



The **RED SWEATER** *Newsletter*

Spring 2020

St. John's Middle School
A Church of England Academy

Dear Parents,

It is very strange writing the foreword in a school that contains only 15 children and a handful of staff. School has never closed and we have done our utmost to support the children of Key Workers and our vulnerable children in school and to support the wider school population working remotely.

I am proud and very grateful for the efforts the staff have gone to to support our pupils during these difficult times. It has been a pleasure to see all the work completed by the children some of which is contained in this newsletter.

The newsletter exemplifies life at St. John's full, vibrant and dynamic with both the children and staff enjoying the learning process.

My last words to each class as I went around the school in the day we closed was we will miss you.

We look forward to the day when our vibrant community can be restored and the school once again is filled with the sound of the children.

Please stay safe and can I thank you all for the support that you have provided to us during these difficult times.

Mr. G. L. Roberts – Headteacher



Straight after February half term we moved into the season of Lent, with our Ash Wednesday Service to mark the six-week period of preparation for Holy Week and Easter. This was a reflective and moving service with a practical opportunity for pupils to receive ashes on their foreheads along with the words 'choose good'. As those pupils that wished to take part in this symbolic act (and most did!) lined up to receive their ashes, the choir and advanced choir sang a number of reflective pieces and some of our pupils read poems based on the Psalms traditionally used at this time of year.

Little did we know at the time that our individual choices of Lenten observance (for example giving up chocolate or sweets for the 40 days) would soon be joined by lockdown making this feel a particularly lenten Lent!



Year 5 update

Firstly, we hope all pupils and families are well and managing at home with the different routines and way of living we find ourselves in. We are continually grateful for the ongoing effort and support from everyone in trying to complete the

work being set as well as staying positive and in touch with others. To say we are all living and working in unfamiliar and strange times is all too apparent for all of us after the weeks of lockdown we have seen so far - we fully understand the range of challenges this brings with managing home learning with home working as well as caring for others, or entertaining younger siblings and we have enjoyed hearing about the imaginative ideas for work and entertainment at home. If you haven't yet seen, one way the St. John's staff have been keeping active is through collective marathons, kindly organised by Mr Cowdery. Please follow the link for more information or if you would like to support our efforts!

<http://www.justgiving.com/owner-email/pleasesponsor/Stjohnsisolationmarathon>

In Year 5, all the teachers have been missing their classes recently, particularly the morning smiles accompanied by 'Hi Miss' or 'Hi Sir' - From some recent conversations with parents and pupils it seems many pupils are missing school more than they may have originally realised too! However, it has been really lovely to hear from some of you over ePraise and even speak to many pupils when teachers have been calling home to see how everyone is. Please remember, class teachers will be calling over a two week period and the number may appear as 'withheld' and if you do change phone numbers at all, please keep us up to date with contact details.

Many Year 5 pupils have also managed to complete some excellent work in various subjects - although we do know sometimes completing all tasks can be tricky with different home situations, work commitments, access to technology and so on, so please be reassured we understand this and appreciate any efforts that can be made. I personally have been thrilled to see some photos and PowerPoint presentations on recent Science topics, including the Lyrid meteor shower! The Year 5 team have also been working on transition recently as our new Year 4s for September sadly may not be able to enjoy the transition events planned for the summer term which many of our Year 5 pupils will remember from last year.

Finally, even though there is still some uncertainty at the moment and keeping safe and healthy is paramount, we hope to see our Year 5 pupils again soon. But in the meantime, we hope you can keep well and keep smiling.

Mr. D. Owen
Head of
Year 5



Sitting in my office these days is really quite a bizarre experience as I'm used to hearing a knock at my door or the constant buzz of voices around the corridors. Having spoken to many Year 6 pupils on the phone recently I know that you are finding the whole situation just as strange and challenging as I am.

I have been amazed at some of the things you have been up to; like seeing how many steps you can walk in 5 minutes, using microscopes to study plant cells and creating robots.

I know that many of you and your parents are finding working at home quite challenging at times but we are so grateful for the efforts you are putting in and it's good to see how enthusiastic you are about sharing your work with



Year 6 update

us. At the Hironses' house we juggle our daily schooling with dog walks, crafty activities, shopping for family and neighbours but also catching up with friends and family over the phone. Unbelievably I have face-timed

someone and used Zoom, something I was adamant I would never do.

So despite the strangeness of the situation we find ourselves in maybe this is a great opportunity to push ourselves out of our comfort zones and find a new skill or hobby that we would never have had the time to try before.

When your teachers call you next time maybe you could share a new hobby or skill you have developed.

Well Year 6, it seems very strange writing this from the silence of my office and I really hope that once again the corridors will be buzzing but until that time, stay safe, look after each other and remember you are the history makers so I hope you are writing this all down somewhere because one day we will look back on this and not quite believe it!

