

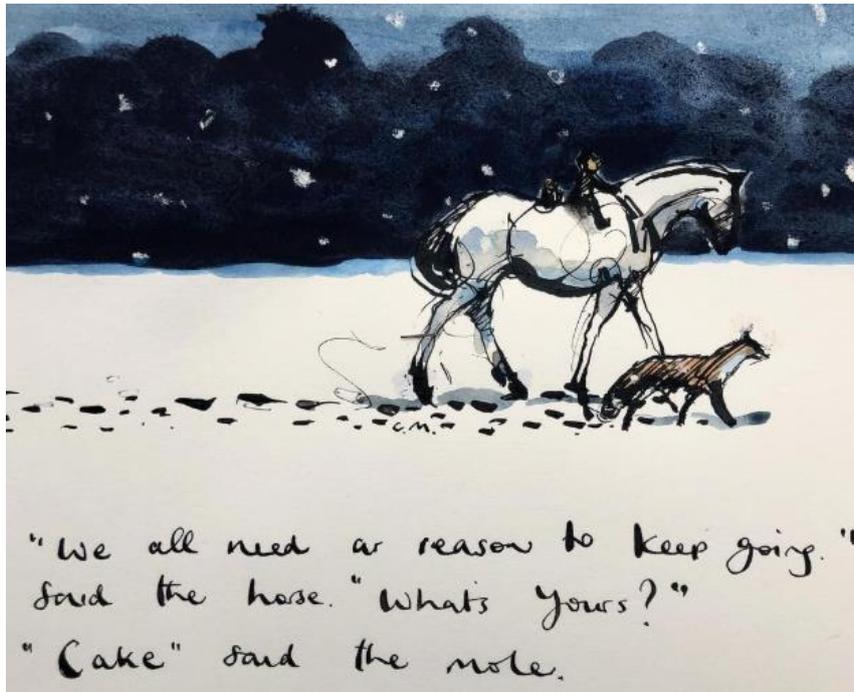
# The Topsham School

## Newsletter 29



A love of learning and commitment to the success of every child at the heart of all we do.  
Tel: 01392 874498 Website: [www.topsham.devon.sch.uk](http://www.topsham.devon.sch.uk)

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020



### Remote teaching and learning- reflections and reassurance

I would like to start by thanking all of you for your patience and encouragement during this challenging time. We are all trying to find a way through this new way of working and it is going to take some time to get the balance right. We know we are not there yet. I keep reminding myself and my staff that we have only been working in this way for 12 days.

I want to reassure all of you that we understand that having to work in the way we are may be causing feelings of anxiety or worry for parents, and I apologise if this is the case for you. I know that many of you are still either working for critical services or you are trying to manage home working, whilst looking after your children. I know too that each one of you will be carrying anxieties connected to how we are needing to live and the pressures this causes; being cooped up in one space, financial worries, health worries, worries about our children's wellbeing and learning, wondering what things will be like when this is all over and other anxieties and concerns that the CV situation is bringing to bare. I feel them too.

We are striving to ensure that the learning being set is providing opportunities for children to practice key skills and not to provide 'new' learning; we know that you are not teachers and your homes are not set up as classrooms. There is no expectation that children will make 'progress'. This cannot be achieved as we work in this very different and challenging way. From conversations and feedback from staff and parents, we understand the instructions given to support parents and children complete learning activities, especially in English, are proving to be

quite time consuming. We are now working in our phase teams to find ways to overcome this. Please bear with us while we do this. We are working to make improvements in this area as quickly as we can.

***Please can I remind you to let your teacher know if you would find it easier to have paper copies of the learning, or alternatives to online activities, as this may also help to ease computer related pressures.***

Gaps in learning may occur, as a result of this time away from school. Every child and every school is facing the same challenges, but we have the resources and a fabulous team of experienced staff to support you and your child when schools start to re-open again. All the learning being provided is to try and support our children remain engaged in learning while they cannot be in school. It is this engagement that is the most important thing. That is why we are tracking engagement, not progress. If you find that your child is really struggling to access or complete an activity in the recommended time, or that there are any resource or technology issues that are getting in the way of accessing or completing an activity, **then stop; that is OK to do. Stop and email your child's class teacher** and let them know so the teacher can reassure and provide support to enable your child to continue their learning and succeed; even if it is just to say to you and your child, "Don't worry about it. Leave it and **try something else.**" It is also ok to upload or send in **ANY** example of their learning, this includes taking a photograph to send to the class teacher; it can be as simple as this. You don't even need to include a comment or explanation.

