

## Mr Bates' Blog - November 2016

### Christmas is coming .....

The Christmas juggernaut has well and truly rolled into town - Christmas trees are appearing, concert practices are well under way and carol singing fills the Junior Hall! Life does still go on (thankfully) so mornings are pretty much unaffected by the growing frenzy of festive activities, and maths and English still rule! On the subject of trees, many thanks to our Grounds Maintenance contractor Morris' of Usk for our free tree - a combination of a bit of gentle persuasion (/nagging) by Mrs Fennell and a couple of free cups of tea, and the tree, which was literally on the back of a lorry, ended up in the hall!



### School Buildings

If you have visited the KS2 building recently, I am sure that you will have noticed the new cladding. These panels will hopefully be installed on the front of the site next financial year and we are currently clearing the drains and fixing the leaking roofs in both buildings (this weekend). We have had an estimate of over £600,000 to fix the building inside and out and we are focused on getting it all done! The local authority will fund most of it and we at the school also have to invest, but it's the right thing to do. I'll keep you posted. We're starting with the priority areas and at least we've made a good start.



### **Croesy News Flash!**

Opening publishing date Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Be sure to get a copy!

### **Croesy Primary Webpage / Dojo / Seesaw**

In my spare moments (very rare at work), I've been working on the school website ([www.croesyceiliogprimary.org](http://www.croesyceiliogprimary.org)) so please take a look as all the key dates, latest news and current pictures from the school are on there. In our team meetings, we've been reviewing the use of Dojo and Seesaw and we've heard you like the updates through these apps. We're upgrading the Seesaw package and including all classes to improve consistency and to establish a digital record of pupil's work throughout their time at school. Our teachers have, up to now, responded to parent messages on these apps but this is becoming difficult to manage and many teachers are finding the volume of parent messages overwhelming. After all, time teaching your children is our main focus. As such, we'd like to revert to old fashioned ways of communication! You can use e-mail to the senior leadership team ([simon.bates@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:simon.bates@torfaen.gov.uk); [rachael.davis@croesyceiliogprimary.org](mailto:rachael.davis@croesyceiliogprimary.org); [andrew.freebury@croesyceiliogprimary.org](mailto:andrew.freebury@croesyceiliogprimary.org); [julie.price@croesyceiliogprimary.org](mailto:julie.price@croesyceiliogprimary.org)), notes or phone calls and, of course, you can ask the children to take more of a lead - independence and self-help will help them in later life and we'd like to encourage more of it. Thank you for your support with this - we will start this after Christmas.

## **Poppy Appeal (£693.33) and Children in Need (£1252.82)**

Stunning effort from the Year 6s who organised a fantastic range of money-spinning activities, services and items for sale to support Children in Need and who sold Royal British Legion merchandise.



We are conscious that this is an expensive time of the year, so thanks (as ever) for your support of the school and these worthy causes.

### **Annual Parent Governor Meeting**

The governors (10) outnumbered the parents (4) by (if my maths is correct?)  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 1!! It was, nonetheless, a very positive meeting with some great ideas shared, most notable of which were the possibility of a night under canvas and involving the school more with the local community and businesses. Thanks to those that came!

### **On a personal note.....**

...Christmas is looming large on the home front as well - however, no trees in evidence yet, just an insistence (from my good wife) that the lounge is decorated to impress the inevitable crush of relatives and hangers-on that will descend on the house in the near future - perhaps that new mountain bike (Santa came early - see Oct Blog) wasn't worth it after all!

All the best - I promise no mention of Christmas (or cycling!) in the Dec Blog!

- SB (24/11/2016)