Mrs. C. Hiron
Head of
Year 6





Year 7 update

Hello from everyone in Year 7 during these strange times, we hope that you and all your family are staying safe and well. Normally at this point I would be talking to you about which class had the best attendance and

highest amount of house points but that's not as easy as it used to be. As it stands 7AME are 50 ahead of 7MMO however 7CS lead the way with points per pupil. It's tight and a possible return to school means all is to play for if we do.

During our phone calls to you at home we have been enjoying finding out all the fun things you have been doing. We've been very impressed with the variety of activities and I wanted to mention a few in particular. Kyle has become an avid poet, Hannah has watched a family movie under the stars and Olivia has danced with Strictly Judge Shirley Ballas over Zoom!

We are aware that some pupils are a bit daunted by the amount of work that has been set. If you are feeling overwhelmed, try and create a routine to your day and focus on the core subjects first. I know some pupils are sticking to their school timetable to plan their work routine. On the flip side we have some pupils and parents requesting more work, so I thought I would take this opportunity to suggest a few websites that might help if you want more work or a further chance to consolidate prior learning.

<https://www.thenational.academy>

An online school with daily teacher led lessons in all subjects. These can either be done independently or with support from someone at home.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

Again like the Oak Academy all subject areas are covered in each year group. Lessons can be done independently or with support.

<https://whiterosemaths.com/homelearning/>

A maths specific website with online lessons and resources. This can be used in relation to the maths section on Bitesize.

If you've any questions while at home, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child's teacher on ePraise.

Mr. K. Hirst
Head of
Year 7



Well, the Year 8 corridors are eerily quiet and I never thought I'd say this but I actually miss the constant calls of 'Miss!'.

Despite the distance though, it's great to hear of pupils keeping in touch with each other using social media - this is really important so keep talking. I never thought I'd be encouraging you to talk more - these really are strange times! I even posted a TikTok the other day - what is happening to me?

We are keeping very busy here in school and at home too, and for me as Head of Year 8 it is all about the next step up to High School.



Year 8 update

Using 'Teams' with a wriggling toddler on my lap has been very entertaining indeed. He thinks it's hilarious that people live in the computer and they're all looking at him and smiling. I just managed to keep him out of

view of the camera though, so Mrs Elwell didn't even notice I was changing a nappy whilst speaking to her - now that's multi-tasking!

I've also had some lovely meetings with your new Heads of Year over the past few weeks and they are very much looking forward to welcoming you all next year. I'm sure you are all looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

I've received some lovely paragraphs from my English groups about their experiences during lockdown and one theme is common throughout. They miss seeing their friends.

If you are at a loss for something to do, message a friend today. Just a 'Hello'. We all need that contact and now more than ever we should appreciate our friends and family.

Stay in touch folks and stay safe.

Ms R. Bourne
Head of
Year 8





STEM Science - Technology - Engineering - Maths

STEM Learning

On Tuesday 4th February a team of Year 8 students took a trip to Warwick Trident College to take part in the regional STEM competition using Lego Mindstorm robotics.

This was an exciting opportunity for pupils to showcase their engineering skills developed in STEM club and potentially qualify for the national final at the Big Bang Fair.

The pupils had a fantastic day with our first win for robotics!

The team did St. John's proud with their presentation skills, team work and coding ability, were the winners for the team work challenge and came 2nd overall, beating older pupils from much larger schools.

Head of Science, Mr. Field said that the team "were buzzing when they came down to the lab on their return".

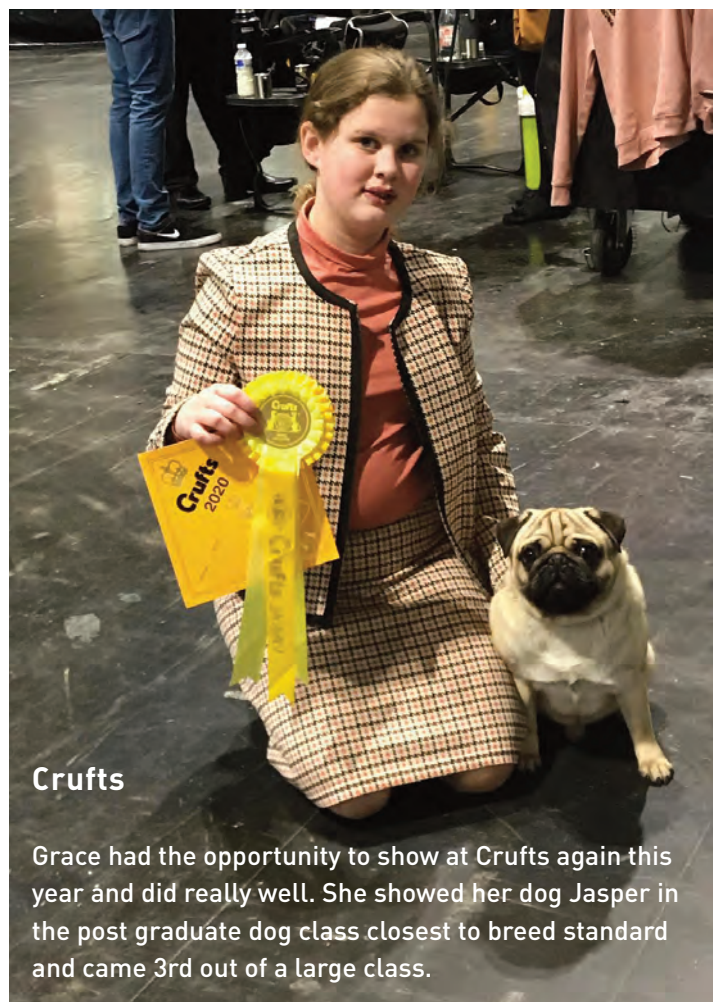
Thank you to both Miss North and Dr. Dowler who accompanied the pupils to Warwick.