My staff and I are in constant communication about how we can make improvements in our provision and how we can make things more manageable for all of you.

### **Some changes from next week:**

One change we will be making from next week, is that teachers will only be providing learning opportunities from Monday to Thursday. Again, the focus will be on a reading activity, phonics/spelling activity, writing activity and maths activity. Teachers are working tirelessly to make these tasks, time limited and accessible; again, we might not get it right next week but please know we will listen to feedback and try and modify things further if we need to.

Fridays will now be known as "Feel Good Family Fridays!"

This will include:

- **one reading episode of 15-30 minutes.** This might be independent reading or simply sharing a book together and reading to your child.
- **one short maths episode of 15 mins:** KS2 will be times tables on TTRS or on paper if online access is limited; FSU and KS1 will be counting- this may be counting in 1s, 2s, 10s and counting anything, from the number of daisies in your garden to the number of grapes in your snack to pairs of socks! **None of the reading or maths is to be uploaded on Google Classroom**
- For the rest of Friday's remote learning, our HLTAs will be in charge and the activities sent out will be focused on either **physical or mental health.** 3 activities will be posted, and you can choose to do 1, 2 or all 3, or if you need to just stop altogether, that is fine. Our HLTAs will be online in Google Classroom to receive any questions or uploaded comments or photos, **but there is no expectation to upload anything on the day.**

**Participate in this day to the extent you wish; it is a dedicated space for family time.**

After our geography topic learning will be more linked across the whole school to support continuity and allow siblings to work together on a project. We will be focusing on Art, so hopefully this will allow for some real creativity. I will communicate more about this when needed.

As the song goes "We are all in this together" and we are. We may not be able to see you each day, but we are all still here. We are all still here to listen and to support you all. We are ALL trying our best and that is good enough. Please be gentle with yourselves and please look after you as well as your children

Have a wonderful weekend, and cake is the way forward,

Mrs Pipe

### **Communication**

Copies of all letters and newsletters sent to parents via Schoolcomms are now also available to view or download from the newsletters section of our school website.

### **Rainbow of happiness**

Congratulations to Daisy in Year 3 who has designed a beautiful rainbow with her favourite quotes from her happy-self journal that she has been writing in for the past 3 months.



### **A message from the governors...**

*"Though the governors cannot meet in person during this lockdown, we are now meeting via video conference to continue to support the school and our pupils, and to monitor key areas such as safeguarding, teaching & learning, staffing, and health & safety. The board is currently meeting more frequently than normal and has just recruited two new governors to assist us through this period and beyond. The governors are determined to help the school to adapt to meet the challenges of today and to ensure safety and security as we move forward beyond this present crisis. Getting through this will be difficult, and those difficulties will not all end the moment lockdown is lifted, but together we can ensure the children are as happy and as safe as possible for the time being, and that they can get back on track when they all meet again when the school is open as usual."*

## SAFEGUARDING



### Online Safety

Two leaflets are being sent to parents by email today entitled, 'What parents need to know about Disney' and 'What parents need to know about Netflix.'

### Safeguarding Leads and contact information

Provision has now restarted in school for the children of our Key Workers and children identified by the government as vulnerable. The school's staff rota has been written to ensure a Safeguarding Lead will be in school each day. Members of staff with this designated position are as follows:

- Mrs Emma Pipe: Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher:  
[epipe@topsham.devon.sch.uk](mailto:epipe@topsham.devon.sch.uk)
- Miss Maria White: Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Headteacher and Online Safety Leader  
[mwhite@topsham.devon.sch.uk](mailto:mwhite@topsham.devon.sch.uk)
- Mrs Hartmann: Deputy Safeguarding Lead, SENDCO and Early Help Leader  
[nhartmann@topsham.devon.sch.uk](mailto:nhartmann@topsham.devon.sch.uk)

If **any** parent has a safeguarding concern or query about ANY child within our community, please email for advice.

