



Harriers Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy

Harriers View, Bloxham Road,
Banbury, OX16 9JW

Telephone: 01295 263067

Email: office@harriers-aspirations.org

Web: harriers-aspirations.org

Alex Pearson – Executive Principal

1st December 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are nearing Christmas and, after the disruption of last year, we have been very keen to hold our usual festive events. All of these have been planned, with the proviso that we continue to monitor local Covid rates and the number of cases in our school. Over the past few days, this situation has been further complicated by fears over the new Omicron variant and the government's reintroduction of masks in shops etc.

This has left us with very difficult decisions to make as a school. We know some of our pupils' and families' most cherished school memories are made over the coming weeks, but we also have to consider the potential risks to our pupils, staff and community.

I hope you can appreciate how much thought we have put into the following measures we are going to announce. We have made these decisions with our whole school community in mind. Advice from Oxfordshire Education and Public Health leaders is that we should take a pragmatic approach, at a local level, focussing on our most critical events and planning them safely. We also have to consider that we are going to have to live with Covid for the foreseeable future and that our community is able to continue many other aspects of their lives with little or no restrictions. We can also confirm that the rates in school remain low, and are monitored on a daily basis.

Early Years and Key Stage 1 Nativities

These are one of the most important aspects of Christmas in a primary school and we are keen for families to be able to watch live, if they wish to do so. We therefore still plan to hold these in the hall with an audience. To reduce risk, we have limited the number of tickets available for each performance, seats will be socially distanced, windows and doors will be open, all audience members are asked to wear a mask and take a lateral flow test before attending. Tickets are available from outside the office before and after school, so please get yours as soon as possible. We also recommend you wrap up warm, even bring a blanket, as the hall is going to be well ventilated, but cold!

We understand that some people may feel uncomfortable attending a performance in person so will record the dress rehearsal and share this online. Any child without GDPR permission will not be in the videoed performance. We do not have professional filming equipment so we cannot guarantee the recording will be of the highest quality!

Key Stage 1 Nativity dates and times:

- Tuesday 7th December, 1:30pm
- Wednesday 8th December, 9:00am
- Wednesday 8th December, 1:30pm
- Thursday 9th December, 9:00am

EYU Nativity dates and times:

- Monday 13th December, 9:15am
- Wednesday 15th December, 9:15am
- Wednesday 15th December, 2:15pm

Carol Concert

We absolutely love attending St Mary's Church for our concert, and it has been too long since we held it there, but we have decided not to do so this year as it means increased risk of pupils and staff coming into contact with Covid outside of school. Instead, each year group will perform their songs on the playground at the end of a school day in the last week of term. We will open school gates early at 3pm, so parents and family can access the site and watch the carols. All adults on the playground on these days are asked to wear a mask (unless medically exempt) and to remain socially distanced at all times. The dates for each year group's performance are as follows:

- Monday 13th December - Year 6
- Tuesday 14th December - Year 5
- Wednesday 15th December - Year 4
- Thursday 16th December - Year 3



Christmas fete

We have decided the risks outweigh the need and therefore this event has, sadly, been cancelled. We can still offer children the opportunity to visit with Santa during the school day on Tuesday 14th December. Tickets may be bought via Parent Pay, but there is a cap on the number available.

Raffle

Thank you for your donations, the hampers are starting to bulge nicely! Raffle tickets are available online for £1 via ParentPay. We will conduct an online draw on Wednesday 15th December and announce the lucky winners.

Gift wrapping/Children's Only room

Thank you to the PTFA who are keen to still run this event on Friday 10th December, during school hours. Tickets are available via ParentPay at £2 per gift.

Christmas dinner & jumper day

Going ahead as planned on Wednesday 15th December. Reminder that the last date to order a dinner is Thursday 2nd December, to ensure sufficient quantities.

Assemblies

We will continue with assemblies but in phases, so that we can socially distance classes in the hall. We hope to resume inviting families to our celebration assemblies after the holidays. We will share high flyers online.

I would like to thank the staff and members of the PTFA for their willingness and enthusiasm to continue with these events and to give the children and families special memories. I know many schools have cancelled their nativities or moved them solely online, but we know how special it is for families to see their child live. All of these events come with the caveat though, that we may need to change arrangements at short notice if we see a significant rise in cases in school or in Covid rates in the local area .

I hope we all get to enjoy these events safely and share some festive cheer!

Yours faithfully,



Alex Pearson
Executive Principal