Maggs Homeless Centre

Children at St. John's kindly brought in their unwanted rucksacks and sleeping bags which were then donated to the Maggs Homeless Centre.

Thank you to Mrs Ingleston, parent, who organised this and took the donations from school to the Centre.

Mrs Ingleston also works for Agility Group and as part of their CSR activities members of staff volunteered with the purchasing and cooking of breakfast at the Maggs Centre each Thursday over a period of 8 weeks.



Crafts

Grace had the opportunity to show at Crufts again this year and did really well. She showed her dog Jasper in the post graduate dog class closest to breed standard and came 3rd out of a large class.



Hello, my name is Verity Treadwell and in the autumn term, me and my friend, Hannah Thompson raised £100 for the charity 'Cancer Research.'

In September, Hannah broke her leg during a football match, and I offered to help her around school and stay with her during the break and lunch. We soon grew bored of playing 'would you rather' every lunch time and decided to do something useful with our time.

Hannah had learnt about origami during her recovery and she taught it to me. We thought it would be fun to sell origami items at lunchtime, at school for 5p – 25p but we wanted all the money to go to a good cause. Eventually, we decided to donate the money to 'Cancer Research' as we both know someone who has suffered from Cancer, and the charity is close to both of our hearts.

After MANY lunch times, our money was growing bigger and bigger. We wanted to raise more, so I went to my local club and asked for any donations. I ended up leaving there with an amazing £25 and we were now really happy with what we had raised. So, after many lunch breaks selling at the door of our classroom, we had finally raised a fantastic £100; we were so proud. We took it to it to the 'Cancer Research' charity shop at the top of the high street. Two weeks later we had a certificate each to show what we had achieved. It was a fabulous experience, and I would like to do so much more to help my community.



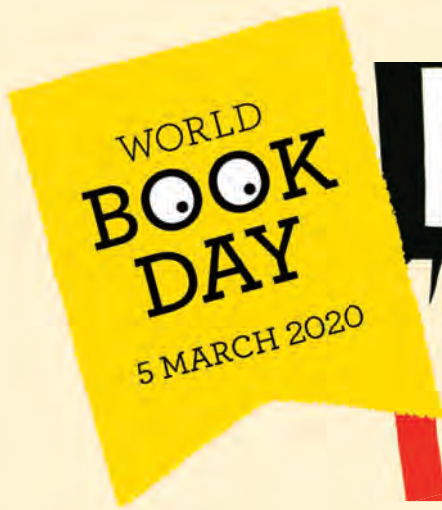
Commonwealth Games Countdown



Daisy Dowell, Year 6, spent an amazing day at the Commonwealth Games Head Office in Birmingham and attending filming for the sport relief / commonwealth games countdown.

She was live on the lunchtime Midlands Today News and was also interviewed and filmed for challenges with TV presenter Becky Wood which was also aired on Midlands Today.





IT'S WORLD BOOK DAY!



Thursday 5th March 2020 was World Book Day in support of Book Aid, a charity which increases access to books to support literacy, education and development in sub-Saharan Africa.



To celebrate this exciting event, we invited all pupils and staff to dress up for the day as their favourite childhood story character. The children made a voluntary donation of £1. Half of all the money raised was donated to Book Aid, while the other half was used to purchase new books for our school library. In addition, a book swapping event was held on the same day. Pupils were encouraged to bring in an unwanted book (no more than three) in reasonable condition and appropriate for their key stage in exchange for a token. They were given time during the afternoon to swap their tokens for donated books. As you can see from the photos the children and staff had some fantastic costumes!



