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Dear Parents and Carers

The festive season is well and truly upon us and Christmas just can't come quickly enough for many of our excited children! This term the children have been working really hard across the whole school and the level of challenge has risen significantly for all children in all classes. For some children this level of challenge has made them think more and work harder than they have in some time, however, all of the children have risen to this new expectation and are now thriving. We talk about learning as being on a journey and improving the children's mental resilience and raising their self-esteem are important first steps on this journey. If you ask the children about the 5 Bs and the learning pit, you will see that they now have a much better understanding of the learning journey and how to be successful. We are so proud of the effort the children continue to make and I'm sure you are too. Without a doubt, they have certainly earned their two weeks off!

A huge part of the improvement in the school in the short time I have been here is the way in which the school and parents work together and support each other. This is a very difficult thing to measure (and isn't reflected in any league tables!), but I'm sure most of you will agree that many aspects of this important part of your children's learning are much better. I hope you find that our staff are always available to discuss your concerns and answer queries and, likewise, we thank you for helping us out when we need to talk to you. On a personal note, I have found parents to be really supportive of myself and the staff and this support means a great deal to us. I appreciate that communication is something we can improve, so to help us with this, please ensure that we have the most current contact details (e-mail address and phone numbers) for you so that the key messages are getting to you. As ever, if there are any issues at all, please mention this to the class teacher, office or myself and we will endeavour to deal with these as soon as possible.

PTFA

I'm sure you would like to join me in thanking the PTFA for their continued support and for putting on a range of excellent and worthwhile events over the Autumn Term. Once again, the Christmas Fayre was well attended and I hope that you and the children enjoyed this (plus perhaps you got some surprise gifts...). As well as this the children were lucky enough to have some Hallowe'en treats in school and a disco! What a busy term! Obviously, these events take a great deal of organising and volunteer time and without the small, hardworking PTFA team, the children would not have these wonderful opportunities. All of us at the school would like to thank Emma, Gemma, Elise, Hayley, Dyneaka and Teresa for giving up

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their time to make such a massive difference to our children's school lives. Thanks must also go to all of the parents who have helped raise over £700 in this term alone – what an achievement!

Swimming

Class 2 will be going swimming during the whole of the Spring Term every Monday morning 10:30-12 (starting on January 14th). This will be one of their PE lessons every week and is part of the National Curriculum which we have to deliver. Last year we trialled all of the children going and, whilst that had its merits, financially it is not something we can continue to do due to the amount of parents not paying. However, by providing these swimming sessions for Class 2, we are still meeting our statutory expectations of the children achieving their 25m target by the end of Year 6. As there are some Y6 children who have not yet achieved this objective, they will attend the Class 2 sessions as well, but only until they have achieved the 25m mark. Full details to follow in January. There is a charge of £3 towards the cost of the coach.

After School Clubs

I hope that the children have enjoyed the after school clubs that have been on offer over the Autumn Term. As we move into the Spring Term, we have some new clubs available as well as some of the original ones! Lego club is one of the new additions and because this club is organised and resourced by an outside company, it is chargeable. Please be aware that the school make no money from this and the club will not run unless there are 7 paying attendees. If you haven't received a clubs' list already, please request one from the office.

Please remember that clubs finish at 4:15 and children should be collected promptly. If children are regularly collected late, your child's place may be removed. If you are struggling to get here on time, please have the courtesy to ring to let us know beforehand.

Thanks Bernie!

For those of you who attended the recent Christingle service, you will know that Bernie Issitt, who has been volunteering here for 8 years, has decided to hang up her volunteering boots! In her time with the school, Bernie has helped so many children and made a significant difference to their lives. We would like to thank her for the amazing contribution she has made and wish her well in all of her future adventures.

Don't forget that we're back on January 7th for another exciting term of learning with new topics and new challenges! All of us here at Surfleet Primary School would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe and enjoy your family time!

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