



HAWRIDGE & CHOLESBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

OUR SCHOOL VALUES: RESPECT - UNDERSTANDING – PEACE – HONESTY – RESPONSIBILITY - TEAMWORK

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'Love one another as I have loved you.' John 13:34

12th June 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

This half term's value is **Understanding**

Summer Term Newsletter No. 6

This week has been a special week as we have been able to welcome back more of our children. (see the photos on our school website) I have been so impressed with how well the children have slotted back in, so relaxed and happy; it's just so lovely to see them! Thank you to all the parents too, you have worked with staff to manage the whole process seamlessly and of course to the staff who have worked with me to plan and prepare for this week.

I am very aware that many of the children have not been able to return to school yet. We would love to see them back at school as soon as possible, but as I am sure you can imagine this is logistically very challenging and parameters are constantly moving. With 2 metre distancing rules in place, it is just not possible to fit 15 children in a class even if we had a spare 7 spaces for the other 15 or more! If the rules about social distancing are reduced to 1 metre, it will obviously be possible to accommodate more children, but not whole classes in one room still. I am however, working very hard to explore possible options and will be in touch further about this as plans develop. We miss you all and look forward to seeing you when it is safe and manageable to do so! Like you, I would like nothing more than to return to the 'old normal' and have our school full again with the sounds of child chatter!

Remote learning continues on our new eSchools website platform and we hope this is working well for all. Remember, we are here to support and help you, so if you are having any difficulties please do message the teachers through the platform, email or phone the office.

Battle of the Books

From mid-January, more than 40 children from Years 4, 5 and 6 joined forces to compete in our annual Battle of the Books competition. Working in mixed teams over 10 weeks they read a specially-selected list of 10 books, ranging from family classics to modern biography and tackling subjects as diverse as World War I, sweatshops in Indonesia and time travel. Among the favourites were *The Boy at the Back of the Class* by Onjali Q Rauf, *Greta's Story* by Valentina Camerini and *Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah. The competition should have reached its climax just before the Easter holidays, but then the lockdown struck...

Postponed but not thwarted, Battle of the Books finally took place in a revised format just before the May half term, with individuals rather than teams competing online over three rounds. Huge congratulations should go to the determined children (Anna, Nat, Miley, Fraser, Finlay W) who saw it through to the end - and especially to Abbey in Year 4 (our outright winner) and Lily A in Year 5 (our runner up) who managed to read all ten books. A fantastic effort! Prizes will be winging their way to the lucky winners in due course.

This weeks' 'music' ...

This week's music is actually a poem. It was written by one of my favourite classical authors Thomas Hardy who lived about 100 years ago. My messages to you have often referred to birds and this poem is following that theme. It is set in winter time not summer, but the burst of joy the thrush song exudes during the harshness of winter resonated with me at this time. Verses 1, 3 and 4 are written below but you can find the full version online. I hope it fills you with joy!



The Darkling Thrush

**I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.**

**At once a voice arose among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-hearted evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.**

**So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy good-night air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware**

If you have a poem or music that you would like to suggest we all listen to, I would love to hear your recommendation. Please email it to the school office with an explanation as to why you have chosen it so that I can include that in future newsletters.

Finally, I wish you all a lovely weekend and look forward to being in touch again shortly.

Kind regards

Mrs R Phillips
Headteacher