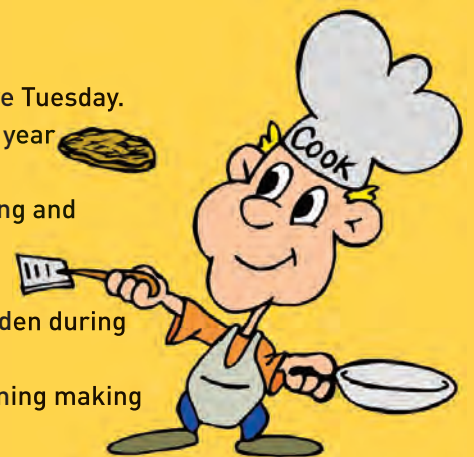
Shrove Tuesday 2020

The long build up to Easter is called Lent. The day before Lent begins is called Shrove Tuesday. 'Shrove' means being forgiven for wrong-doings. It happens on a different date each year depending on when Easter is. This year Shrove Tuesday was on 25th February. Another name for Shrove Tuesday is Pancake Day. Long ago this was a day for feasting and having a good time.

People went to church to confess the bad things they had done and would be 'shriven' or forgiven before the start of Lent. As rich foods such as eggs were forbidden during Lent, one way of using them up would be to make pancakes.

Many people make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday and our Canteen were busy all morning making pancakes ready for the children to buy at break.

With 355 pancakes sold in 15 minutes we had some very happy customers!!





Well Being Enrichment Day

On Friday 28th February we had our first Wellbeing Enrichment Day. The day included the whole school partaking in Yoga, Chair Yoga, different Mental health workshops and producing their own Zentangle! This helped teach the children about 5 steps to mental wellbeing.

Evidence suggests there are 5 steps you can take to improve your mental health and wellbeing. Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

1. Connect with other people

Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing. They can:

- help you to build a sense of belonging and self-worth
- give you an opportunity to share positive experiences
- provide emotional support and allow you to support others

2. Be physically active

Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness. Evidence also shows it can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- raising your self-esteem
- helping you to set goals or challenges and achieve them
- causing chemical changes in your brain which can help to positively change your mood



Find out more about getting active

3. Learn new skills

Research shows that learning new skills can also improve your mental wellbeing by:

- boosting self-confidence and raising self-esteem
- helping you to build a sense of purpose
- helping you to connect with others

Even if you feel like you do not have enough time, or you may not need to learn new things, there are lots of different ways to bring learning into your life.

4. Give to others

Research suggests that acts of giving and kindness can help improve your mental well-being by:

- creating positive feelings and a sense of reward
- giving you a feeling of purpose and self-worth
- helping you connect with other people

It could be small acts of kindness towards other people, or larger ones like volunteering in your local community.

5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

Paying more attention to the present moment can improve your mental wellbeing.

This includes your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.



WORCESTERSHIRE SKILLS SHOW

Chateau Impney 4th March 2020

On Wednesday 4th March, Mrs Woodward took our Year 8 pupils to the Worcestershire Skills Show at the Chateau Impney.

The Worcestershire Skills Show is Worcestershire's largest careers event. The event provides young people in school Years 7 to 13 years with the ability to interact with Worcestershire's largest employers from a variety of industries including: Science, Technology, Engineering, Math's, Hospitality, Advertising, Marketing Professional Services and Public Services. Young people are given the opportunity to gain an understanding of the career pathways available to them and to find out about the skills and qualifications that employers are really looking for.



This year the show was even bigger and better and saw over 3000 young people through the doors with 80 employers exhibiting. There was something to suit all interests, and young people were encouraged to undertake a variety of 'have a go' activities to demonstrate the different roles available across a large variety of industries. As well as learning about Apprenticeships, Higher Education pathways, University Options, STEM Careers and Employability Skills through a variety of tech talks.



April Physical Activity Challenges competition



St. John's pupils took part in physical activity challenges with their families organised by All Active Academy. They told us that we have some very keen pupils (and parents!!!) which was great to see. This resulted in St John's Middle School having the third most posts/interactions over the last month of April (only 6 posts behind 2nd and 8 posts behind 1st place) and therefore WON £75 of equipment vouchers for the school. Well done everyone !



St. John's Staffs Marathon



You may have seen that over the past two weeks the staff from St John's have been pulling their trainers on, digging out their gym kit and hitting the streets.

Why?

To complete as many miles as possible as a team and to try and raise money to support our NHS at this difficult time.

We had an amazing 50 members of staff take on the challenge either walking, running, cycling or even horse riding for 30 minutes and tracking the distance they covered.

We completed a fantastic 148.90 miles, more than 5 full marathons and further than from St John's School to Leeds. Not only this, but we have raised an incredible £650 which will go to the Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents and students for their support and donations.

We are also looking into the possibility of expanding the challenge to include our pupils in the coming days and weeks.

