At this time of year we think of all the people who are near and dear to us, the people who make a difference in our lives. It is also the time of the year for kindness. The word of the month for December is Kindness. It is at this time of the year that the word kindness takes on added meaning. The Holiday Season is celebrated a number of different ways by our Anthony Burns Families, but one common thread in all of these celebrations is kindness. Simple, genuine acts of kindness, modeled by adults, are one of the best gifts that any child can receive. Through this modeling, children begin to understand the beauty of kindness and in return begin to practice acts of kindness as well.

In my job as Principal, I have been able to witness incredible acts of kindness, many going unnoticed by the general public. I have seen children motivated by what they see and begin to act in a kind way. I urge all of us to take a minute to practice an act of kindness these next few weeks and perhaps plant the seed that will lead others to acts of kindness through the year.

As winter weather approaches, please make sure your child knows what to do if school releases early. Where do they go? Do we have updated phone numbers? What if school is cancelled? How do I know if school is cancelled? Please check the student handbook and our website for all of this information.

So that you may plan appropriately I would like to give you the information on the SOL dates for this year. Our third, fourth, and fifth grade students will be taking these tests between May 16 and June 10. Please plan any appointments around these dates. Thank you for your cooperation.

On behalf of Mrs. Langridge, the office staff, and myself we would like to extend to all of our Anthony Burns families a most safe and happy holiday season.

Make It a GREAT Season – The Choice Is Yours.

Nancy S. Coll
Principal
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December – Important Dates

Word of the month: **KINDNESS**

Dec. 1  Lifetouch Picture retakes

Dec. 11  School Geography Bee

Dec. 14  5th grade Focus class to Fords Theatre, DC

Dec. 15  1:10 Early Dismissal Elementary Only

Dec. 17  Chorus Concert: K-2 at 9:45; 3-5 at 1:45; Friends & Family at 7:00 pm

Dec. 18  9:30 ABES Spelling Bee
Interims Go Home

Dec. 23  First Day of Winter Break
Flu season is around the corner. The flu vaccination is a great way to prevent illness in your family and keep school attendance up. Here is some basic information to consider.

This year's annual flu shot will offer protection against H1N1 flu (swine flu) virus, in addition to two other influenza viruses that are expected to be in circulation this flu season. A vaccine that protects against four strains of the virus will also be available, as will a high-dose flu vaccine for adults age 65 and older.

Influenza is a respiratory infection that can cause serious complications, particularly to young children and to older adults. Flu shots are the most effective way to prevent influenza and its complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age or older be vaccinated annually against influenza.

### Flu shot
- Administered via injection/needle
- Contains killed viruses - you CAN’T pass the flu along to anyone else
- Approved for use in people 6 months of age and older
- Can be used in people at increased risk of flu-related complications, including pregnant women and those with chronic medical conditions

### Nasal Spray
- Administered through a nasal spray
- Contains weakened live viruses that won’t give you the flu but that can, in rare cases, can be transmitted to others
- Approved for non-pregnant, healthy people ages 2 to 49 years
- Not given to those with chronic or suppressed immune systems, or to children and adolescents receiving aspirin therapy.

Whatever option you choose, remember it takes 2 weeks for full coverage to take place.

Other steps you can take to help protect yourself from the flu and other viruses. Good hygiene remains your primary defense against contagious illnesses.

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Use an alcohol-based sanitizer on your hands if soap and water aren’t available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth whenever possible.
- Avoid crowds when the flu is most prevalent in your area.
- Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep, exercise regularly, drink plenty of fluids, eat a nutritious diet, and manage your stress.

If your child's medical file is incomplete, please complete ASAP to ensure your child can continue attending school. Notes will be coming home with an exclusion date per VA State law.

Hearing and Vision screening has been completed. Contact me if you have any concerns.

Please remember to send the original prescription box in with your child’s medication.

Cough drops must have a MD note - I am sorry - just the way it is.

Have a warm and merry holiday season!

Debbie McCue RN, BSN
**REMINDE RES:**

**It is Stafford County School Policy:** You must bring ID when entering the building for any reason, such as volunteering in a classroom, eating lunch with your child, attending an assembly or checking your child out for an appointment.

**Emergency Cards:** Please notify the school office of any changes in address, phone numbers and emergency contacts

**School instructional hours are 9:00am to 3:40pm. Students are not to be dropped off** at the school **before 8:35am**, except for Chorus and other scheduled events.

**Dismissal:** It is school policy that we receive notes from both/all parents when a student will be riding a different bus or leaving as a car rider with a friend. Please make sure a note is sent to the teacher regarding any dismissal change.

**Daycare van riders:** Parents please remember to inform your child’s daycare facility when your child is absent or is picked up early due to illness or an appointment.

**Lost & Found:** Please have your child check for their lost coats, clothing items or lunchboxes at the lost and found across from the cafeteria. **ALL UNCLAIMED LOST & FOUND ITEMS WILL BE DONATED.**

**Student Accident Protection Insurance** is available through Scholastic Insurers. Forms can be picked up in the office.

