

Lead Encourage Aspire Respect Nurture

Date: Friday 3rd April 2020

Dear Parent and Carers

I hope that everyone at home is healthy, fit and well and no one in your family is showing signs of the Coronavirus. Without any doubt we are in extraordinary and unprecedented times. We must all have faith and hope that this global pandemic begins to slow down to give scientists across the world an opportunity to work together to identify a vaccine that will help protect everyone.

We are all so grateful to all of those very courageous 'front-line' staff in the NHS. What an incredible job they are doing to support us all through these immensely difficult times. I have also been very moved to see the enormous numbers of volunteers who have stepped forward to give their support wherever they can. It just shows, that in a crisis, people are always willing to help others. In the media there have been numerous accounts of individuals willing and able to help in their own communities too.

Along with most things our school community has suddenly had to adapt to a completely different way of working. With all schools closed for the vast majority of pupils, their learning has suddenly had to take place at home. All schools still remain open, on a rota of skeleton staff, to support our critical key work force and for those who may be vulnerable.

With most aspects of society in 'lock down', to help reduce the spread of the virus, everyone is having to spend far more time at home than we have been accustomed to in recent times. As a school we understand the difficulties that families may be facing on a daily basis. Children often crave the attention of those who are looking after them. Under normal circumstances children would have the chance to freely interact with their peers at school where they love to chatter about all sorts of things that appeal to them in their play. By and large this has been abruptly taken away from children and so they too are having to adapt to the change.

Parents across the world are all having to try and work from home and for many they are also having to manage child care at the same time. This in itself can naturally cause tension and additional stresses. Access to the internet in every home will therefore be at a premium. With this in mind I'm sure that you will all have now established effective timetables so that those needing to work from home can do so, to reasonable effect, and those who need to learn (pupils from the age of 4+ years) can do so too and at the same time ask for support, from parents, carers and teachers when necessary.

With isolation being the new temporary 'norm', we are all developing ways to communicate differently. I'm sure that when things do return to normal once again we will all be conscious about how we can communicate more efficiently. In saying this I'm sure that there will be some good to come out from this crisis and help us all to live together in greater harmony and for the common good.

I hope that you have all had the opportunity to look at the work that the staff have been providing for your children in the Pupil Zone of our school website. During the two weeks of the traditional Easter holidays staff will not be providing set pieces of work for the children to do at home. Instead we feel that due to the present crisis children would benefit from having some time to relax with their family as the past few weeks have been really quite stressful for all concerned. Rather than 'set work' we have decided to put together some activities, all of which are optional, that the children

might like to do during the two weeks of Easter. As from Monday 20th April, staff will once again be setting work for the children to do Home Learning.

I'm sure that as time goes on, and if we are still in the same situation, we will continue to develop the Home Learning that we have presently started for your children. As you will have noticed already we have been setting work for the children in order to consolidate previous learning. Into the future we intend to develop our communication so that we can begin to 'teach' some aspects of their learning. This of course will depend, to some extent, upon technology and how best we can utilise it to support children's understanding at home. In the meantime, I hope that you will gain full use of the websites that we have provided access for your children.

May I take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for their consideration, kindness and patience during these challenging times. At the same time, I would also like to say 'thank you' to all the Blockley School staff for their hard work and professionalism in ensuring that all the pupils have been kept safe and well throughout this emergency. We all hope that everyone in our community remains safe and well and that an end to this crisis will be in sight soon.

Please contact school using admin@blockleyschool.gloucs.sch.uk if you have general questions. If your questions are about the Home Learning please contact your child's class e-mail. If you have a serious concern please contact me directly using head@blockleyschool.gloucs.sch.uk

And finally, do remind your children to WASH THEIR HANDS (with plenty of soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds) on a very regular basis, as this is known to help reduce the spread of this virus.

