

5th February 2021

Dear Parents

It has been 'Number Day' today and Junior School pupils have been doing all sorts of activities related to Maths and numbers. Mr Turnbull organises this event and he wanted me to remind you all about the baking competition: *It has been lovely to see all the fun you have had with your number related bakes for Number Day today. Thank you to all of those who have sent me pictures of delicious looking baking. Remember entries run until Thursday 11th so there is still plenty of time to get baking...*

This has also been Mental Health Week and there have been assemblies and House Activities in both Junior and Senior Schools, designed to get pupils off a screen and doing some different things. Mrs Hardy has sent me the tips below, which she hoped might be helpful for all of us who are parents, at this challenging time:

Here are 5 tips for how you can improve your children and pupils' wellbeing

Step 1: "Teach them to be themselves" - Helping children to realise their strengths is a great way to build their confidence. Encourage children to notice and appreciate their own strengths, and those of others too.

Step 2: "Be grateful"- Help children to bring attention to what's working well in their life by developing gratitude skills. To develop these skills, you can use techniques such as starting a gratitude journal or have a gratitude list discussion at breakfast/dinner.

Step 3: "Help them be more mindful"- A way in which we can help our children develop these skills is drawing for 10 minutes. Simply set a timer for 15 minutes and ask your child to draw something they can see. This activity isn't about what the child decides to draw, it's about whether they are able to focus on the activity and bring their attention back if they get distracted.

Step 4: "Be kind" - There are thousands of ways children and adults can show kindness every day, it can be fun to sometimes turn these small acts into every day rituals.

Step 5: "Teach them the importance of resilience" - One way to build resilience in children is to help them develop a growth mindset. Children with a strong mindset are more likely to try again when they fail, and also to attempt to learn how they can improve.

Next week is Safer Internet Week – also very pertinent at this time whilst our children are spending much more time online than they might normally be doing. There will be assemblies and CC activities on this topic to promote internet safety in Junior and Senior Schools.

The Practical and Performance Faculty have been very much promoting creativity and setting learning activities designed to get pupils off the screen and actively creating. We asked them to do this – even if it does move them away from teaching the planned curriculum – so that pupils have a more varied diet in lessons. These pictures and report from Mrs Dawson show some of the results:

I can't tell you how thrilled I am with all the fantastic artwork the Junior pupils are doing. They are throwing themselves into each creative task and coming up with some truly amazing work - too much to share here!

Here is some work by Years 5 & 6. I wanted them to practise their fine motor skills using things that were easily accessible, so I got them to use a piece of kitchen roll to help guide them to create colourful repeating patterns using felt pens. Then the fun started! They were asked to see what happened when they sprinkled water on their finished piece of work! The results are superb.



Mr Fenwick has also been working creatively with pupils in Music, where both Senior and Junior pupils have been composing and recording their work:

Year 8 have been learning about Folk music this half term and have not been deterred by the lack of instruments to perform with. Instead, they have been completing practical work using an online keyboard. One particular task has been to compose a Folk melody and all students have worked excellently in such unusual circumstances. I would like to give special mention to Gordan Houston, Lacie-Mai Finley Malcolm, and Eva Cherry in 8W – these students went above and beyond the requirements of the task by sending recordings of themselves performing using the online keyboard for me to listen to.

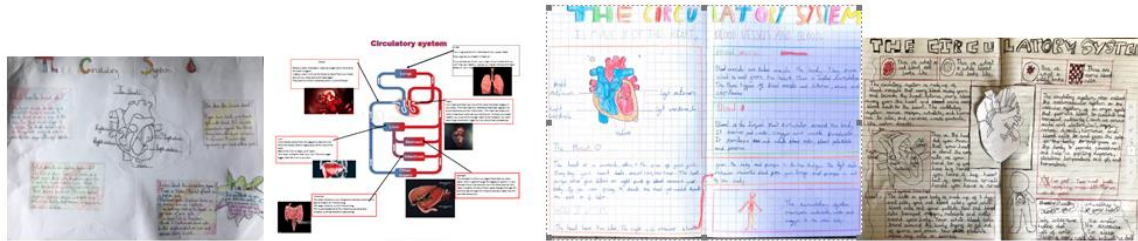
Junior school students have also been sending me wonderful recordings of themselves singing and performing along to songs which they have been set to learn on Charanga. This week I have received fantastic recordings from Charlotte Elsdon playing her recorder along to Mamma Mia, Layla Walton singing Mamma Mia complete with guitar accompaniment, Eliza Voss singing for Mental Health Awareness Week, and Gracie Thurston singing Three Little Birds.

Remaining in the Practical and Performance Faculty, Mrs Babington has been baking bread with her students – or at least they have been doing the baking and sending pictures of the results. I have to say that these made me very hungry this week!



Pupils have been getting busy and away from the computer by cooking up a feast. Bread shaping has been done in line with a bread project that has been ongoing in January and year 11 have been keeping up their cooking skills by producing meals for the family. Some lovely results that had to be shared.

