



Head's Blog: What Makes Christmas Special

"It was simple and shared and that's what made it magical."

When I was a child, Christmas felt wonderfully slow and full of anticipation. The day before Christmas was always buzzing with excitement. Christmas music played all day, while my brother and I helped Mum make mince pies and sausage rolls, and the Christmas pudding, which came ready-made, became our responsibility. We pushed coins into it knowing that after our turkey dinner the next day, Dad would ignite it with brandy and we'd hunt for coins to see who had found the most.

Christmas was full of traditions. In the evening there was always a programme on television, because in those days the TV decided what you watched, and if you missed it, you missed it. We'd sit together watching favourites like *Morecambe and Wise* and *The Two Ronnies*, while our parents laughed at jokes we didn't quite understand. Meanwhile, our thoughts drifted to Christmas morning and the hope that Santa might bring some toys: an Evel Knievel stunt cycle we could launch down the stairs, a Stretch Armstrong to be pulled to impossible lengths, maybe a cap gun with its sulphur-like smell or, if we had been really good, a new set of Matchbox cars.

Christmas Eve was the only night of the year when my brothers and I *wanted* to go to bed early, convinced that if we fell asleep quickly, Christmas Day would arrive sooner. We left a small sack under the tree, pinned an old sock above the fireplace, and headed to bed. I remember lying there, wide awake, wondering if I would hear Santa arrive or stay awake long enough to catch him. Of course, I never did. I always fell asleep. Christmas morning revealed toys that needed no screens, only imagination. Christmas wasn't rushed. Toys needed assembling, stockings held oranges and chocolate coins, and we gathered around paper hats, flaming puddings, and far too much food. It was simple and shared and that's what made it magical.

Looking back now, it isn't the toys or gifts that shine brightest in my memory. It's the simplicity... the cooking, the laughter, the stories, and the feeling of family being together.

In a famous Christmas story, *The Grinch* comes to a sudden realisation: *"Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas... means a little bit more."* And I think the Christmas grump stumbled upon the truth. The Grinch realised that Christmas isn't about things, but about kindness, gratitude, and togetherness, and his heart instantly grew three sizes.

- Kindness costs nothing, yet it can completely change someone's day. And everyone, whatever age, can be kind.
- Christmas gives us a moment to show gratitude to people who care for us, teach us, support us, and make our days better in ways we may forget to notice. It's a time to say thank you, not just for presents, but for kindness, patience, and the small, everyday things we often take for granted.
- Christmas has a special way of bringing people together. It gathers families and friends around tables, in living rooms, dining rooms, classrooms, and school halls, reminding us to slow down and spend time with one another — talking, laughing, remembering, and simply being together.

If we all show kindness, gratitude, and togetherness this Christmas, we *will* make a positive difference. Every time we help someone, include someone in a game, or simply say thank you, we make the world a little better. Christmas is the chance to pause, to appreciate what we have, to look after one another, and to share a little more joy and kindness than usual. If we do that, even in the smallest ways, then Christmas has already done its job.

Happy Christmas

We enjoyed a lovely Tuesday evening at the Junior Carol Service at All Saints' Church. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the season and end the term. The choir sang beautifully and our readers read clearly throughout. Thank you to everyone involved for making the evening so special and especially to The Revd David Salter for leading the service.

We would like to thank all our students for your hard work, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes to learning throughout this term. Your curiosity, effort, and willingness to try your best make our school a wonderful place to be every day. We say a big thanks to our staff for their dedication and hard work in supporting all our young people. Thank you also to our parents and carers for your continued support, encouragement, and partnership with our school. Your involvement and trust are truly appreciated. We wish everyone a restful Christmas holiday and a happy New Year and look forward to welcoming you back in the new term on Tuesday 6 January.

Farewell to Mrs Balloch

We say a fond farewell to Mrs Rebecca Balloch, who has been our Deputy Headteacher over the past year. During her time at Kingham, Mrs Balloch has been an excellent SENCo and a dedicated class teacher in Reception and Year 1, supporting pupils with care and commitment. She also brought her love of music to the school, leading singing assemblies, running the choir, and taking our singers out into the community. We thank Mrs Balloch for everything she has given to Kingham and wish her every success in her new role as Headteacher at Ampney Crucis Primary School.



Good luck, Mrs Pearce

We wish Mrs Pearce all the very best as she begins her maternity leave to prepare for the arrival of her second baby. We send her our warmest good wishes and look forward to sharing her happy news. Mrs Putt will be teaching Year 4 in the new year, and we know the class will be in very safe hands.



Diary Dates

Mon 5 Jan	INSET Day
Tues 6 Jan	First day back
Weds 14 Jan	CNPS U11s Swimming
Weds 28 Jan	CNPS U11s Hockey
Fri 30 Jan	Year 3 Class Assembly 2:45pm
Thurs 5 Feb	Year 3 Ancient Egypt Day
Fri 6 Feb	West Oxon Cross County Finals
Fri 6 Feb	Year 2 Class Assembly 2:45pm
Wed 11 Feb	Year 2 trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park
Thurs 12 Feb	Year 5 and 6 trip to Gloucester
Fri 13 Feb	Last Day of Half Term
Mon 23 Feb	First day back
Wed 4 Mar	CNPS Year 1 Dance Festival
Tues 10 Mar	KPSA Movie Night
Tues 17 Mar	Y6 Sports Tournament at Kingham Hill pm
Weds 18 Mar	Parents Evening 3:30pm – 7pm
Thurs 19 Mar	Parents Evening 3:30pm – 6pm