

News from Mr Edwards-Grundy

This weekend is the end of January, which means that in Collective Worship on Monday we will begin our new Value of the Month, Kindness.

In Collective Worship today I shared some of the children's Hope Acrostics, but I have now received so many more that I will share these on Monday. The children's work is a poignant reminder that hope comes in all shapes and sizes.

As a community, nation and world we are hoping for an end to this challenging season, but within that big hope are so many others. Hope for the recovery of sick relatives, for spring, for a good night's sleep, for a bit of peace and quiet. Whatever you are hoping for, it is my prayer that in the days and weeks ahead you will find the energy and courage to keep hoping, to believe that better days will come and that by working together we can see our hopes realised.

Today's newsletter contains links to several resources that I hope you may find helpful in protecting the mental health and wellbeing of you and your children. I am all too aware that winter days, world news and the challenges of personal circumstances mean that many of you may be feeling overwhelmed. I would encourage you to take a look at the resources that we have shared, try out some of the ideas, on your own, or as a family and looking ahead to our Value for next month, be kind to yourself.

Listening to Lottie sing so beautifully for Collective Worship this week I was struck by the truth of the words of that song "...any dream will do". It's as true for us as it was for Joseph about whom the song is written. We do not know how the journey will play out or end, but we should always remain hopeful. For me that hope is grounded in God, who has proved to me to be a source of light, whatever the darkness and challenges I face.

Top Doodlers!

Mr Noble's class has done it again, but this week they have shared their success with Miss Hinkins' class. Well done to the children in those classes for being this week's 'Top Doodlers!'

Thoughts from The Priory

Did you make a snowman on Sunday?

I know that many families loved having fun in the snow, building snow people and animals, having snowball fights and sledging down hills. There is something exciting about seeing a fresh blanket of snow and all the potential fun that it's going to bring. It makes us feel hopeful.

Something else that makes us feel hopeful at this time of year is that we are heading towards spring, the days are getting longer and the snowdrops and other flowers are beginning to appear.

I took this photo of the snowdrops that are at the bottom of my garden, by the river.



A few weeks ago, when the river flooded, these flowers were covered in water and then on Sunday they were covered in snow. But they are still alive! Despite the challenges they have continued to grow. Their appearance tells us that warmer and better days are coming.

This weekend, why don't you look out for shoots of new life in your gardens, or along the paths as you go on a walk. They are signs of hope, available for all of us to see and appreciate.

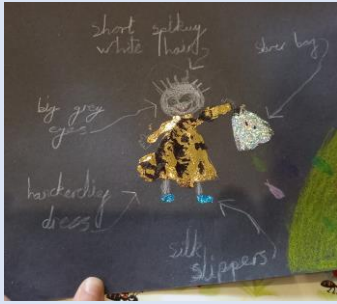
As we head towards spring, my mind is already turning to Easter. The Easter story is all about hope and new beginnings, a reminder that no matter how dark things are, there is always hope.

Let's look forward together, with hope.

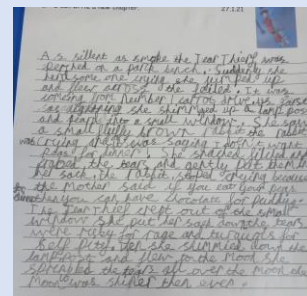
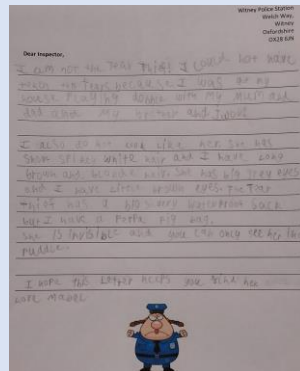
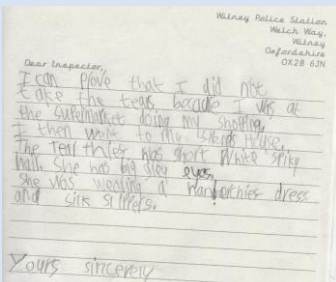
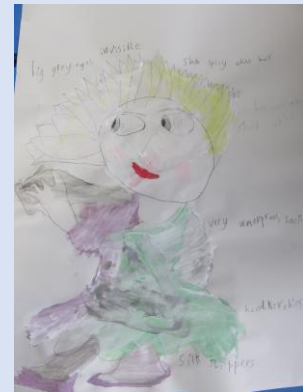
Rev Simon Kirby

