

A Christian Family who Care,  
Share and Learn Together.

Astbury St. Mary's Church of England Primary School  
Newsletter ~ 4th December 2014 Issue 7



Dear Parents,

The Christmas spirit has well and truly arrived at Astbury, with our Christmas fair taking place this Friday at 6 p.m. On Friday, the children are to come into school in their Christmas themed clothes, together with their raffles tickets and any last minute things to be sold that evening on the stalls.

The PFA have asked for as many volunteers as possible from 1.30p.m. onwards to help get the school looking amazing, as well as asking for your support when doors open at 6 p.m. I would like to thank all of you who have already donated gifts and handed back raffle tickets. All money raised goes on the children in our school so hopefully we will have a school bursting at the seams this Friday!

Our nativity this year is taking place in church. You have had a letter about this separately so we hope to see lots of you there over the two days.

The next event I would like to draw your attention to is the annual Christingle service which takes place on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 9.15 a.m. The whole school will be at this service and you are warmly invited to take part as well. Children are asked to make their own Christingle to bring to the service, so we will look forward to seeing them on this day.

And finally.... Last year I read the Christmas story to the whole school and we sang Christmas carols around the tree. You are more than welcome to join us at 2.15p.m. on the last day of term for this event.

Enjoy this wonderful and special time of year, and no doubt I will see most of you at one or more events over the coming two weeks.

Kind regards,

Mark O'Leary

## Music for Life

There are likely to be some new lesson places available for children who wish to try a taster course of lessons on a musical instrument through Music for Life at school starting in January. Across our area there are currently more than three thousand students having lessons through the not-for-profit school programme which has twice been rated "Outstanding" in reports produced by the Department for Education and the Federation of Music Services. If you think your child may be interested, please register your interest with Music for Life as soon as possible **before Monday December 15th**. They will contact you with further information about costs to let you know if a place is available and if you then decide to go ahead they will arrange for a short "taster" course to be provided in January. Course fees are reduced by at least half for children entitled to free school meals, and Music for Life may take other circumstances into account when charging for taster courses. You can register interest via the website [www.musicforlife.org.uk](http://www.musicforlife.org.uk) or by email to [admin@musicforlife.org.uk](mailto:admin@musicforlife.org.uk) or by calling 01978 761162."

## Christmas Post boxes



Our Christmas post boxes are now out (outside Class Joseph) so that children can post their Christmas cards. Each Class has a Christmas post box, which is labelled. Children need to clearly write the name and class name on the envelope.

## Christingle Service

The children have been given a Children's Society money candle box. Could we ask that you fill the candle box with as many coins as you can over the next week. These can then be collected in school and taken to Church on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 9.15am. The money collected is donated to 'The Children's Society'. Parents are warmly invited to join with us at this service. Children are asked to bring in their own Christingle to take to church on the morning of Dec 18<sup>th</sup>, as well as their homemade Christingle which we will light for them in church.



*A Christingle is a symbolic object used in advent services in churches of many Christian denominations. It has its origins in the Moravian Church, with the first recorded use, in Germany, in 1747.*

*This is the story of the first Christingle:*

*One Christmas time back in 1747 at a town in Germany, Pastor John sat at home in front of his fire. He was thinking how he could explain the love of Jesus, and what Christmas really meant to the children in the church. He decided to prepare a simple symbol to help make the message of Christmas fresh and lively for them. Pastor John gave each child a lighted candle wrapped in a red ribbon, with a prayer that said "Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these dear children's hearts". This was the first ever Christingle service.*

*The Christingle consists of:*

- an **orange** representing the world with
- a **red ribbon** around it representing the blood of Jesus
- **fruits and sweets** (usually dolly mixtures) are skewered on 4 cocktail sticks which are pushed into the orange representing the fruits of the earth and the four seasons
- and a **lighted candle** is pushed into the centre of the orange representing Christ, the light of the world

**Dates for your Diary**

5 <sup>th</sup> December	Parents morning 8.45-9.45am Christmas Fair 6.00-8.00pm
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Last Mad Science workshop. Nativity in church at 2.15pm – performed by Reception and Year 6. Rest of the school will be singing in the chorus.
10 <sup>th</sup> December	Nativity in church at 5.30pm – performed by Reception and Year 6 Rest of the school will be singing in the chorus.
11 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas lunch in school –
12 <sup>th</sup> and 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Live Nativity at 6.30pm around Astbury Village/Glebe Farm
18 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle Service – 9.15am in church School Christmas parties
19 <sup>th</sup> December	Carols around the Christmas tree – 2.15pm. All welcome Last day of term
5 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	INSET day
6 <sup>th</sup> January	Children are back in
7 <sup>th</sup> January	Barclays Bank in to talk money skills with year 5/6
12 <sup>th</sup> January	1 <sup>st</sup> swim for group 2
20 <sup>th</sup> January	All school trip to see the Borrowers at Newcastle Under Lyme