

School tries (and fails) to ban Christmas

Has the meaning of Christmas been lost? Lady Lumley's School reversed its decision to ban festivities after more than 500 pupils wrote letters arguing that the holiday is still valuable.



Ho ho ho! In Dr Seuss's book, the Grinch tries to steal Christmas from the inhabitants of Whoville.

"No cards, no parties, no gifts and no Christmas tree."

This year, teachers at Lady Lumley's School in North Yorkshire decided that enough is enough.

The true meaning of Christmas has been lost in an "an avalanche of **commercialisation**," said RE teacher Chris Paul. Rather than a day of religious celebration and goodwill, the festive season has become "a very stressful, expensive, **argumentative** and lonely time" for many.

The school announced a ban on all Christmas activities and decorations. That is, unless students could persuade Mrs Paul to change her mind.

"If the arguments are good enough, we

might see fairy lights in Lady Lumley's once more."

Within days, the school received more than 500 emails and letters. Pupils thought about the true meaning of Christmas, the value of tradition and its place in the modern world.

Mrs Paul was impressed by "thoughtful" students who made "a strong case". So impressed, in fact, that Lady Lumley's School is now once more **adorned** with baubles, bells and boughs of holly.

Has the meaning of Christmas been lost?

Holy night?

Yes, say some. Values like goodwill and selflessness have been hijacked by retailers who want our money — just look at the

Coca-Cola and John Lewis adverts. Each year, the decorations go up earlier to get us spending for longer. Most of us aren't even Christian anymore, so Christmas has become completely detached from its origins.

Don't be such a grinch, reply others. Christmas values are alive and well in charity appeals, as well as the increased focus on social issues like homelessness and elderly loneliness over the festive period. Besides, this time of year has a unique power to bring families together, and give us time to rest and reflect after a year of hard work.

Q & A

Q: What do we know?

A: Lady Lumley's School, a secondary school in North Yorkshire, has reversed its decision to

ban Christmas activities and decorations after students wrote more than 500 letters asking teachers to reconsider.

Q: What do we not know?

A: Whether we will ever be able to truly say that

the meaning of Christmas has been lost. Every family or person has a different relationship with the holiday.

YOU DECIDE

Should non-religious people celebrate Christmas? Why/why not?

ACTIVITIES

Draw and decorate your own Christmas tree! You don't have to use traditional items like stars or angels if you don't want to. Use your imagination and invent your own Christmas traditions that mean something to you. For example, the decorations could represent the different parts of the world your family are from, or even your favourite sports team.

SOME PEOPLE SAY...

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others."
Bob Hope

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

WORD WATCH

Commercialisation – When something is run for purely financial gain. For example, some people think that shops use Christmas as a

tool to make people spend more money. This means that people end up caring more about expensive presents than things like love, charity and fellowship.



Argumentative – Tends to have lots of

arguments.

Adorned – Added decoration to make something more beautiful.

BECOME AN EXPERT

Read this article on [theday.co.uk](https://www.theday.co.uk) for links to recommended videos and further reading.



Notes

