



# FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2014

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday 20th January	Staff training (no pupils in school)
Friday 24th January	10am-12pm —ASD forum
Thursday 6th February	10am-12pm —PMLD forum
Monday 10th February	1pm-3pm — SLD/MLD forum
Thursday 13th February	6pm-8pm— Valentines disco
Friday 14th February	End of term 3

## A MESSAGE FROM PEGGY...

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a fun and relaxing Christmas break.

As always, lots went on last term and the weeks were full of Christmas celebrations, amongst other things.

In this newsletter, you can read about the many events that took place including raising money for Children in Need, the Christmas Disco, Christmas Nativity and our first Woodstock @ Christmas event.

I would like to welcome some new staff who have started with us this term. Janie Tregaskes has joined us as a Teacher while Lola Lilley, Jessica Burford, Megan Armstrong, Katy Webber and Joshua Ellis have started as Teaching Assistants. We wish them all the best in their new roles.

I am sorry to announce that Marie Nolan-Cooke, Jade Latter, Lesley Glover, Vikki

Corlett and Paula Wraight have left Five Acre Wood. We would like to thank them all for their hard work and wish them the best in future.

Now that our Friends of Five Acre Wood School charity is up and running, we were delighted to find out this week that we have been awarded £8,000 from The Childwick Trust for Eye Gaze equipment.

This is very exciting as it will offer all of our students who are unable to articulate their needs without specialist support access to state of the art technology that has the power to give them a voice. We are very grateful to The Childwick Trust for making such an investment in our students and we can't wait for the equipment to arrive!

Finally, it is with great sadness that I have to inform you that one of our pupils, George Spencer-Hopkins of Fox class, passed away over



the Christmas break.

George started at Five Acre Wood in Reception and had been at the school for just over 3 years. He will be missed by all the staff and children at the school, but especially by the staff that worked with him and his friends who moved up through the school with him. You can read our obituary to George on page 3.

George's family are asking for donations for Cobtree Play School. Any donations can be sent to Albany Funerals, 669 Loose Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9UX.

Best wishes,

Peggy.

*Peggy*

Friends of Five Acre Wood School



Registered Charity Number 1153151.

## SYCAMORE VISIT



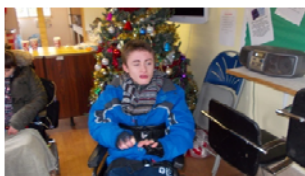
Some of the students from Sycamore class travelled to Squirrel's Riding Stables to see the horses, experiencing the smells and environment.

We visited the coffee shop

where there was a Christmas tree and had a snack and drinks. Then we went to get to know the ponies. Several of them popped their heads over their doors to say hello and

one of the ponies came out of his stable so that we could come much closer to him. We then went into the Tack Room and experienced the smells of the leather saddles and bridles.

All in all it was a most enjoyable visit. Many thanks to Hayley Squirrel and Louise Douglas for making us feel welcome.



## RABBIT CLASS

Rabbit class were very busy in the lead up to Christmas. We enjoyed all the different art and craft activities, including making Christmas cards (both for the Christmas fair and for home), peppermint creams and Christmas dinner placemats. We also had fun making snowmen and snowflakes for our winter display. I think you will agree, our display looks amazing!

We have got lots planned for the new term. Our main story in literacy will be The Gruffalo and we will be using The Hungry Caterpillar in numeracy to help us with our pattern making.



## WILLOW CLASS UPDATE



Willow class had a great time over at the Post 16 department at Aylesford this term.

We have been trying out the trampolines and really loved bouncing.

The young leaders from the classes there have taught us how to stay safe on the



trampoline and have fun. Thank you young leaders and Kirstie Hemingway for taking us on them.



## CHRISTMAS DISCO



On Friday 6th December, pupils at Five Acre Wood School got into the festive spirit at the Christmas disco. The disco was arranged by the Family Council and was great fun—even Father Christmas made an appearance!

The event was a huge success, with over 100 people attending. Pupils had a great time dancing to music played by the DJ and choosing their



favourite songs, with prizes given to the best dancers.

We would like to thank everyone involved in organising this event.

## GEORGE SPENCER-HOPKINS

We are very sad to announce that one of our primary children, George Spencer Hopkins, passed away during the Christmas break.

George started at Five Acre Wood in Reception and had been at the school for just over 3 years.

George was a very popular member of his class and always came in with a beaming smile on his face.

George was also known around the school for his cheerful nature, infectious giggle and cheeky character.

George had a love of cars, something which he loved to talk about to everyone, and often made us laugh with the way he used to dress up in different clothes, including hairbands, hats and feather boas!

George will be sorely missed throughout the school by everyone who had the pleasure of working with him.

## CHILDREN IN NEED

On Friday 15th November 2013, pupils and staff at Five Acre Wood School helped raise money for children in need.

Various activities took part through the day and pupils were able to wear their own spotty clothes for the day for a voluntary contribution of £1.

There were two 'spotty'



discos, during which there were cakes for sale for pupils and staff to buy.

In addition, pupils collected pennies and stuck these on to a giant Pudsey picture.

Five Acre Wood's Post 16 students also got involved at Aylesford, with a basketball match, face painting and a competition to guess the number of balloons in a car.

