festival, which were based on the musical Singing in the Rain. They applied their creativity really well and tried some quite tricky paper craft; their decorations made the tree look wonderful!



November values art competition winner



November's values art competition was all about exploring and creating rangoli patterns to help celebrate Diwali, which took place last month. There were lots of colourful vibrant entries, but the prize went to Gabriela in 4B for her very carefully designed and decorated rangoli - well done Gabriela!

Year 3 Production of Straw and Order!

A big congratulations to Year 3 on their fantastic production of Straw and Order! All three classes put together a fabulous show and the children were so committed to their roles! Thank you for all the support from adults at home and for attending the performances.



Anderson Shelters

Year 6 had a great time making Anderson Shelters. Thank you to all the adults who helped us - what a fun afternoon!



Branfil Ambassadors – Safer Streets Review

Last week the Branfil Ambassadors took part in the Safer Streets review with the charity Sustrans. Sustrans focus on making it easier for people to walk, wheel and cycle in our towns and cities. In a very sensible and mature manner, the children shared their experiences and opinions about the Cedar Road restrictions to motor traffic with Dan and James.



Poppy Appeal

Thank you very much for helping The Royal British Legion by purchasing a poppy. Branfil raised an amazing £325.44 for them.



Weekly Attendance Awards!



11.12.2023 – 15.12.2023

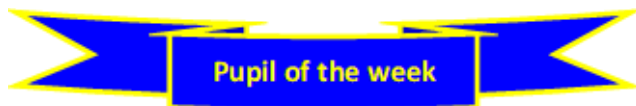
The following classes won the Attendance Superstar Certificate for excellent attendance of over 97%:

Acorns, 4 Larch, 4 Rowan, 5 Hawthorn and 6 Acacia.



Star Writers for Autumn Term 2

Evie - Acorns
Harry - Conkers
Amelia - 1 Pine
Maigon -1 Lime
Amalli - 1 Willow
Callum - 2 Cedar
Fletcher - 2 Beech
Robyn - 2 Holly
Alfie - 3 Hazel
Kosi - 3 Oak
Ellie-May - 3 Maple
Matius - 4 Birch
Emily - 4 Rowan
Ethan - 4 Larch
Ruby - 5 Alder
Minnie - 5 Aspen
Nonso -5 Hawthorn
Lyla - 6 Hornbeam
Zoe - 6 Acacia
Alexia -6 Chestnut



15th December 2023

All of Acorns
All of Conkers
George - 1 Pine
Arlo - 1 Lime
Kamilla - 1 Willow
Ava - 2 Cedar
Kenza - 2 Beech
Nicholas - 2 Holly
All of 3 Hazel
George - 3 Oak
Meharwan - 3 Maple
Toby - 4 Birch
Alex - 4 Rowan
Harry - 4 Larch
Isabelle - 5 Alder
Esme - 5 Aspen
Stacy - 5 Hawthorn
Lukas - 6 Hornbeam
Lily - 6 Acacia
Charlotte - 6 Chestnut



Happy Birthday!

Natalia, William, Ariana, Mabel, Chloe, Henry, Aria, Essie, Edouard, Samuel, Benjamin, Olivia, Alice, Mason, Eliana, Ellie-May, Archie, Lukas, Brodie, Saoirse, Michael, Connie, Dolcie, Charlotte, Ranveer, Oleksandr, Antonio, George, Arjun, Ella, Olivia, Dylan, Isla, Oliver, Amelia, Jack, Elizabeth, Ronnie, Alexandre and Toby.



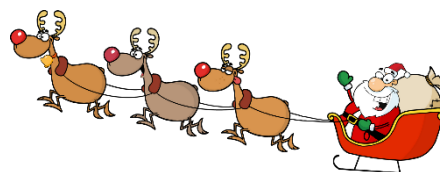


DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday, 19 th December 2023	Children break up from school usual time
Wednesday, 20 th December 2023 – Wednesday, 3 rd January 2024	Christmas Break
Thursday, 4 th January 2024	INSET day
Friday, 5 th January 2024	INSET day
Monday, 8 th January 2024	Children return to school
Wednesday, 31 st January 2024	Year 3 visit to Colchester Castle
Tuesday, 6 th February 2024	Year 2 visit to Upminster Park
Monday, 19 th February – Friday, 23 rd February 2024	February Half Term
Tuesday, 12 th March 2024	Year 2 visit to Call of the Wild
Thursday, 21 st March 2024	Year 5 and 6 - Young Shakespeare Theatre Group
Friday, 29 th March – Friday, 12 th April 2024	Easter Break
Monday, 13 th May – Thursday, 16 th May 2024	Year 6 SATs week
Monday, 20 th May – Friday, 24 th May 2024	Year 6 Residential to Gillwell Park Activity Centre
Monday, 27 th May – Friday, 31 st May 2024	Spring Half Term
Tuesday, 18 th June 2024	Year 5 visit to Nuclear Races
Thursday, 20 th June 2024	Reception visit to Barleylands
Wednesday, 24 th July 2024	Break up for the summer break

Inset days for 2024-25

Mon 2nd and Tues 3rd Sept 2024
Mon 6th Jan 2025
Mon 21st & Tues 22nd July 2025





Friends of Branfil news: December 2023

Your newsletter about our PTA!

Website: <https://www.pta-events.co.uk/friendsofbranfil/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BranfilPrimarySchoolPTA/>

Highlights:

THANK YOU for your support!

The children really enjoyed the Children's Christmas Sale last Thursday. We hope you all love your gifts.

A Special thanks to all the staff and parent helpers on the day, we really wouldn't be able to run the event without you all!

The Christmas events raised a whopping 5k!

