



Newsletter 5th February 2021

Dear parents,

If variety is the spice of life, then lockdown is the white sliced bread. But hopefully, we can change all that in this newsletter which is packed with uplifting news and feel-good stories. At first, I thought that I would struggle to find any real stories, so (and I am going to be honest with you here) I was going to make some up (Trump style). However, the good news has been flooding in, so there has been no need to include the non-real items in this newsletter – I had a particularly good one about the St James' Year 1's Around the World Yacht Team's record-breaking efforts, but never mind.

Everything is getting better at the moment, from COVID news to the days getting longer. Even the sun is shining again (at the time of writing).

Re-opening of schools

We have been told that we will learn more about the government's plan for reopening schools after the February half term. Until then, we have no idea about how/when/if this will happen, and we will all find out together via the news long before I hear through any official channels.

Once an announcement is made, I will be in touch with you as soon as I have been sent the official planning guidance and had the opportunity to determine how we will be able to meet the government's expectations.

Needless to say, we all want the children back in school as soon as possible. We really miss everyone!

Comic Relief's Red Nose Day - March 19th

I realise this is a little way off but please put the date in your diaries. Red Nose Day's theme this year is 'funny is power' and I'm sure we could all do with a laugh right now. After cringing last year about the amount of plastic waste caused by red noses, I was pleased to find out that this year they are plant based (probably glace cherries – goodness knows they are inedible anyway) which is a positive step forward. More information will follow about how we, as a school, will be laughing to raise money in March.

Every Mind Matters

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>

This website, by the NHS, is centred around mental health and wellbeing and includes specific advice for the coronavirus outbreak along with links to further support. It covers topics such as 'looking after children and young people during the coronavirus outbreak', 'looking after a child or young person's mental health', and 'looking after your own mental health'. After all, you have to put on your own oxygen mask, before you can help someone else with theirs.

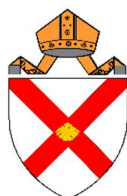
National Online Safety

Please take a look at the attached flyer with more information.

Kooth

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Kooth is a free online counselling app which is aimed at pupils aged 10 and up which contains discussion boards, free counselling, self-help tools and more. Whilst we hope pupils will not need to use it, the app may be



beneficial for some as a way to provide somewhere to turn to address any anxiety they may have now or in the future.

Kent Together

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus/kent-together>

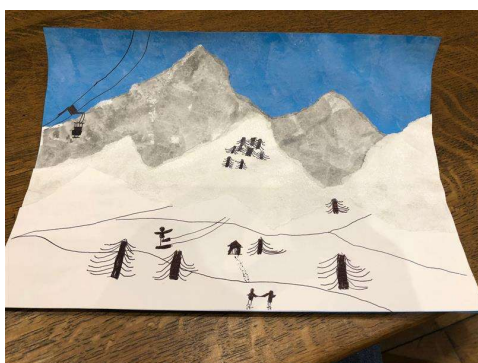
If you are vulnerable and need urgent support that cannot be met through existing support networks, then Kent Together may be able to help.

They can help with:

- making sure you have enough food and supplies
- picking up prescriptions (except in Tunbridge Wells)
- making sure you have someone to talk to by phone, Skype or Facetime.

Art Live KS2

I have been very impressed by the standard of work and enthusiastic attitude of all the children who have been part of Art Live. Here are just some examples:



Ski scene by Noah Garner



Ski scene by Samuel Steadman-Jones



Inspired by Austrian artist Hunderwasser by Finley Stocker

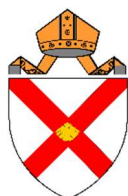
Mrs Williams

Polar Adventures

Year 2 have been going on Polar adventures for their topic. I thought this photo of Isla in my class was really fun to show what the children have been up to at home. On the right, we have a polar bear with different textures by Jamie Cruickshank.



Mrs Williams



Key Stage 2 Accelerated Reader Challenges - 05.02.21

Huge congratulations to the winners of this week's Accelerated Reader challenges.

Highest Individual Word Count	Highest Number of Quizzes Achieved	Highest Class Word Count
Toby in Deer Class	Jessica in Badger Class	Osprey Class
1,001,477 words	41 quizzes	5,271,323 words

Please keep encouraging your children to read and complete their AR quizzes. Every word counts!

Ms Simpson

Virtual Dance Competition

Just a reminder that we are bringing you and your families a St James' Virtual Dance competition to brighten up your lockdown! There are 3 categories - individual, team and family and we will be awarding winners for the novices and the pro dancers out there. Full details have been sent out via ParentMail. Please contact Mr Hodges or Mrs Raistrick for any further information or questions you may have. We look forward to seeing all your amazing routines!

Big Bird Watch



The RSPB invited the everyone in the country to take part in the Big Bird Watch on 29th-31st January and we were very happy to watch for and count how many birds visited us in Forest School. At this time of year, food can be scarce and birds need to keep eating as much as they can in preparation for spring when they will nest, so it is a perfect time to feed them. We put out bird seed and meal worms mixed with lard which the birds think of as a tasty treat! To help Mr Tutt, Miss Hayward, Mrs Walker and Mrs Johnson watch for birds we installed some bird feeding stations outside their office windows. Birds usually take a little time to get used to a new feeding place, but Miss Hayward's feeder has already had a few visitors. In Forest School we have been very lucky and have seen Goldcrests, Robins, Wrens, Magpies, Carrion Crows, Blackbirds, Song Thrushes, Blue Tits, Long-tailed Tits, Coal Tits and have heard the Great Spotted Woodpecker hammering on a tree. Some children have already let us know what birds they saw in their gardens, what have you seen?

