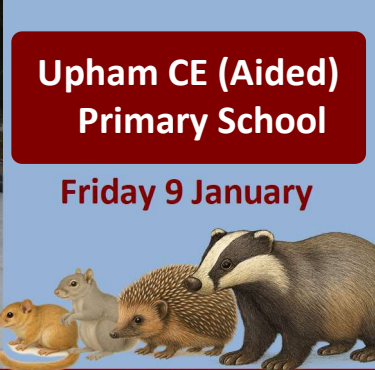




Photos: Children enjoying the snow on Tuesday – a fun first day back!



Upham CE (Aided) Primary School

Friday 9 January

YR Y1&2 Y3&4 Y5&6

Happy New Year, I hope 2026 has started well for everyone. I also hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas. There's often not much chance to rest during the Christmas holiday – it's so busy with so much excitement! The children have returned bright and ready to see their friends though. Tuesday was a particularly exciting start as during morning playtime it started to snow and settle – this caused much excitement and lots of smiling faces (see photo above).

End of Term 1 Absence Reports

As the Autumn Term has now completed, we have emailed absence reports home for all children today. These reports are designed for you to see how much absence your child has had this term and how this compares to previous years.

Some absences can't be avoided, such as a bout of vomiting but the issue is that any absence means some learning will be missed. It's really hard to catch this up – when the children return everyone else doesn't stand still and wait for the child to catch up, they have to catch up and cope with the current learning. Some children are better than others at coping with this and the more time missed, the worse the problem. I have therefore indicated on the report how many days the % absence equates to and an approximation of how many learning sessions this might equate to. All of this information will hopefully be useful for you to help you reflect on your child's attendance. If children have a higher absence level, good attendance over the coming terms will reduce this.

For all of those children whose absence is 10% or higher meaning they dip into the 'persistently absentee' category (as defined by the DfE), I have added a specific comment regarding their absence level.

Don't forget, you can explore your child's attendance further in the Arbor App at any time.

Dates for your Diary:

Weds 21 Jan – Squirrels
Class trip to Sea City Museum

Weds 21 Jan – 3pm Year 4 Parents info meeting re multiplication check

Mon 16 – Fri 20 Half Term

Mon 23 Feb – INSET Closure Day

INSET Days left for 25/26

- Mon 23 Feb
- Fri 22 May

Check you haven't missed these communications this week:

Weds 7 Jan – Email to Squirrels (Y1&2) Parents regarding trip to Sea City Museum

Time Travelling Teddy!

Squirrel Class (Y1&2) had an exciting start to their term. They opened a mysterious present which turned out to be a time travelling teddy – who asked them in a letter to find out more about the past to help him! I hope they talked to you about this. This 'hook' will help them have a motivating purpose for their historical enquiries this term, building to the trip later in the term (letter sent on Wednesday). Look out for him reappearing later in the term!



Emails:
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A reminder About Playtime Snacks

Last term I started to notice more and more children, mainly years 3 to 6, eating crisps, biscuits, chocolate and such like at morning playtimes. What I can't work out is whether these children were sneaking something intended for lunch from their lunchbox or if parents have provided them. I therefore want to use the new year as a time to re-set:

A reminder that children are welcome to bring snacks for playtime but they should be fruit or veg (prepared or chopped in a container is fine). Children in Dormice and Squirrels Classes have the free fruit provided under the government scheme anyway. Breakfast bars and fruit winders are not fruit. This has been our policy for years and is not a change at all. I'd really appreciate it if you could have a chat with your child about this too.

It is also noticeable what children have been eating due to the amount of litter building up. A few children did a litter pick this week (thanks to Zoe, Lily, Nicole, Grace & India). I shared this with the children in worship today (photo right) to point out the effect this has on local wildlife and ecology in terms of degradation of plastic into microplastics which enters the food chain.



I spoke to the children also about the expectation about snacks and that they can expect me to be asking them questions about what they are eating if this isn't fruit/ veg from Monday next week. Note there are some children, such as our diabetic children, who require different snacks for specific reasons so of course their individual arrangements continue.

Year 4 Parents Info Meeting

Parents of Year 4 children will be aware that your children are required to take a multiplication check later in the year (June). On Wednesday 21st January at 3pm Mrs Bird is holding a brief meeting in class to explain what is involved and how the children are already well on track with learning their tables.

Charity Donations from Productions

Thanks for the donation for the children-chosen charities following the productions last term. Here is how much has been raised so far, the links are still active at the moment so it's not too late if this was forgotten in the busy-ness of Christmas:

Dormice Class £40 Dogs for Good



Squirrels Class £75 Save the Children



Hedgehogs Class £85 Hedgehog Appeal



Badgers Class £68 RSPCA



Nice Epiphany Tradition

In Collective worship on Tuesday, we have talked about Epiphany, the time of the visit of the Kings to Jesus as a child is marked on 6th January. We followed a European tradition which involves chalking a message at the door to welcome visitors 20*C+M+B+26. This represents 20 and 26 for the new year, * the star, CMB the initials of the traditional names of the Kings; Caspar, Melchior & Balthasar and crosses. You might have noticed this chalking on the entrance to the playground. Children might like to do this at home and tell you about it – and Epiphany as a season runs up until 2nd Feb so there's still time.