Should you wish to donate the link to the Just Giving Page is

<http://www.justgiving.com/owner-email/pleasesponsor/Stjohnsisolationmarathon>

Year 8 "lockdown" experiences !

"The main thing I have learnt from this strange experience is to never take things for granted. Small things like going for a meal with your family, spending time with your friends, going on holiday, spending time with your grandparents and much, much more. I have found out that we all want things that we can't have, for example a lot of people complain about going to school and say they just want to stay in bed. However now we are all able to do that, we want to go back to school because we are bored at home. Carrying on from this subject, I know that once we are able to go out, I am not going to waste a second, but enjoy it, because we never know which day will be our last.

However on a positive note, I am trying to make the most of staying at home. It's an interesting experience that hopefully will never happen again, but it's a time to spend quality time with family. I have noticed that my family are becoming closer, we enjoy doing quizzes and face timing our other family members who we unfortunately can't see at this time. Although it is hard at times, I also try and stay as productive as I can and use this time to relax and unwind, ready to come back with a fresh mind." **Rosa**

"From this virus I have learnt that we should never take life for granted because one minute we are all good and happy then the next we are seeing hundreds of people dying and suffering. I have been really bored and annoyed that we can't go outside with our friends and family, also not being able to go to school and see our mates and not being able to learn."

"So far in this crazy experience I have learnt to not take anything for granted and to appreciate all of the little things in life like: seeing my friends and family, going out for meals, celebrating Easter with my family and just all of the little things that we don't always think too much about in everyday life.

It feels so bizarre when going out for dog walks and having to go out of my way just so I stay 2 meters away from my neighbours.

From this experience so far I think I have learnt to not take daily life and freedom for granted and I have learnt the true value of our average everyday life" **Georgia**

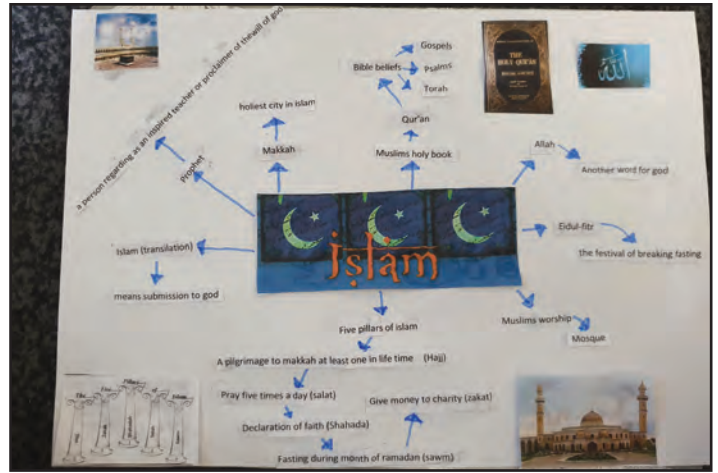
"So far I've learnt things that I already knew but only a few things that I didn't know before. I am coping with it at the minute but in the future I think it would affect my grades in GCSE. My mom is helping me and my sister as best as she can because she wants us to do well at school. Plus, my mom can also learn new things that she didn't know before and my dad tidies the house up (making sure the house is nice and clean so there is a less chance of catching the virus). When this is all over I would love to go and see my family and friends again because at the minute it is like we are trapped in a cage and can't get out of it but I can at least go out in my garden on a nice sunny day. I hope I see you sooner." **Jayden**

Work done during lockdown:



Science - Charlie has made a solar system out of beads complimented by an alien life form.

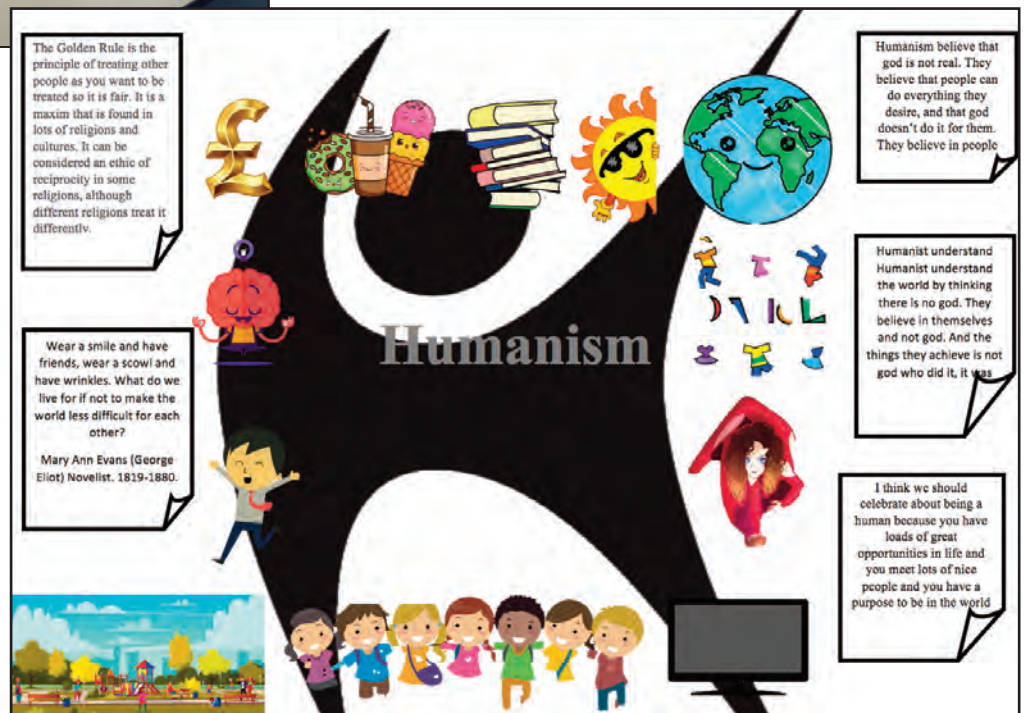
VE day bunting made by Key Worker children in school



