

## ☀ Headteacher Blog – Week Beginning 15 December 2025

If last week was magical, this week has been nothing short of full panto season meets North Pole workshop, with a generous helping of end-of-term sparkle. Woodlands has laughed, sung, glittered, danced and jingled its way through these final days, and I could not be prouder of our children or more grateful to our wonderful staff.

Our Wrexham student teacher in 2DR has now had the complete December training experience - in other words, they've survived the true test of primary education: teaching during the final week of term.

We began with our beautiful Reception Nativity, performed on both Monday and Tuesday to two packed audiences. The Nativity is such a rite of passage: a moment that stays with families for years. Whether you're a shepherd with slightly droopy tea-towel headwear, a determined wise person clutching gifts, or an angel whose halo refuses to behave, there is something timeless, tender and profoundly special about this performance. Our pupils were extraordinary, and our families were warm, supportive and emotional in all the right places. Even our children from the Resourced Provision popped in to see what all the fabulous singing was about, and as an inclusive school we welcomed their visit, even for a brief time.

Throughout the week, we hosted a range of visitors and meetings, including SALT appointments, safeguarding discussions and multi-agency support. Year 5/6 held their brilliantly chaotic Christmas Bingo, with parents competing as enthusiastically as their children, and lively Christmas Quiz, which featured equal parts teamwork and good-natured debate.

By Wednesday, the festive momentum was unstoppable. The whole school gathered for our much-loved Christmas Lunch - paper crowns slightly askew, crackers firing off in all directions, and jokes so bad they were excellent. Year 2 completed their final Judo sessions, SLT met (with only minor cracker-hat slippage), and staff managed to prep for next term amidst all the festive chaos.

On Thursday morning, Badgers, Owls and Reception Foxes welcomed families for joyful Stay & Play Christmas sessions, full of crafts, songs and enormous pride. Reception followed this with their own Christmas Party, while pupils from Years 1–6 had a sing song in school, having learned all their carols and not been able to travel to Astbury Lodge to sing carols for residents because of the weather. The vast majority of our pupils enjoy this annual event, it is a moment of genuine connection and community spirit that touches everyone who takes part and reminds us all that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

Thursday also brought one of the children's favourite moments of the term: our Winning House Celebration. A huge congratulations to Team Biles, who claimed first place this term! Attenborough finished second, followed by Scott and Fletcher - all celebrated for their fantastic effort and teamwork. Biles enjoyed a wonderful celebration on Thursday, and KS2 even had a special Lego session, which went down extremely well (with both pupils and certain staff who 'accidentally' joined in).

And as if that wasn't enough joy, we were treated to live music from our very own Jonny, who performed for the RP as a warm-up before singing for the whole school today. Watching the children listen, sway, sing and beam was a highlight of the week.

Finally, and very gratefully, staff enjoyed a surprise coffee and doughnut van visit this morning – thanks Mrs Simkins for organising this. There's something magical about watching a tired teacher at

the end of term wrap their hands around a hot drink and remember what warmth feels like. And our amazing PTA gifted every child in school a little something 😊

Friday was our final flourish! The RP Christmas Party ran throughout the day and at 2pm we officially broke up for Christmas, sending home hundreds of excited children and a heroic set of staff who have more than earned a well-deserved rest.

This week has been a perfect snapshot of Woodlands at its very best, full of joy, care, community and childhood wonder. Our staff have worked tirelessly, our children have shone, and the vast majority of our families have recognised our hard work and supported us with warmth and kindness every step of the way.

As we head into the holidays, I want to say a heartfelt thank you for your trust, your partnership and your positivity throughout this term. It has been an extraordinary year: busy, emotional, exciting, challenging and rewarding in equal measure. I have chosen to show gratitude this year, rather than focus on the sad things that have happened to my family, and be thankful for the positives and the people who have made the year so great.

Wishing all our families a peaceful, joy-filled Christmas holiday period and a very happy New Year. We look forward to welcoming you back in January, hopefully refreshed, recharged and with slightly less glitter in your hair.