



Dear Parents

Friday 27th November 2020

Today it felt great to be able to welcome back the majority of our staff and children who have been isolating, with the remainder due to return on Monday. Mrs Joliffe also returned briefly, having been released from isolation, and is feeling much better. She is very thankful for all the messages of support. We are pleased that all tests this week have again come back negative.

Year 5-8 children have been taking their autumn term exams this week, the first such assessments they have taken since last autumn. I was pleased with the clear preparation most seemed to have done and with the positive attitude displayed by all, including those Year 7&8 children at home with a Zoom invigilator. Exams can only ever measure a small proportion of children's talent and my main desire is for all children to have tried as hard as possible and to have performed to the best of their ability.

Pre Prep have had a very busy week in the classroom and I have seen impressive developing reading skills in Reception and flourishing free-writing skills in Year 1 and Year 2 and also a lovely Year 3 piece of writing about the Stone Age. Pre Prep children have also been extremely busy preparing for this year's Christmas performances, with various parts being rehearsed and also filmed this week, ready for the final edit and release before the end of term. Year 2 came together outside so that they were able to rehearse as a single group and it was lovely to see everything coming together in the late autumn sun.

Pre Prep and Prep assemblies both covered Advent with Mrs Harries talking about the traditional candles and preparations for Christmas, while a group of Year 8 pupils took Prep pupils through the origins of the word and some of the traditions of Advent that are very different from today. We also saw a fascinating image of how the sun's position in the sky taken at the same time each day fluctuates over the seasons and why evenings draw in so starkly before the winter solstice. Mrs Harries told Pre Prep children of the story videos she is recording them for each day of advent, which we look forward to, whilst Bird Families explored issues around road safety.

This week has seen a range of stimulating activities, with 3H making impressive geography models, 3R experimenting on friction, children from all year groups creating a crib set for St Peter Mancroft in the library, judging continuing for the six science books short-listed by the Royal Society and Little Acorns being creative with our home-made play dough. We also released our [Little Acorns film](#) this week, which I hope they are all proud of. Year 1 were investigating materials, while Year 2 were busy cereal tasting and measuring. The Wonderwall is looking magnificent with the latest pieces of work on display for children to admire, with pictures also shared in the bulletin so parents do not miss out.

Year 4 were busy racing their balloon karts made in DT earlier, while Year 7's created some impressive Frankenstein posters and taught me a great deal about Mary Shelley who wrote this classic novel in 1818. Year 6 were enjoying creating rhythms on African drums in music, while Year 4 were enjoying "turtle academy" work in computing and Prep musicians were filming for the Christmas Concert. As November nears its end, we also admired the progress of our staff participants, either in growing magnificent moustaches or undertaking the walking challenge.

Next week sees flu immunisations for Reception to Year 7 pupils whose parents signed up via the NHS portal, Senior, Intermediate and Junior House Cross Country competitions and the Year 8 Lake District Trip information meeting for parents and pupils (via Zoom).

I wish everyone an enjoyable weekend.

With best wishes