RE - Year 5's Ashton Richardson's incredible RE studies on Islam from week 1 and 2 during lockdown set project work.



A Humanism graphic produced at home by Megan Weston



A king and his queen longed for a child,
And since she was born, they had always smiled.
Then came the day of the sweet girls christening,
Where all of the guests were dressed up dazzling.

Thirteen wise women but they didn't invite one,
Although one guest missing, they still had lots of fun.
Giving the baby gifts like wealth, charm and beauty.
Then the thirteenth lady burst in, shouting, screaming rudely.

"How dare you not invite me!" the wicked woman screeched in dismay,
"I had the perfect gift prepared! Might as well give it anyway!"
She performed an evil spell, settling in the girl's heart so deep,
"On her fifteenth birthday she will prick her finger and fall asleep!"
But the poor princess would not wake up although she would take breaths,
This never-ending sleep could be described as death.

One small, kind lady spoke up above the rest,
She could help the princess; she hadn't given her gift yet.
She whipped out a magic wand and her joyous face fell,
The king flinched and the queen wept as she performed her spell.
The final lady said, "She will awake with true loves kiss."
"The whole kingdom will sleep as well so nothing is to miss."
The king bellowed for all his guests to quickly leave,
To return with a spinning wheel. (He burned them all and felt relieved.)

His attention turned to the kind, wise lady,
He asked if she could care for the baby.
The magic woman nodded and pointed out her friends,
"We own a small cottage, deep in the woods. We'll use our magic to defend."
And so, the fairies took the child as her mother cried goodbye,
They would keep the princess safe no matter how hard the witch could try.
Fourteen years had passed, since that horrible day,
The fairies raised her polite and taught her she must stay away.
Now just a week before her birthday, the word fifteen made her mothers wince,
So, she left to go on a walk where she met a handsome man (the prince!)

She would meet him every day for hours upon end,
Then came her birthday and her mothers' rules began to bend.
"no talking to anyone other than us!"
"no going outside! No don't make a fuss!"
The devastated girl sat down and began to think,
'I could sneak out and write an apology with paper and ink'

