

14th May 2021

Dear Parents

I am beginning the newsletter with something really special this week and not at all the kind of story that I usually get to report! Many of you will already know from the media that one of our Junior School families had some very famous visitors recently. Today I have been lucky enough to have Penelope Chapman's own report of the day that she got to meet the future King of England! I'll let Penelope tell it in her own words...

Yesterday I got a big surprise when my mother announced that she would be telling me who was coming to Manor Farm at Little Stainton. I was told that someone was coming two weeks earlier when my mum had a phone call saying can Prince William and Princess Catherine come to the farm. At first my mother thought they were joking but then a few minutes later they suddenly somehow read her mind and said 'No, we are not joking Clare!'

At 12.15 my mother told me they would be coming. A friend of my mother's called Rachel helped us to put on the head collars and helped us to get ready. At that time I was wearing a denim dress with rainbow sleeves. Then we brought our lambs out of the shed. We then brought the lambs around the house and brought them to the gate. Then we took some pictures and after a few minutes four cars came down, one with the royal couple and three with the police.

After we greeted them we also showed them our lambs and then they went on a walk around the farm and we went back to the shed. My mother and father then showed Catherine and William around the farm and they got to go on a tractor coloured green and it uses satellites to help it move.

When they came back they had a go at leading the lambs and then our parents sat on small bales and so did the Duchess and Duke and a few other farmers. It was the bestest day.



My thanks to Mrs Chapman for the lovely pictures of the day – but mostly to Penelope for writing so beautifully about it!

This afternoon pupils in Year 4 – 6 have taken part in our Bingo fundraiser. Miss Blair has sent me this report and picture:

Please see below a picture from 4J taking part in our bingo fundraiser this afternoon. The children in Y4-6 had a blast dabbing their numbers, some for the first time. I would like to say a huge thank you for all of the contributions. Contributions can still be paid via ParentPay until Monday. So far, we have raised a total of £200 for playground equipment for our Junior Polam community.



On Tuesday I had the good fortune to be at the back of Year 8 Reading, as our new CCF School Staff Instructor – Mr Clark – introduced CCF to the students. They were excellent at standing and saluting on command! I do hope that we have lots of new recruits for CCF after the Reading!



Mr Wilkinson has very much decided that it is tennis season – even if the weather does not seem to agree with him! Almost every Senior School student that I walk past at the moment has a tennis racquet sticking out of their bag – I thought Year 7 might never get into the Dining

Hall today for all the handles that were in the way! On Monday we had the first tennis fixture of the term – here is Mr Wilkinson's report:

U15 & U13 boys Tennis V Durham Johnston (H)

On Monday we had our first tennis fixture for quite some time where it was great to see boys in Years 7, 8, 9, & 10 all having some competitive action against some very tough opposition.

The weather was very unpredictable with thunder rain and then sunny spells. The boys relished this and played some really good tennis. U15 boys lost overall but the highlight was Kian Cs match against the no1 from Durham. Kian played some really good shots, particularly off his backhand side.

In the U13s the best game was Arthur C's singles which he lost 6-4 but on another day it could have easily gone the other way. Blake E won his singles 6-2 dominating the play and Alex W came close losing narrowly 6-4. Well done to everyone who took part and let's go and smash it up this summer on our courts!

Mr Wilkinson



Mrs Squires has asked me to include a report from her – which covers quite a number of Language and Literature related topics!

Well done to those who have accessed myON throughout this week. We have collectively read for five hours and accomplished an additional 29 books in the past seven days. Never one to become complacent, I want to congratulate you on your reading whilst also reminding those who haven't read to get those pages turned!

Massive thank you to everyone who entered the creative writing competition. It was a bold move changing this from monthly to fortnightly but I have still been astounded by the amount of entries I have received. I have thoroughly enjoyed reading all entries.

Special mention to Ellis and Elliott in Year 8, Poppy, Jayden and Grace in Year 7.

I am pleased to announce that the winner for this particular competition was Daniel in Year 9 for his 3rd person narrative of a soldier passing. Here's a snippet from his entry:

'At this point I lost the thread of the exchange as perspective suddenly hit, all the things I didn't understand and the fact that whatever Dennis was, he wasn't alive. I broke, crying and wailing and digging my face into his bare, emaciated ribs, cold like meat straight out of the fridge. I kept squeezing his hand, harder and harder, pushing the stiff fingers closer together.'

I look forward to announcing the next theme on Monday.

Next week is Week A which means the return of our Wow Word. I hope you have all felt empowered after our last addition. From Monday, the word will be 'explicit'. This is a key tier two word, knowing the meaning will help you massively in KS4. Parents, please quiz your child on the meaning of this word towards the end of next week.

I sent a letter to all parents this week updating you with the relaxation of restrictions that come into force from Monday. The PHPA have also asked me to remind you all that they are holding a live Thrift Shop between 10.00 and 12.00 noon in the Liddiard Theatre on Friday 21st May 2021. Social distancing and mask wearing will be observed. Entrance via car park entrance to the theatre. This is the first live Thrift Shop opening for some time, so I expect it will be busy. As always, my thanks to the PHPA volunteers for their hard work.

Well done to all of Year 6 for completing their end of keystage assessments this week. They looked very nervous when I addressed them in the Old Gym on Monday – but much more relaxed and excited when I popped into the auditions for their end of year play after they had finished their assessments on Thursday! I don't know who was more excited about the play – the Year 6 children or Mr Turnbull and Miss Blundy!

Next week our Year 11 students begin their final round of assessments for their GCSE Teacher Assessed Grades. Good luck to them all – I hope that they work hard this weekend but also find time to relax and de-stress. I am already very proud of each and every one of them for the resilient way in which they have coped this year – and I know that they will all do their very best.

Best wishes



Kate Reid