

# FOCUS Newsletter

November 2018

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Dear parents, carers and teachers,

In our November edition of the FOCUS newsletter, we want to provide you with reminders of all the events coming up before the holidays (including [Winterfest](#) - see p.2), as well as highlight FOCUS' recent fundraising activities. Finally, we want to share another message from the school about how parent giving is helping to fund additional learning resources for the children (see below). Thank you for all your generous support!

FOCUS 2019 team (email: [focusucps@gmail.com](mailto:focusucps@gmail.com))

## Reading for pleasure: Mrs. Durning's thank-you



*"International evidence suggests reading for pleasure offers massive cognitive and emotional benefits, as well as better attainment in maths and literacy." Teresa Cremin, TES 26/01/2018*

A huge thank-you to our parent community for supporting our ever-developing 'Reading for Pleasure' culture. This month, FOCUS has very kindly purchased some new reading books for the school. This contribution, on behalf of our parent community, will benefit many children. These books are being devoured and I have already received my first book review from a child in Year 5. 70 books were purchased from Barrington Stoke Publishers. They publish books for children that attempt to break down the barriers that prevent children from becoming fluent readers. Many of the UK's greatest authors and illustrators contribute towards their fabulous collection of children's fiction.

Presently, I am developing an outside reading area. FOCUS has purchased a reading shed and several cushions to help create a warm and cozy reading space. Hopefully this space will be fully constructed by January, ready for the spring term.

We are incredibly grateful for these new additions to support reading for pleasure at UCPS.

### Upcoming reading initiatives:

- 7 December at Winterfest: **Heffers Festive Bookstall** (cash payments are quicker and easier).
- February: **Love our Library**, non-fiction focus. Further information to be provided January 2019.
- Spring 2: Key Stage 2 **author visit** (fingers crossed!)

## Save the dates

### Saturday 1 December

Deadline for Christmas tree orders

### Monday 3 Dec. to Friday 14 Dec.

Year 2 Post Office (see page 2)

### Friday 7 Dec., 3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Winterfest (see more on page 2)

### Saturday 8 Dec., 8:15 a.m.-12ish

Christmas tree collection

### Friday 14 Dec., after school

Reception bake sale and Garden Club jumble sale

### Monday 17 Dec., various times

School disco (Reception 1:15 pm; Y1-Y2 at 2:00 pm; Y3-Y5 at 3:30 pm.).

## Christmas tree fundraiser

**Reminder about the Inaugural FOCUS Christmas tree sale**



If you haven't already done so, please consider buying your tree this year from FOCUS, which is selling high-quality and locally sourced Christmas trees, with all profits going to the school.

### How does it work?

Please follow this [link](#) to place an order and see payment options. Please do [email FOCUS](#) with any questions or technical issues.

### Key dates

**Saturday 1 Dec.:** final orders and payment received.

**Saturday 8 Dec.:** collect at school car park 8:15 am-12 pm.

## Winterfest: we need your help to make it a success!



Winterfest will take place after school on **Friday 7 December**, and there is an extensive programme of festive activities and musical entertainment planned! Take a look at our Winterfest [programme](#)!

We are looking for volunteers to help set up Winterfest **after school on Thurs. 6 Dec** and **during the school day on Fri. 7 Dec**. We also need volunteers from each class to run stalls for **30–45 minute slots** between **3:15–6:00 pm** during Winterfest. Spreadsheets are being circulated by class reps for each of the classes' areas of responsibility. Get in touch with [FOCUS](#) or your class rep if you can help - thank you so much!!

### We are also in need of the following donations:

- Chocolate/candy (leftover Halloween candy is great) for tombola;
- Raffle items, large and small;
- Bottles of wine;
- New or used items in great condition that would make good gifts for the "Secret Room", where students pick a gift for their parents and have it wrapped;
- Gift wrapping paper and supplies;
- New or used stuffed animals for 'Adopt-a-Pet' stall.

**All donations can be dropped off at reception. Thank you!!**

### Some highlights from FOCUS fundraising activities

- Year 3 bake sale and uniform sale (28/9/18): about **£462**
- Gardening Club bake sale (12/10/18): **£208.03**
- Year 2 bake sale (19/10/18): **£315.66**
- Film Night (9/11/18): **£411.23**
- Year 1 bake sale (16/11/18): **£332.31**
- [Co-op Local Community Fund](#): **£2218.49** raised in the last quarter by parents that have chosen UCPS as their Co-op cause. **Fab!**

Thank you to the many parents who have already signed up to volunteer as class reps for events such as the Winterfest and for the FOCUS Committee. **We are still looking for additional helpers, including class reps for the following classes:** Acorns, Sunflowers, Dragonflies and Skylarks. If you would like to get involved, reach out to Anahi Romero or Ellie Stamatopoulos ([focusucps@gmail.com](mailto:focusucps@gmail.com)).

## Christmas Post Office

Our annual school Christmas Post Office will run from **Monday, 3 December through Friday 14 December (2 weeks)** at the main gate near reception.

### How does it work?

Year 2 children will sell stamps (5p each) **every day at drop-off (8:15–8:25 am) and pick-up (3:15–3:30 pm, except Fridays)**, which can be used to post Christmas cards that will be delivered within the school.

Please make sure names and classes are written on each envelope before posting. This is a great opportunity to send a festive wish, or words of gratitude, to a school mate, teacher, or member of staff.

All proceeds will go towards the school, but our main goal is to provide an opportunity for our children in Year 2 to apply their maths skills in a real-world situation.

### Volunteering for the Post Office

If you and your child are interested in volunteering at the post office, please contact Shosh Miller-Langley (Swifts) or Mariko Brittain (Robins).

Thank you in advance to all the Year 2 children and their parents for adding a little extra to their school day and for helping making the Christmas Post Office happen!

## [easyfundraising.co.uk](http://easyfundraising.co.uk): give to the school while you shop!

By registering with the UCPS-dedicated [easyfundraising.co.uk](http://easyfundraising.co.uk) account, it's so easy for us as parents to raise money for the school when doing any online shopping on sites such as Amazon, John Lewis, Sainsbury's (and many more).

So far, **76 parents/carers** have signed up to the UCPS account and we have raised **£1,569**. Just think how much more we can raise for the school if we all sign up and shop this way! To sign up, follow the instructions on the [easyfundraising](http://easyfundraising) website, or see FOCUS' message on this topic on Classlist.