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**ABSENCES**

JUST A REMINDER ABOUT WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL. YOU NEED TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL AT 658-6800. **ALSO WE MUST RECEIVE A NOTE FROM YOU TO EXCUSE ANY CHILD’S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL.** IF NO NOTE ARRIVES, WE WILL FOLLOW THE STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS POLICY OF RECORDING AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE.
Winter break is full of opportunities for your youngster to read—and for your family to spend extra time together. Try these activities that fit right into the season.

Check the mail
Gather in the living room, and let your child read aloud from the greeting cards, postcards, and family newsletters that arrive in your mailbox. He could also read announcements of holiday events—this will give him practice reading dates, times, and addresses, too.

Read to relatives
It’s fun to snuggle up and read to Grandpa! If you visit with relatives, your youngster could show them how he’s learning to read. If you’re not seeing extended family in person, suggest that your child read to them long-distance via phone call or video chat.

Idea: Get a book of plays for children. He and his cousins could choose one, practice reading their lines, and perform it for the adults.

Play, build, or cook
Your youngster can practice reading instructions when you play a board game, assemble a train set, or make a holiday casserole. Help him read each step aloud. Diagrams and other graphics often accompany assembly instructions—and when your child uses them, tell him that’s “reading,” too.

Let’s write poetry
Is your child a poet who doesn’t know it? Suggest that she turn to favorite books or best friends for inspiration. Here’s how.

● From book to poem. Have your youngster look through a book and pick out words she could rhyme. In a nonfiction book about castles, she might choose knight and bright or moat and boat. “In the castle lived a very brave knight. His suit of armor was shiny and bright.”

● Poems with friends. Encourage your child to write a poem with a friend. They could take turns adding lines to their verse. Have them agree on a topic (say, recess). Then, your youngster could write, “We love flying high on swings,” and her friend might add, “And hanging from bars and rings.”

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At the library

The library is more than a building full of free books to read. It’s also a place to make memories and help your youngster develop a love of reading. Consider these ideas.

Read around a theme. Ask your child to pick a theme for your library visit. Examples: snow, holidays, foods around the world. Then, go on an adventure to find related material. For snow, your youngster might check out a picture book about a snowman, a non-fiction book about an Olympic skier, and a winter issue of National Geographic Kids magazine.

Tour your area. If your library system has multiple branches, try visiting a few. The children’s sections probably have different types of reading areas, book selections, and activities. Together, you’ll become familiar with all that your libraries have to offer.

Learn from story time. Library story hours are a great way for your child to discover new books. Attend one, and then let your youngster use it as a jumping-off point. She might look up stories by an author she enjoyed or a graphic novel like the one the librarian read.

Q&A

Young researchers

Q This year in school, my daughter has to do research on an inventor of her choice. That sounds like a big job for a little one! How can I help her?

A You might think of research as something that older kids do. But research is just the process of gathering information.

Your daughter may collect facts about her inventor by reading a biography or visiting a museum website. She could even interview a neighbor or relative who uses one of the person’s inventions on the job.

Remind your daughter that she should always double-check facts in case a book or a website is incorrect or outdated. If a book says an inventor had more than 100 patents, she could see if a history or education website states the same number.

Q&A Young researchers

Make a writing kit

My son, Evan, wasn’t showing a lot of interest in writing stories. I remembered that our daughter really enjoyed writing with glitter pens and little notepads. That gave me an idea.

I gathered supplies like paper, sticky notes, index cards, colored pens and pencils, blank cards and envelopes, a hole puncher, scissors, and glue. I put everything into a shoe box, labeled it “Evan’s Writing Kit,” and presented the box to my son.

At first, he just drew pictures, but soon he began leaving notes around the house for us to read. And one day, he showed me a book he wrote about trucks. He had drawn and labeled a different type of vehicle on each index card, hole-punched the cards, and fastened them together with a nut and bolt!

Having his own writing kit with various materials seems to motivate Evan—and the whole family is enjoying his writing.

Fun with Words

Parts-of-speech bags

Noun, verb, or adjective…this game makes it fun to identify parts of speech.

Materials: 3 paper lunch bags, marker, scissors, old newspapers and magazines

First, help your youngster label each bag with a different part of speech: nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Can he tell you what each one does? If he isn’t sure, here’s a quick guide:

• A noun names a person, place, or thing (cricket).
• An adjective describes a noun or pronoun (loud).
• A verb shows action (chirps).

Then, have your child cut apart headlines into individual words and sort them into the bags. (Set aside any words that don’t fit into the categories.)

Finally, he can draw one word from each bag and try to make up a sentence that includes all of them. Example: A cricket chirps loudly, but he is not as loud as a cicada.

Note: When he’s comfortable identifying those parts of speech, add bags for pronouns and adverbs. A pronoun takes the place of a noun (he instead of cricket). An adverb describes a verb (louder).