

Emmbrook Junior School Newsletter

Friday 8th May, 2020

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Letters emailed this week:

- Well Being Wednesday Newsletter
- Mr Theobald 5K Every Day in May!
- Spoonyville
- Online Courses

Hello from Mr. Usher



Hello everyone, I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and well. As we enter the 7th week of lockdown and beyond, I continue to be aware of the levels of stress and anxiety that many members of our community may be feeling. As a school we continue to keep up to date with government advice regarding 'well-being' and home learning provision and as a school we feel that we are in line with or ahead of expectations.

Our strategy to support 'well-being' is outlined in this newsletter but I wish to emphasise that the home learning opportunities we have provided are there to support you and not cause additional anxiety or stress. We do want children to continue learning at home where possible but again we only ask that they do what they can, when they can. If you have any issues with the tasks set, please email teachers via the year group email address or use the class drop-in sessions. Please read through the '**Well-being Wednesday**' newsletter if you get the chance as it contains some useful well-being hacks and activities.

Father Lamey from St. Pauls has been in contact and would like to encourage people to write to any nursing home they know or live near, or have links with and send some pictures, drawings or artwork too. Due to the lockdown many residents of such homes are feeling particularly lonely and isolated. As well as this staff at nursing homes have been under a great deal of pressure in very difficult circumstances. If you could write to the staff saying well done or write to the residents saying you're thinking of them and hope that they are ok, it would very much be appreciated. Please feel free to write to any nursing home you know or have links with but the two nearest to us are probably:

Glebelands Care Home, Glebelands House, Woolf Drive, Wokingham, RG40 1DU

West Oak, Murray Road, Wokingham, RG41 2TU

Father Lamey has also suggested that the dropping round of any old magazines or some new bottles of lemonade or fruit or chocolates would be gratefully received. I would encourage you to do so, perhaps during your daily exercise, as long as it's done safely observing careful social distancing rules.

There continues to be unhelpful and misleading speculation in the media about how and when schools will reopen. This is incredibly frustrating for us and must be more so for families. Please rest assured that we are in contact with Wokingham Borough Council as well as working closely with other local schools in planning for how we will reopen the school. As soon as we have any information, we will share it with the community.

Thank you for your support and understanding. As always, stay in touch and stay safe.

Teams

We've been very pleased and impressed with how most children have been accessing and utilising Teams for the home learning. We have been made aware that some children have been using the calls feature to contact each other. Since we are unable to monitor the content of these calls, we are investigating how this feature may be restricted to staff only however in the meantime, we ask that children do not contact each other using the calls feature. Further to this, some of the shared files and documents have been deleted or changed - possibly as users don't realise that this impacts everyone. When accessing or downloading activities, please ensure that they remain there for others to access.

Safeguarding Hub for Parents

Given that children are probably spending a great deal more time online during the current situation, now is a good time to remember the potential risks certain websites, apps and social media can pose. As a school, we've signed up to a safeguarding hub that allows parents to access interactive guidance on setting up parental controls on their child's devices, as well as guidance on apps like TikTok, YouTube and Instagram and more. You can access the safeguarding hub using this link:

<https://parenthub.thekeysupport.com?uuid=b015a52b-30e5-4f10-b56c-4393e5353c6f>

Well Being

Our key priority once school reopens will be supporting the children's mental health and giving them lots of opportunities to discuss and reflect upon their experiences as well as chances to work through any anxieties and worries. Mrs Edwards has been running small 'invite only' nurture sessions via Zoom for our children who need it the most. However, whilst school is closed, it is more challenging for us to provide bespoke support to every child. Therefore, we have had to find other ways to reach out to you all.

Each Wednesday, we send out a **well-being newsletter**. This is written especially for the children and will give them lots of calming strategies and mindful exercises. We hope they enjoy reading it and that it provides a well-needed 'pick me up'. All well-being newsletters also contain some really lovely activities and messages from the staff. Any supporting documents have been uploaded to each child's Teams account for ease of access.

Please also take a moment to visit the '**school closure home learning**' section on our school website where there are a wealth of documents, activities and suggested websites that might help with supporting your child's well-being during this time.