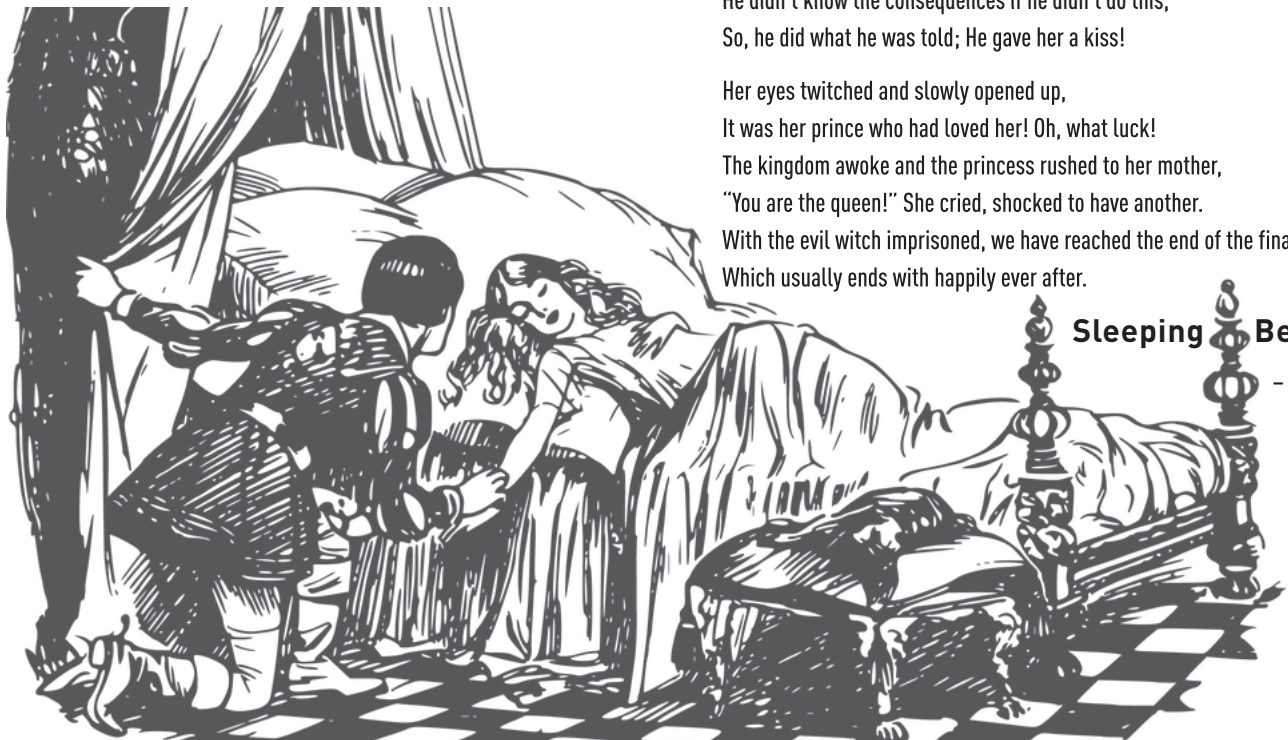
She did just that whilst her mothers were busy,
There was a flash of green and she felt extremely dizzy.
The prince saw her wobble and nearly collapse,
So, he took her to his castle where she could relax.
He sat her down and left to get her a drink,
But she was swept into a trance as quick as a blink. She followed the path that the magic showed,
Climbing spiralling staircases till she found a door that evilly glowed.
She pushed open the door and she saw one of her mothers,
Surprised that she was not at home with the others.

"Why mother, what are you doing?"
"Oh, my darling, can't you see I'm spinning!"
"What a beautiful ring, mother! But why does it glow?"
"Come closer my dear and I'll let you know!"
She took a step further, but something caught her eye,
A thin sharp spindle 'come closer!' it seemed to cry.
Reaching her hand out she pricked her finger deep,
Then began the never-ending sleep.

The kingdom yawned and stretched out as they all fell asleep,
Even the prince dozed off as the fairies began to weep.
100 years had passed since the spindle had pricked,
And the fairies finally knew who the girl's heart had picked.

They used all their magic for this final spell,
And when the prince woke up, the fairies were there with a long story to tell.
Once they had explained, he rushed to her bed,
Where she was lying asleep but looked all too dead.
He didn't know the consequences if he didn't do this,
So, he did what he was told; He gave her a kiss!

Her eyes twitched and slowly opened up,
It was her prince who had loved her! Oh, what luck!
The kingdom awoke and the princess rushed to her mother,
"You are the queen!" She cried, shocked to have another.
With the evil witch imprisoned, we have reached the end of the final chapter,
Which usually ends with happily ever after.



Sleeping Beauty

– Isobel Harper
Year 7

Jack and the beanstalk

– Joseph Roberts, Year 7

There once was a boy called Jack
He lived with his mum in a shack,
She sent him to get
A video cassette
But instead got beans in a sack.

He put the sack on the ground
Mum leapt over in a bound.
She tripped and she fell,
Gave out a loud yell
The mum landed on a mound

Over night, the seeds will sprout
The next day Jack chose to scout
It grew very wide.
He felt lots of pride
Climbing this thing was paramount.

He climbed that hour, with his supply
He said to his mum, which was a lie,
"I'll be back in a tick,"
His mum was quite thick,
So she believed him and said: "Bye bye zz!"

At the top, he heard this cry,
"Fee fi fo fum, aye aye aye"
Jack reacted with dismay,
This could be a bad day!
He could end up a human pie!

The giant put Jack in the pot,
He ran around, like a shot
He ran faster and faster
What a disaster.
He really is a big clot.

"You and I need to talk,"
Said Jack to the Dork
He ran out the door,
Fell splat on the floor
And jumped down the beanstalk

Giant was in an excavator,
Luckily there were escalators
He got stuck in the mud
As the result of a flood
And got eaten by a large alligator



Life under lockdown:

Lockdown has been a strange time for me as a Ballroom and Latin dancer. I would normally train 6 days a week and travel to Liverpool, Sheffield, London, Litchfield, Wolverhampton and Cannock each week for all my lessons and practice nights. I also most weekends travel all over the country to attend competitions and we (my dance partner and I) are currently ranked No. 1 in the UK for under 14s and 4th for under 16s. I love what I do and these last few months have been difficult to adjust. My living room has become my dance studio and the zoom app has kept me in touch with my dance partner and teachers having virtual lessons.