**IF ANY ADULT FEELS A CHILD OR ADULT MAY BE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER YOU MUST CALL MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) OR 999**

*"If you are worried about a child or young person in Devon and want to speak to someone, or if you are a child or young person worried about your own safety please contact the MASH on **0345 155 1071** or email [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk) and give as much information as you can."*

Devon Children and Families Partnership.



### EMTAS HELPINE



- Help with supporting your bilingual and GRT families
- Help with translations
- Help with resources



CALL: 01392 880789

EMAIL: [EMTAS@babcockinternational.com](mailto:EMTAS@babcockinternational.com)



# Devon Bilingual Writing Competition

Write a Poem in your own language and in English

## The theme: Home

you can write about:

your home in another country

the home you live in now

staying at home during the lockdown

what home means to you

you can add illustrations

Prizes awarded for 1st & 2nd places winners in the following age categories:

KS1,(5-7)

KS2 (8-11)

KS3/4 (12-16)

Win bilingual talking pens and books!

For more details please contact us on:  
[emtas@babcockinternational.com](mailto:emtas@babcockinternational.com)

All entries must be submitted to the address above before the 2nd June 2020

# Messages from Teachers...

## In school this week....

*"What a wonderful, sunny, happy and productive week we have all had. The children have become film directors, completed skipping challenges, splashed about in water and amazed everyone with their fantastic story recall and writing. A particularly big thank you to all the children for making some new friends feel so welcome as they joined us this week."*

**Mr Vernon**

### Little Acorns

*"Mr Vernon has been in school this week and has really enjoyed being very busy again in the Foundation Stage Unit, which we are basing our Key Worker provision in. It has felt strange not having all the usual lovely 'busy bees' around him but, if you have not been with him, he has really enjoyed seeing all the wonderful things you have been doing at home. Well done for all your Jack and the Beanstalk story work and bug hunting - we found lots of slugs near the new vegetable beds at school - oh dear!!"*

**Mr Vernon and the FSU Team**

### Big Acorns

*"What brilliant home learning again this week Big Acorns! It has been fantastic to see all your wonderful story work, from recalling our Jack and the Beanstalk story to drawing amazing masks and writing speech bubbles. We're pleased you enjoyed your ladybird maths and were able to show how well you are understanding the number system. Like the Little Acorns, you have certainly turned into brilliant bug hunters, we think there might be a David Attenborough amongst you!"*

**Miss Dinning, Mr Vernon and the FSU Team**

### Year 1

*"This week Year 1 have been really impressing Mrs Chesworth and Mrs Phillips with their enthusiasm for learning. We have been looking at volume and capacity and have enjoyed carrying out practical experiments to learn more about this. A lot of us were surprised that some tall, thin containers looked fuller than shorter, wider containers, but actually held the same amount of liquid! We have also been showing off our writing skills. We have been writing postcards to Jack's mum, from Jack in the Beanstalk, and having a go at writing the story. We have been so impressed with the hard work and dedication the children have shown this week. Well done!"*

**Mrs Chesworth and Mrs Phillips**

## Year 2

*"This week has seen the Year 2 children getting out into their gardens to apply their knowledge of position and direction. They are now experts, so if you are ever lost don't hesitate to ask them for directions! They also make pretty awesome obstacle courses, ladder climbs and tunnel crawls included. It has been so wonderful to see their hard work, learning about expanded noun phrases, applied in their Jack's Adventure short writing task. It has taken lots of grit and determination to complete this week's learning and I am so proud that you have ALL persevered (parents included!!)."*

**Mrs Whitehead**

## Year 3

*"This week I've had the pleasure of seeing some of my Year 3's in person as I've worked in our key worker provision in school. They have really impressed me with how they have shown our school values of teamwork, co-operating with children of all ages and especially supporting the younger children. Meanwhile online the class have been busy turning themselves into Times Table Rockstars – judging by the positive feedback, the children are embracing this fun, online way of practising their times tables. They'll all be Rock Legends in no time!"*

**Mrs Daitz**

## Year 4

*"We are so impressed with how Year 4 have committed their time and energy to this week's learning, whether they have been learning remotely from home, or in school completing their activities. From the detail that they have given in their writing-collecting fab vocabulary and really pushing themselves in their sentences, to the perseverance they have shown in the new TTRS and some tricky timed questions, they have begun to settle in to this unusual way of learning and are supporting each other through these changes, and have been very patient with us while we adapt to this new way of teaching! So thank you Year 4, you deserve a great rest this weekend!"*