News from around the school

This week we heard from Mrs Rump and Miss Hinkins about the work Year 2 have been doing this term on 'The Tear Thief'. Children at school and at home have been involved in lots of creative work, including artwork and puppet shows, as well as some impressive writing producing another chapter in the book and convincing the inspector as to why they are not 'The Tear Thief.'



We loved this piece of writing, which started by describing 'The Tear Thief' as "silent as smoke".



Thank-you

Thank-you to everyone who completed our short online survey this week about your experience of remote learning.

We received an amazing amount of feedback in just 48 hours, which meant that it could be discussed by staff and we could make changes to our plans for next week.

We really appreciated the positive feedback alongside the things you would find more helpful.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank you for everything you are doing to support your children's learning – we think you are amazing!

100-club

This week the office team drew the next number in the 100-club on behalf of The Friends.

The lucky winner was Sam Knight, ticket number 23, who won £49.50.

Congratulations to Sam – we hope you enjoy treating yourself with your winnings!

We are grateful to The Friends for their ongoing fund-raising, which once all the children are back in school will benefit all children.

Where you can find help

There are lots of organisations to whom you can turn for help if you want professional support, advice, or just someone to talk to. Here are the contact details for just a few.

[NSPCC](#) – ideas as well as support for the whole family, not just children

[Childline](#) – 0800 1111 Support for young people.

[Samaritans](#) – 116 123 If you need to talk.

If you need help in an emergency, always dial 999.

If you want to talk, you can contact St Mary's Cogges and a member of their team would be happy to provide a listening ear. Please do also feel free to make contact with [Judith Ledden](#), our Home School Key Worker, who can also provide support and signpost you to other agencies.

Worry Monsters

Attached to this newsletter is information provided by the School Nurse Team.

We would encourage you to read through the information as it contains some really good ideas and useful tips for coping with the current challenges.

We especially liked the ideas for making your own [worry monsters](#), we think we will have a go at one of these.

The information also contains a useful link to a webpage with [ideas for managing anxiety](#) for adults, including links to relaxation techniques and how to structure your time.

You can also find links to support agencies, which you may find it helpful to contact if you are experiencing any particular difficulties.

Relax!

Relax Kids have produced some free to use resources for children and adults designed specifically to aid relaxation.

We think the ideas on their [Calm Exercise Cards](#) are really helpful in unwinding and taking time to be still. We especially like the idea of imagining that we are butter, slowly melting into warm toast.

The site also has links to other activities undertaken by the organisation and other things that you or your children may find helpful at this time, such as journalling.

Whether you find the suggestions on this site helpful or not, we encourage you to find something this weekend that brings you joy and helps you relax.

Re-opening of schools?

We are sure that you, like us, were saddened by the news this week that schools will not re-open to all children until at least 8th March.

We would like to assure you that when all children are back in school, we will be addressing any gaps in learning. We are confident that your children will show the same eagerness to learn that they did in September and will be ready for the next steps in their learning.

Asymptomatic testing

Just a reminder that as of this week, all staff in primary schools are now testing themselves twice a week for Covid-19.

We are delighted to be part of this routine testing as it provides another layer of protection to both our school community and the wider community.

We will continue to communicate any positive cases in the same open and transparent way that we have done to date.

Quiz corner

Last week's answers –

1. 4 bags of rubbish and a large pile of equipment that has gone to be recycled.
2. The Year 3 team – it was great fun!
3. Only one, but there were a lot of people giving advice!!