<https://emmbrookjuniorschool.co.uk/parents/school-closure-home-learning/>

Remember – we are here if you need us. If you have a big concern or worry about your child's well-being that you need additional support with (and that has not been alleviated by any of the resources or ideas we have provided) then please get in touch.

We know it is not just the children who may be finding this situation tricky – adults do too! We appreciate that it can be particularly hard to keep the children motivated with their schoolwork. Miss Barnes has created a poster of **top tips for parents to help support children's home-learning**. This was sent round to you all on Wednesday. We hope it helps.

Upcoming Parents Forum Meeting

We asked our Parent Forum reps to find out parents' views on the home-learning tasks we are currently providing and to get your ideas for anything that we can further develop. They will contact you through the year group Facebook Pages.

Parents can provide feedback through the Parents' Facebook page or via email in the ejsparentsforum@gmail.com. Responses will be shared with the school anonymously ready for our virtual meeting on Friday 15th May and will be very useful for us when reviewing our provision during school closure.

While we very much appreciate parents taking the time to share their feedback with us, can we respectfully ask that if you do share your opinions with your Parents' Forum Rep via Facebook, that you are mindful that it is a public space and to try and keep responses as impersonal as possible. We would also ask that you give the school a chance to address any concerns before sharing negative comments in a public forum. We accept that we don't always get things right and will always try to improve where we can. Thank you for your on-going support.

Getting children financially savvy!

We have been in touch with Charlotte Hall (the Branch Manager at the Wokingham Branch of Newbury Building Society) who told us that the Building Societies Association have provided financial material for children of various ages. We have had a look at their resources (covering topics such as simple budgeting, needs vs. wants and saving money) and we think they look pretty good. They may be of use to you for your child to complete at home. The link is <https://www.bsa.org.uk/financialeducation>

Run Theobald, Run!

Our very own Mo Farah - AKA Mr. Theobald - has pledged to run at least 5K a day to raise money for Emmbrook PTA during May!

Mr. Theobald has been very concerned that due to lockdown, some of our main PTA fund-raising events this term have been cancelled. Both the Infant school and the Junior school rely heavily on the money we raise through our joint PTA events in order to enhance the curriculum provision and learning opportunities we offer. Therefore, he has taken matters into his own hands (or should we say feet?) and has decided to literally 'run' his own fundraiser! Within the first two days, he had already blown his target of £400 out of the water! In fact, last time we checked, he had raised well over £1000! We are incredibly proud of him.



We would like to say a huge THANK YOU to all of you for being so full of community spirit despite these tough times. You have bowled us over with your generosity. If you would like to donate, please follow the link below.

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/emmbrookpta?utm_term=V8yY7gbPx

Answers on a postcard...

Last week, we set parents the challenge of solving a few of Mr. Fisher's head-scratching anagrams from our recent staff quiz. Here are the answers! How did you do?

- 1) **Think Legion** (a film and a stage show) **The Lion King**
- 2) **To Ritual Ale** (A French inspired savoury dish) **Ratatouille**
- 3) **Moan Habit** (A Sportsman and a hero of Mr. Fisher's) **Ian Botham**
- 4) **Trove Hum** (A drink - one for cocktail lovers) **Vermouth**
- 5) **Chased Crinkles** (A classic author) **Charles Dickens**

Can you guess the biscuit?



It's a well-known fact that everyone who works at Emmbrook Junior School loves a biscuit to dunk in their customary breaktime cuppa! In honour of all our lovely staff members who are missing their daily dose of staffroom table sweet treats, Miss Scales has prepared a little quiz for you. Read the clue and guess the name of the biscuit! Simple! Answers next week, folks...

No	Clue
1	Your body's internal system
2	A drink with a high salary
3	An Antarctic waiter
4	London ones are black
5	Child's Toy
6	An American whiskey
7	A most coveted award
8	Redhead
9	Has lots of members
10	Get at it with 2K
11	Elite Idiots
12	Frozen diamonds
13	Can be found round the cooker
14	Half a loaf
15	We are not amused
16	This drink bites
17	Lucky people get out of the way
18	Drink this before lunch
19	Wanderers Luxury
20	Snap Off
21	Mr Glitter might be called this in old age
22	Popular Holiday Resort
23	Between a Baron and an Earl
24	Boxer
25	Amazing Bowl by Max

Have a lovely Bank Holiday Weekend everyone!