Mrs Greenaway

Year 3 Design & Technology Projects

Year 3 are having great fun in Design Technology. We have been making sleeping bags for a toy and have learnt new skills including making and using a pattern, sewing a hem and sewing a seam. Here are photos of some of the



finished ones. The extra challenge was to have a go at adapting a simple pattern to make a jacket for their toy. I think we have found a fashion designer (see below). Hopefully the children managed to thread their own needles but we would like to say a huge 'Thank you' to all parents for their help and patience.



Mrs King

Year 6 Poetry Competition

As part of Children's Mental Health Week, Year 6 have been getting their creative juices flowing and have been writing poems about Coronavirus and the way the pandemic has made them (and the people around them) feel. To make it a bit more exciting, we made it in to a competition!

The winners' poems are at the end of this newsletter, so keep scrolling. They have been asked to choose a book that they would like to receive as a prize. We hope you enjoy reading the poems as much as we did. I have put links to the children's poems on the school website under the "children" tab (including the runners up), so please do take a look.

In Osprey Class Izzy Walker is the overall winner, but I just couldn't not give recognition to Georgia, Finlay and William as their poems were brilliant too, so I also wanted to share theirs.

Mr Hodges

From Owl Class, the runners up were: Hardy Sellers, Dylan Goldberg and Emily Martinez, who all wrote wonderfully emotive poems. The overall winners were: Freddie Goodyear and Saskia Darcy.

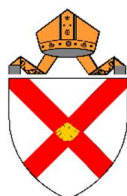
Mrs Holland and Mrs Raistrick

Isabella is the winner from Kestrel Class - producing a wonderful piece with beautiful language and imagery woven in. I've been amazed by the effort from the whole class and have also picked three runners up: Alfie Burns, Ollie Pooley and Vikashne Sanjeevan. Well done everyone!

Mr Stevens

And lastly, just before the poems

Do you ever search for a children's TV show that you loved back in 1981 to show your children ("hey – you're going to love this; it's what I used to watch when I was your age"), to be completely crushed at just how rubbish it



was? And then do you have to endure your children's mocking as they tear your fond childhood memories to pieces? Can you imagine a man with a glove puppet physically attacking people (via a synthetic emu) even being acceptable today?

These days children's TV is so sophisticated it would have been prime time viewing back in the early eighties (NumberJacks would probably have been sandwiched between the Onedin Line and Upstairs Downstairs). TV these days is brilliant!

Just more cause for celebration and positivity about the world today. Things are getting better every day...they really are.

Thank you all, as always.

John Tutt

Headteacher

INSIDE OUT

In a year that went very slow, a virus had the spotlight,
Our lives were turned upside down and gave us all a fright
Interfering with our day-to-day life and our plans,
Our country and the world were not covid fans.
As time stood still, we were all feeling very blue,
Sad, worried and scared, we were feeling these too.
But through this horrible mess, people were being kind,
Helping those to get better in body and in mind.
The doctors and nurses worked hard throughout,
True superheroes without a doubt.
Shopping for friends who were locked in with fear,
Being a shoulder to cry on when they shed a tear.
Looking out for your friends and caring for each other,
It's hard-seeing friends and family suffer.
When you're feeling down, and don't know what to do,
You could always think of Winnie the Pooh.
"You're braver than you believe and stronger than you seem",
This is what he said, it's true and not a dream.
Whatever you're feeling inside, let the feelings out,
It's okay not to be okay, nobody will shout.
This year there is more hope and better times ahead,
This is what the scientists and MP'S have said.
Hoping that everyone is fine, and not too sad,
This year is going to be better and for that I'm glad.

Izzy Walker



Wash Your Hands!

It has been dangerous,
People dying, no one to care for them
-wash your hands.
The NHS have been working all the hours,
Trying to make everybody healthy.
We can't see friends, what a tragedy
-wash your hands.

Home schooling,
Spending all day on a screen,
Too many people in the house,
Meltdowns from kids,
Parents getting annoyed,
Trying to teach their kids and work,
And shop, and clean...
Nothing to do
-Wash your hands.

Shops closed, empty shelves, no lights on.
Only supermarkets or takeaway coffee shops are open,
Everybody going crazy for things,
like toilet paper!
Wash your hands.

Needing to wear a face mask in shops, sanitize hands,
Much loved family members lost,
And other family too far away to see,
Only the people we live with,
It sometimes gets annoying,
Being with your family for too long.
No holidays, no days out, no sleepovers...
Wash your hands.

Hopefully it will all be over soon,
We will be able to hug our friends,
And have sleepovers,
And everything will be back to normal...

WASH YOUR HANDS!!!

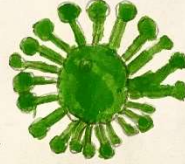
Saskia Darcy



LOCKED UP IN LOCKDOWN

The last year has been very tough.
I don't think I've gone out enough.

Virus, virus everywhere,
Covid gives me nightmares.



I miss my family and friends,
From that I find my mood descends.

But when I'm feeling low and flat,
What makes me happy is my cat.



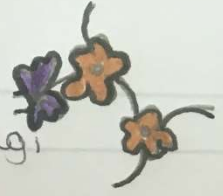
Pixel, Pixel is her name,
Her joyful play keeps me sane.

But what really helps me cope,
Is the future vaccine hope.

Freddie Goodyear



Imprisoned in our darkened thoughts of ceasing,
Is there any single hope for changing?
There was nothing left to say,
Everything felt hollow,
like empty glass bottles waiting to be shattered and thrown,



Hope was our only ally,
In this dreadful virus,
But hope ran off the charts,
Maybe it will come back someday,



We have fallen down,
But we will get back up,
We will carry on this notion,
And live today like there is no tomorrow.

Isabella Whitehead