Keep safe and well

Best wishes

Mr Pudifoot

BULLETIN

School Community

Our school bulletin reflects our school community. Whether we are together in school or together through shared learning and electronic communication we still aim to carry out our Blockley School Vision:

Blockley School creates a caring environment where everyone is encouraged to be the best they can, with each child supported to love learning, develop resilience, respect difference, celebrate success and value others within a Christian environment.

We hope that in these challenging and unprecedented times we will still all work together to help the pupils LEARN in the best way that we are able. The current situation requires team work at a distance!

Although you may be physically isolated within your home, please don't feel alone. We all need to work together to support the children as they learn in a very different environment and support each other. If you are struggling with the current situation please seek help. There is support available locally and nationally. Please see the support for parents/carers section under pupil zone, useful websites, for more information.

<https://blockleyprimaryschool.co.uk/pupil-zone/useful-websites/>

Shrove Tuesday

Although it now seems like a distant memory we had a wonderful start to the term with a Shrove Tuesday celebration and a chance to raise money for the Church Urban Fund by having a Big Pancake Party. The weather forecast was not favorable so the activities were held in the hall. Mr Jones organized a great afternoon of fun and the Revd. Dana Delap explained about Shrove Tuesday. Andrea kindly cooked pancakes for everyone so we all enjoyed a reward at the end. Thank you for your donations that will go to tackle food poverty, vital at a time such as this.

American Museum Visit

On Thursday 27th February, a member of The American Museum of Bath's outreach team spent the day with Class 5. In the morning they learnt how the geographical and climatic features of North America influenced the types of homes built; hence, igloos as winter hunting shelters in the Arctic regions and tepees as temporary shelters on the great plains. The day was full of interesting snippets that revealed a more complex pre-European Native American civilisation than is often portrayed including sophisticated farming systems. The highlight of the day for everyone was handling artefacts and trying to work out what they were – a real taste of working as historians. The day ended with everyone learning the skill of weaving.



Parents/Carers Evening

Despite the days being altered due to our Ofsted visit, it was fantastic that parents were still able to make their parent evening slot. It was a great opportunity for parents to meet with teachers face to face and receive information before the current situation of social distancing was in place.

World Book Day

Thank you for helping your children dress up in fantastic book related costumes. We enjoyed seeing and hearing about the various characters from favourite books. Staff were able to share their favourite stories with the pupils and inspire reading and writing. Perhaps pupils could share their favourite books with you during this period of isolation. We look forward to seeing what they may be inspired with from reading their favourite book.

Home Learning

The normal termly activities came to an abrupt halt as the situation regarding COVID 19 rapidly altered our way of life and we had to cancel Easter Activities and events further afield including our Year 6 residential. However, we are looking forward to hearing about your additional home learning and all of the inspiring activities that have been carried out in your homes. No doubt we will be able to share more of this as the situation continues.

Additional Learning and Activities

Links to websites that provide inspiration for additional activities and advice on talking to your child about COVID 19 can all be found on our website under the pupil zone, useful websites.

<https://blockleyprimaryschool.co.uk/pupil-zone/useful-websites/>

Internet Safety

It is always important to ensure that we all stay safe online. At the moment more of us will be using the internet and supporting the children online. Home activity packs highlighting internet safety are available through Think-U-Know and there are handy tips available for parents/carers to help keep your child safe online. Please see the links on our website (pupil Zone, useful websites).

<https://blockleyprimaryschool.co.uk/pupil-zone/useful-websites/>

Class 1

Norman has shared with us his rainbow heart which he made last week to show kindness to others.



Perdy is enjoying learning at home. She is helping with lambing and a has done a project on castles.



Sofia has made elephant from a milk bottle and tissue paper.