**Miss White**

## Year 5

*"What another great week Year 5! You have again produced some amazing work and I have enjoyed reading and looking at it. You seem so much more confident in using Google Classroom - well done. Thank you for all your really positive comments regarding TTRockstars – you all seem to be enjoying this. A big thank you to parents too, who are obviously working hard at home supporting your children. It is greatly appreciated."*

## Year 6

**Mrs de Winton**

*"Year 6 have impressed me once again this week with their ability to apply themselves to a challenge, even when they are finding it tricky. We have been writing character descriptions and I have been blown away by the work that they have completed. They have used so much tier two vocabulary and have clearly worked very hard, making for vivid (if a little scary) descriptions of giants. I am so impressed Year 6 - keep up the brilliant work."*

**Miss Greygoose**

## **Covid-19 Updates for Parents**

As a school, we are receiving information and updates from a wide range of sources including the Department for Education and Devon County Council. As the situation evolves, we will endeavour to collate the information that is relevant to parents and share this with you on a weekly basis.

### **If you are having a food emergency .....**

If you are having difficulty feeding your children and find you have no or very little food, you can ring Estuary League of Friends on 01392 879009 and ask for Simone. They are able to arrange emergency food deliveries.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can get worse during times of stress and uncertainty. If it did for you, now is the time to get help. Visit: [www.domesticabusehelp.co.uk](http://www.domesticabusehelp.co.uk)

If you are in an abusive relationship and need help, here are just some of the people and places that can provide help. Take the first step today. Victim Care Unit – 01392 475900 First Light (Safer Futures) – 0300 777 4777 Devon Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0345 155 1074 Cornwall Domestic Abuse 24hr Helpline - 01872 225629 Women's Aid – 0808 2000247 Male Domestic Violence Advice Line - 0800 3283623 Galop - DV Advice for Lesbian, Gay, Bi Sexual and Transgender - 0800 5875247 National Domestic Abuse Helpline - 0808 2000247 Or visit: [www.domesticabusehelp.co.uk](http://www.domesticabusehelp.co.uk) **In an emergency always call 999.**



### **Samaritans**

You may be feeling more worried or unsettled by what's going on in the world. It might feel like there is a lot that's outside of our control. It's natural that this uncertainty and change may affect people's mental wellbeing. If you need someone to talk to in confidence about anything that's worrying you, you can ring 116123 for free. Samaritans is open 24 hours every day, 365 days a year.

# We are finding new ways to support young people...

We are offering a wide range of digital support during the current crisis; delivering our services over phone, video-call and email.

For a full list of services, please read our [Coronavirus Update](#).

## We are still here

**Wellbeing support:** Our counsellors are still delivering our mental health services to young people. If you need to talk to someone, email [wellbeingenquiries@youngdevon.org](mailto:wellbeingenquiries@youngdevon.org)

**Accommodation support:** If you need support staying at home, or are at risk of losing your accommodation, you can find advice and helpful information at [www.yhdevon.co.uk](http://www.yhdevon.co.uk). If you live in Exeter, East Devon or Teignbridge, email [yes.exeter@youngdevon.org](mailto:yes.exeter@youngdevon.org). If you live in Newton Abbot, email [yes.newtonabbot@youngdevon.org](mailto:yes.newtonabbot@youngdevon.org)

**Skills support:** Our Skills courses are still being run remotely. To get in touch with our tutors, email [thechangeacademy@youngdevon.org](mailto:thechangeacademy@youngdevon.org)

**Participation enquiries:** Our Participation team are continuing to work remotely, and our Youth Council are having regular Zoom meetings. For more information on how to get involved, email [participation@youngdevon.org](mailto:participation@youngdevon.org)

**Sexual health advice:** Our sexual health service is still running. If you need any advice or support, email [yes.newtonabbot@youngdevon.org](mailto:yes.newtonabbot@youngdevon.org)

If you would prefer to text, please send your name and message to **07894724610**.

These are difficult times. If you know someone that would benefit from our support, please encourage them to get in touch with us.



The latest national advice on coronavirus (COVID-19) is available on the [Government website](#) and [NHS website](#).

For local Government advice, please visit the [Devon County Council website](#).