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



Upcoming Events

- Year 6 leavers hoodies to be ordered in January
- Easter Games
- Reception - Year 5 Discos
- Year 6 leavers Disco
- Boot fair on the field
- All dates to be confirmed

Products available:

Available to buy on our website now:

- Branfil Water Bottle
- Pre-Loved Uniform
- Adventure Island wristbands continue to be available online for collection from Pin Ups Salon, Gidea Park or school office on request.

Welcome to the Reading Ambassadors Christmas Newsletter. Check out our Christmas book recommendations for all ages, have a go at our Christmas quiz and see if you can complete the Christmas wordsearch. Have fun and happy reading!

Recommended books for children aged 3-!



Recommended books for children aged 5-!



Recommended books for children aged 7-!



Recommended books for children aged 9-!





C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S
O	R	E	L	F	A	D	B	R
O	A	E	S	A	E	N	S	E
K	N	N	I	T	E	A	T	D
I	G	D	O	N	U	Y	C	A
E	E	G	W	O	D	M	H	E
S	L	E	I	G	H	E	E	T
K	T	R	I	F	T	R	E	E
P	L	I	G	H	T	S	R	R

Santa	Tree	Lights	Sleigh
Angel	Red	Cookies	Reindeer
Christmas	Gift	Elf	Cheer

Christmas Quiz.

1. Which book is Charlie Bucket in?
2. What kind of animal is Black Beauty?
3. Who has 'terrible tusks and terrible claws and terrible teeth in his terrible jaws'?
4. Which house team is Harry Potter a part of?

Answers.

1. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
2. A horse
3. The gruffalo
4. Gryffindor



At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to talk an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it's needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalsafety.com for further guides, tips and tips for adults.

When parents and carers finally have the chance to spend some quality time with their child over Christmas, many face a familiar struggle to prise their young one's attention away from their phone, console, tablet or computer. Fun family bonding over the festive period, however, doesn't have to exclude devices. There are sackfuls of Christmas activities and ideas online which grown-ups and children can enjoy together. We've compiled our own 'nice list' of seasonal suggestions for how to

MAKE THE MOST OF THE ONLINE WORLD THIS CHRISTMAS

1 EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

Budding bakers will relish helping out in the kitchen with some tasty festive treats. Spend some time together researching child-friendly Christmas recipes online (the BBC Good Food site is an excellent place to start), and then you and your little elves can rustle up gingerbread santas, marshmallow snowmen or reindeer shortbread. The only thing that's more fun is eating your creations afterwards!

WHEN THE SNOWMAN BRINGS THE SNOW...

4 A WORLD OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW

From turkey on the beach in Australia to roller-skating to church in Venezuela, Christmas is celebrated in a variety of ways worldwide – curious youngsters might enjoy discovering other nations' festive traditions online. Google's Santa Tracker is a brilliant (and free) starting point, with games, activities and animations to help children enjoy learning as they count down to the big day!

2 THE OLD SONGS ARE THE BEST?

We've all had that Christmas compilation CD that was almost perfect, if it wasn't inexplicably missing one of your best-loved tracks. In this era of music streaming, however, your little helpers can assist you in compiling a definitive playlist of all your favourite seasonal songs – no more pining for The Pretenders or wishing for Wizard.

5 THE NEAR AND THE DEAR ONES

Between time constraints, distance, the weather and Covid precautions (or a combination of all four) for many families it just won't be possible to physically spend time with everyone they'd ideally like to this Christmas. Video calling technology, of course, takes some of the sting out of the disappointment by virtually transporting loved ones into your living room.

3 DECK THE HALLS

There's no such thing as 'too many' Christmas trimmings! Let your child channel their excitement into some creative crafting, and you'll make memories as well as your own DIY decorations. There are loads of step-by-step guides online (including video walkthroughs on YouTube) for seasonal showpieces like paper plate angels, handprint wreaths and cookie wrapper Christmas trees.

6 KIDS FROM ONE TO 92

If Santa's brought your young ones a console this year (or they already had one), it's a perfect excuse for some quality time while they gleefully trounce you at FIFA or Mario Kart. Digital versions of traditional board games like Monopoly and Cluedo are available on most platforms, too; get the whole household together for a modern take on some old-school family fun.

7 A WINTER'S TALE

Everyone enjoys a story at this time of year; after all, the whole celebration is based on an engrossing yarn. Sites such as Audible are an excellent way of entertaining excited young ones, with classics like Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and seasonal short stories by Erid Slyton alongside more contemporary Christmas tales by the likes of Tom Fletcher, JK Rowling and Ben Miller.

8 CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THOSE FACES

People used to express their gratitude for a thoughtful Christmas gift with a thank you card or a dutiful phone call. Not in the digital age: now your relations can see first-hand on video calls how delighted the children are with their presents – and even how they look in that slightly questionable hand-knitted pullover.

9 BROUGHT ME SOME CORN FOR POPPIN'

Struggling up against the winter weather with the family (and a generous helping of chocolate!) to enjoy a well-loved movie is a delightful Christmas tradition. The usual streaming services have some classic candidates on offer: *Home Alone* and *The Santa Clause* are on Disney+, while Amazon Prime has *EM* and *The Grinch*, and Netflix goes with *The Princess Switch* and *The Christmas Chronicles*.

10 GUESS WHAT I FORGOT?

Friends and family putting their wits against each other on Zoom, Teams or Skype really took off during lockdown, so why not revive the tradition over the holidays? Your questions could be on the biggest news, sport and showbiz stories of 2021, or be Christmas themed, or you could stick to classic general knowledge. Ideal for those days between Christmas and New Year.

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National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday



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AND £7 PER CHILD FOR SANTAS GROTTTO
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