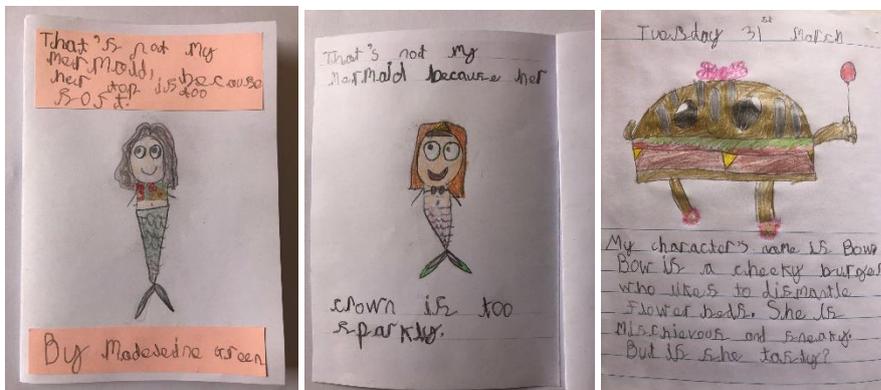


Valentino completed an art tutorial on YouTube entitled 'draw with Rob' and drew a friendly Stegosaurus using pencils, marker pens and colouring pencils.



Class 2

Maddie has written a character description of a cute hamburger named Bow. She has also started writing her own 'That's not my Mermaid' book. Maddie also learnt to ride her bike this week. Well done!



Martha made an underwater diorama display scene out of different materials.



Class 3

Oscar K has been working towards his Cub Scout badges and making dinner for the family.



Wilf H made an underwater diorama display scene from different materials.

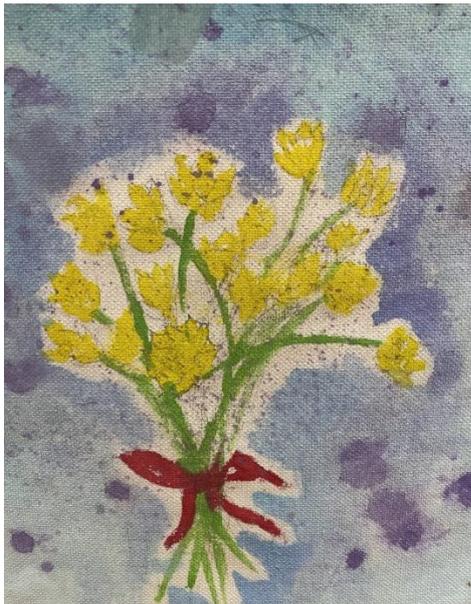


Class 4

Thea completed lots of lovely Maths and English work. She did some wonderful writing about the Queen bee. She created a reading den and is learning a new skill, how to play the piano.



Mariella took inspiration from a vase of daffodils and carefully sketched a still life drawing, completing it by water colouring the flowers and the background.



Lilie is looking after the caterpillars from Class 4. They are currently all chrysalides and will remain like this for approximately another week before emerging as butterflies.



Seb has been following online tutorials from children's author and illustrator Rob Biddulph with great success. He looked at the work of Andy Goldsworthy last week which inspired him to make some land art of his own.



Class 5

Imogen has created a wonderful mindfulness picture.



Cass has planted beans from Mrs Furniss.



Gracie was allowed to colour the house with washable chalk to cheer the neighbours up.



Blockley Village

Blockley village has been brightened up by villagers decorating trees, lamp posts and gates with pom-poms, knitted scarves and there is even a lamp post with a monster foot! Keep your eyes peeled for bunting coming soon near the park if you live in Blockley and go out for your daily exercise.



Easter

Easter will be a little different for us all this year. We were not able to hold our usual Easter activities in school but you could do some at home if you are interested. The Diocese of Gloucester have prepared some material for you and your household to be able to enjoy Easter together.

Copy and paste this into your internet browser address bar.

<https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Holy-Ground-2020.pdf>

Term 5

Term 4 ends on 3rd April and Term 5 begins on 20th April when we will continue to provide you with Home Learning material. Please do not come to the school site unless you are a Key Worker or have vulnerable children and have contacted school to arrange to bring your children.

We wish you all a relaxing, if different, Easter break.

Stay Safe.

With kind regards,

Blockley School Staff