Great work has been going on outside the P & P faculty as well. Mrs Goodwin and Miss Blair's Year 5 the children in Year 5 children have worked exceptionally hard to learn about the roles of different parts of the circulatory system. Both their teachers are very proud of their efforts and the great work that they have produced – some of which is below:



Reception have continued their work on Penguins and have even been able to take part in a virtual school trip to Chester Zoo today to see the penguins live! Miss Barras and Mrs Crosby tell me that have seen some amazing work. They also wanted to say a big thank you to Mrs Chapman for informing them about this. Well done everyone! Here are the Key Worker children at the zoo this morning!

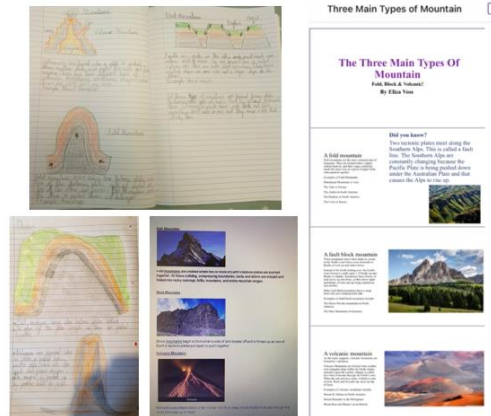


Miss Blair wins the prize this week for the first contribution to the newsletter – she sent me the following about the History work that her class had been doing at 6.58am on Monday! Proof, if any were needed, of her dedication!

I know it's rather early, but I have been marking my history and wanted to share some of the work from my class. I am blown away by how much time and effort they have spent learning about the Aztecs. What's impressed me more is how creative they have been to find ways to demonstrate their learning. I am very proud.

Mrs Staerck has sent me some information about the Science that Year 4 have been doing: *This week the Year 4 children were set an independent Science lesson. During this activity, they learnt that the sun is the main source of energy for almost every living thing on earth! The children applied then this knowledge by creating paper chain models to show how the energy is passed along the food chain.*

Mrs Johnson has also sent me a report about how well her class have been working: *Year 4J continue to work extremely hard at home. This week they have independently been looking at how mountains are formed and sent in some great reports explaining the 3 mountain types. They have also been working hard on Spelling Shed and Times Tables Rockstars, where they are top of the leader board. Keep up the good work, we are all very proud of you.*



Possibly my favourite report of the week has come from Miss Ritchie though – it probably needs no further comment from me...

From this:



To this:



This week, Year 3 have been looking at the digestive system and what the different parts of it do. I did a live demonstration of how food is digested using a plastic bag for the stomach and some tights as the small intestines. I have never known the children to be so disgustingly engrossed in a lesson! The children listened amazingly and were able to tell me the order and the purpose of each stage in the digestive system.

From feedback from parents, the biggest comment from the children was “Miss Ritchie had a poo on Teams today!” Sorry for putting you off your lunch!

A few notices from Mr Robson:

A reminder to Year 9 students, please, to have their careers application forms back to me in Teams assignments **by the end of next week 12 February.** The ones I have received so far are excellent - remember employers will be seeing them and giving you feedback.

MFL CHALLENGE

The MFL department is launching a National Challenge next week for Key Stage 3 MFL classes. In your class Teams files, you will find on Monday details of how to submit a recording of yourself reciting a poem in either French or German depending on your year. We would encourage as many students as possible to have a go at this. You have a few weeks - **the deadline is 26 February** - and the best ones after we have judged them will be entered for a national competition.

We would love to see lots of students taking part and wish you all Bonne Chance/Viel Gluck. Please contact us after Monday if you would like to participate.

MRS. ROBERTS, MRS. JOYCE, MR. ROBSON

He has also asked me to include the results of the first round of the House CC Quiz:

CURRENT LEADERBOARD

CONCORDIA CRESCIMUS - ALL 10 OR 9.5 CORRECT

ADWELL ADU-GYAMFI 7V

FIONN GLEINSTER 7J

DANIEL LOCKHART 9W

MATTHEW DOVE 11S

ANSWORTH ADU-GYAMFI 8G

FORM POSITIONS - TOP FOR EACH YEAR

YEAR 7 - 7J WITH 46 POINTS - ALSO THE BEST FORM IN THE SCHOOL

YEAR 8 - 8D WITH 32 POINTS

YEAR 9 - 9W WITH 10 POINTS

YEAR 10 - 10NBM WITH 4 POINTS

YEAR 11 - 11S WITH 27 POINTS

HOUSE POSITIONS

1. TEES 97.5 POINTS

2 KENT 82 POINTS

3 SWALE 45 POINTS

4 SKERNE 34 POINTS

Well done to all who took part – I hope that we get even greater participation next week!

I'm going to finish with the snow – as one of my favourite pictures of the week. We had more snow this week – and I hear there is more to come! Here are the Year 2 Key Worker children about to hurl their snowballs across the Junior School playground!



I hope that you all have a lovely weekend after the busy week that we have clearly all had! Next week is the last of the half term, with Year 9 parents evening on Monday and Junior School parent telephone calls all week.

Best wishes

K. Reid

Kate Reid