A total of £230 was raised. We would like to thank all those involved in organising this event and to everyone who contributed.



## WOODSTOCK @ CHRISTMAS

Delivered on a scale which defies belief, our 'Woodstock' festivals have rapidly established themselves as legendary phenomenon, where a spectacular fusion of music, theatre and themed entertainment is used to capture the dreams and imaginations of our pupils.

The latest of these events, Woodstock @ Christmas, was held on December 11th 2013, at Aylesford School Sports College, who have worked in close partnership with us for many years and where our Post 16 pupils are based.

Don't for one minute be fooled into thinking this was a mere Christmas school fete: where else would a local mini cab firm – Strood Cabs Limited - lay on fleet of vehicles to transport all pupils and staff to and from the event, at absolutely no cost? Where else would you find sales executives from Maidstone Harley-Davidson dressed as Santa's on Harley's, being joined by marked Kent Police cars to provide an official escort for the convoy? Where else would the 'real' Father Christmas lead the convoy, 'surfing' in on a Fire Engine? And this was just the start of an authentically breathtaking festival, where local and national



organisations pulled out all the stops to create the experience of a lifetime for our inspirational pupils.

The 'main event' was headed up by some amazing international artists, kindly provided by 'ARD-UK Music And Entertainment Agents' and the 'Live And Love Music' agency.

Pupils and staff were definitely spoilt for choice in the diverse and truly exceptional performances that were delivered by critically acclaimed musicians such as Kaleidophone, Tara Priya, Rachel G, Rajiv, Ollie Banks and Mr Rootsy. Between them, these inspirational acts have 'racked up'

millions of YouTube hits, awards, downloads and album sales - they certainly added the 'X Factor' to proceedings

and wowed everyone with their 'knock out' sets comprised of a range of covers and original material, sprinkled with Christmas classics!

Add into the mix a custom made 'Grotto', a present per pupil (donated by numerous high street toy stores and also funded by both The Maidstone

and The Malling District Lions Clubs) a bespoke Father Christmas outfit made by a costume designer from the Harry Potter films, a double decker playbus, themed attire provided by Antrix Costumes, a staggering range of Christmas props (supplied by Dallas Events in Ashford), coupled with juggling elves on stilts, and the event became an astonishing 'Narnia style' feast of Christmas themed magic!

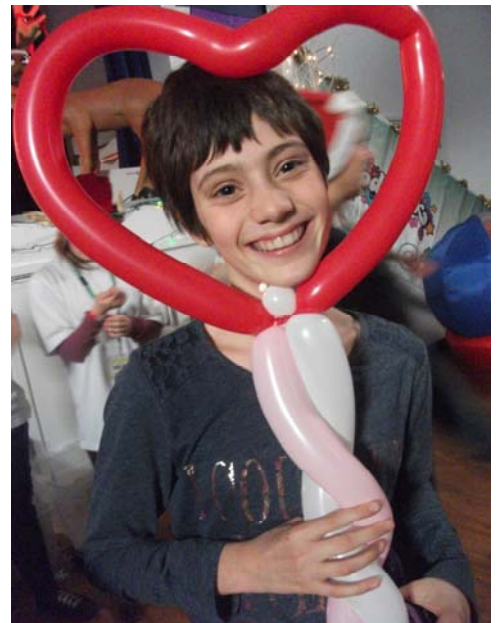
Thank you to everyone

that helped to create this amazing 'out of this world' event - Dallas Events, The Rotary Club, The Hazlitt Theatre, Smyths Toy Shop, Hobbycraft, Antrix Costumes and Themes, Harlequin Fancy Dress, The Entertainer, Hawkin's Bazaar, APK Contractor's Ltd, Recognition Express (Rochester), Bees Knees Play Buses, Papa's Barn, Maidstone Harley-Davidson, ARD-UK Music And Entertainment Agents, Live And Love Music, Strood Cabs Limited, Aylesford School Sports College, Kent Police, Kent Fire And Rescue and NSP Recording Studios.

In a day and age when many people are entirely driven by money, these organisations demonstrated the desire and absolute commitment to putting the time and effort into supporting our event, whatever the cost incurred to themselves. Thank you from everyone at Five Acre Wood School for making such an incredible difference to the lives of our pupils.









## CHRISTMAS NATIVITY



To celebrate Christmas this year, the Lower School at Five Acre Wood took part in a nativity play on 18th December 2013, performing to family, friends, carers and staff.

There was lots of excitement as pupils filled all roles and contributed in various ways, from dressing up in costumes to singing, signing and dancing.

The Christmas Nativity was very well received by the audience and it was clear to see how much effort went in to organising, rehearsing and preparing costumes.

Pupils from Sparrow and Badger class narrated the nativity story throughout while each class took to the stage, signing and singing songs including Little Donkey, Twinkle Twinkle and Away in a Manger.

Five Acre Wood School would like to thank everyone involved in organising the performance and to all those involved for supporting and encouraging our pupils.



## POST 16 CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Monday 16th December, the Post 16 department had a Christmas dinner for students and staff.

Students and staff prepared



and cooked the dinner, which included turkey, roast potatoes, sprouts, carrots, Yorkshire pudding and stuffing balls. Students also designed and made their own placemats.

Thank you to all those who helped organise and cook the dinner, it was enjoyed by everyone who attended!