But with this new virtual dance world has also brought with it opportunities to have lessons with people that are normally busy with other work commitments. On top of my normal lessons I am now having weekly lessons with 9 times world Latin champion Joanna Lunis and Amy Dowden and Shirley Ballas from BBC strictly come dancing. All have been fantastic and I have learnt a lot from these world class professionals. So even in these strange times I have had some amazing experiences, however nothing beats dancing in a competition on the dance floor at Blackpool with the orchestra playing and the crowds clapping and cheering us on. Hopefully I will be back there soon!!!

Olivia Bourne – 7MAR



Cross country championships

Congratulations to Leo Cerrone and Oli Edrop who both qualified for the cross country national finals!

Hopefully this will be re-arranged at a future date and we will watch with anticipation, cheering the boys on.

Well done Leo and Oli !





***"It's life Jim,
but not as we know it"***

so said Spock to Kirk

Whatever happens next will not be normal as we understand it. The problem is that most of the time we are second guessing what the

experts or the government will be doing, and being expected to exercise "good common sense". Problem is that common sense is something that is built on by past experience and what we are going through is relatively new to us all.

Navigating through such times is difficult, the goal posts seem now to be shifting and if we are honest a lot of what is happening to us is beyond our control.

I think that is why the message "Stay at Home" worked, it was a consistent marker for us to navigate with. Things are less clear now and yet we are called to make some big decisions, especially the one to return our children to school. If you have concerns and worries then you are not alone. Parents, school governors, senior school leaders and local authorities probably all share those concerns.

So how do we navigate life now? Perhaps we can't we are limited in what we can do and so perhaps a better image to reflect on is that of an anchor. Anchors give ships in harbour a sense of safety, they will not go adrift, but anchors do not stop a boat from experiencing the power of the current or movement of the waves. So what are your anchors at this moment?

Before the C-19 pandemic, there was a rhythm and a degree of consistency in life and the anchors you had were adequate, but what about now? Perhaps it's a good time to review the anchors that will hold you fast in your life and in the lives of your family.

During another time of uncertainty, a group of people who had readjusted their worldview and faced persecution and imprisonment for their faith faced a difficult time. It was not just them that suffered but also their families and livelihoods. We have a record of a letter sent to these people in the Bible and in that letter the writer reminds them of a hope this is like an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. And what is that hope? That they are not abandoned or forgotten, that they are deeply loved in Jesus. The hope that grows from this is like an anchor for their soul. They will still face troubles, but they have hope based on the faithfulness of God.

My own experience of having this hope has sustained me during some dark times for me, including debt, illness of a loved one, a stressful job. I wish I could say that I became immune from the pain, suffering and inner damage that these things caused, but that would be a lie.

What is true is that the hope that I had that God was there, faithful and present, gave me strength to carry on and to endure.

When I was in the Boys Brigade I got introduced to a hymn that contained the lines

*"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?
When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift or firm remain?"*

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love!"*

May God bless you in these strange times and remember there is an anchor you can depend on.

**Reverend Ray Khan - Parish of Bromsgrove
Team Vicar St John the Baptist & St. Andrew's Charford
T: 01527 577172 M: 07952170840**

Help for Parents / Carers

Below are some partner agencies within Worcestershire who may be able to offer support if you are experiencing challenging circumstances:

Basement Project - Facing homelessness / foodbank

<https://bromsgrovebasementproject.org.uk/what-we-do/foodbank/>

"We have a food bank on site at The Basement Project. If you are struggling to make ends meet, we can provide a food and toiletry parcel to see you through a few days. We accept self-referrals for food parcels, as well as from other agencies who are already working with you. Call us or drop in during our opening hours if you need a food parcel."

Here to Help - 01905 768053 This can be used Monday to Sunday 8am and 8pm. <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help>

Starting Well is a Worcestershire website providing help during antenatal, post birth, and early years stages, and right throughout school life. www.startingwellworcs.nhs.uk

Parenting and Community Services Bromsgrove

Pear Tree Centre Mob. **07943 832294** Tel. **01527 835 775**

Are you a member of the public and worried about a child? If you have reason to believe that a child, young person or adult is at immediate risk from harm dial **999**

If you have any concerns about a child or young person living in Worcestershire and feel that they may be in need of protection or safeguarding contact **The Family Front Door**. Staff are available Monday to Thursday from 9.00am to 5.00pm and Fridays from 9.00am to 4.30pm. **01905 822666** or out of office hours **01905 768020**

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Watt Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 7DH

Tel: 01527 832376

E-mail: school@st-johns-bromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk

Web: www.st-johns-bromsgrove.worcs.sch.uk