

The Blue Letter: 29th January 2021



Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sure many of you were disappointed to hear the Prime Minister's announcement this week that the return to school has been delayed until at least 8th March. It's two week's until half term and then we have two further weeks of remote learning after half term before hopefully we are all back in school. The Department of Education has not asked school to stay open over half term for those who fall into vulnerable categories or the children of critical workers. We will also be going ahead with our planned INSET day on Monday 22nd February.

Remote learning has involved a lot of time spent in front of a computer screen for children and for staff. We are planning a couple of digital detox screen free days. The first will be on Tuesday 2nd February. The teachers will post a range of activities onto google classroom for you to look at before Tuesday, none of which require a computer and hopefully allow plenty of choice and fun. The children in school will also be completing some of the activities including going for a walk. **If your child is due to be in school on Tuesday, please send them in with clothes suitable for a muddy walk with appropriate footwear and coats.**

This week we have started regular COVID testing for school staff. The use of rapid lateral flow tests is beneficial in finding people with coronavirus (COVID-19) who are not displaying any symptoms. This testing is not yet available to the children, but limiting school attendance will help to support the reduction in the overall number of social contacts in our communities, which is a vital intervention in the context of current very high transmission rates. Thank you for keeping your children at home if you possibly can. A big thank you to all our critical workers – they are doing an amazing job!

In recognition of the challenges posed by the pandemic and the disruption this has had on the children's education, the Department of Education have cancelled the national curriculum assessments due to be held this summer 2021. This includes the key stage one and two tests, teacher assessments and the year one phonics screening check. When school is fully open to all children we will focus on supporting all children to achieve their best.

I'm sure those children learning remotely have enjoyed the chance to engage with their teachers via Google Meet this week, I know the teachers have loved it too. Keep an eye on the Stream in Google Classroom as there will be opportunities this week for you to meet virtually again.

Children's Mental Health Week

The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week is Express Yourself.

Expressing yourself is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. It is about finding a way to show who you are, and how you see the world, that can help you feel good about yourself.

As parents and carers, you play an important role in your child's mental health. Check out the free resources available to support your child.



<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

Worship Wherever You are

Patience is the ability to endure times that are difficult, something to which we can all relate to at the moment. A quick internet search brings up many wise sayings about the importance of patience:

- Patience is a virtue
- Good things come to those who wait
- Patience is the art of hoping
- Please find your patience before I lose mine

I wonder which one stands out to you the most? The bible verse for this week is Colossians 3:12. St Paul was writing to the church in Collosae, encouraging them, 'as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, [to] clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience'. Many Christians have drawn on this verse in the pandemic as a reminder to be compassionate, kind, gentle and patient – both to others and to themselves. Indeed patience in the bible is often linked to these other values.

I wonder how we can show patience this week? What difference might patience make to us and those we love.



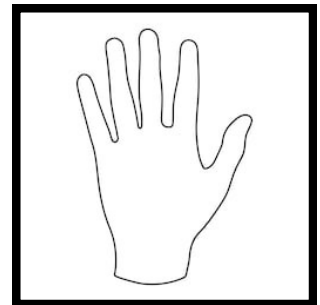
Go for a walk

Go for a walk – can you see signs of new plants growing? Think about how these plants and flowers show patience – taking what they need from the sun and earth to grow over time until they become beautiful and give joy to so many. Think about patience in your own life – how might you grow in patience? What might be stopping you growing? If you'd like to, you might ask God to help you here.



The 'hand challenge'

Using your non-writing hand, patiently draw around your writing hand and then cut it out. When do you find it hard to be patient? Write or draw this on one side of the hand. How might you show patience this week? Write or draw your ideas on the other side of your hand. If you have been creating a reflective space at home, you might like to add your hand to this space to help you think about patience this week.



Patience is...

Create your own 'Patience is...' sayings. Can you think of some really wise ones? Some really funny ones?

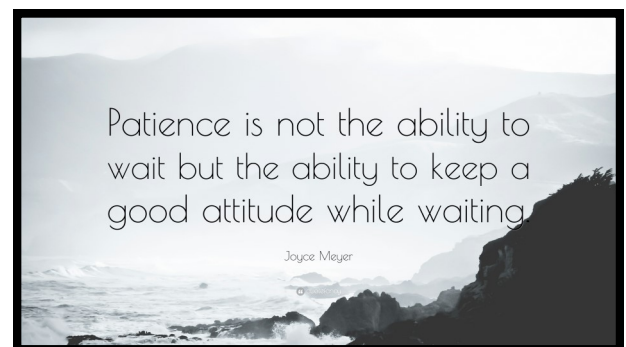
Dear God,

Thank you for being with us during these difficult times.

Help us to grow and become more patient each and every day,

As we show love and compassion to ourselves and others.

Amen



Virtual School Winter Games

During the first lockdown last year, we took part in the Specsavers Virtual School Games. We had some fantastic contributions from children at home and at school. We came Second out of all Sussex Primary Schools!

At 9.30 every Monday throughout February, 4 new winter sports challenges will be released on www.sussexschoolgames.co.uk, on social media, and sent directly to those signed up to the mailing list. Participants have until midday every Friday to submit their scores, and leaderboards will be published later that day.



These challenges can be completed from the comfort of your living room, kitchen or garden, or at school. You won't need any special equipment, and whether you're competing on your own or your whole school is taking part, anyone can get involved.

Scores for each challenge will be submitted online, and will contribute towards the school's average score, so it doesn't matter whether you are a big school or small school.

It all kicks off at 9.30am on Monday 1 February with the launch of the first winter sport on social media and via email.

Anybody can take part, and whilst there is no 'official' sign-up required, you can [sign-up to the mailing](#) list to get updates, challenges and results sent to you directly.

We will be encouraging everyone to get involved as part of PE lessons.

Let's see how well we can do this year!

Free School Meals

From 1 April 2018, free school meals in all West Sussex maintained and free schools and academies are available to pupils in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of state Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

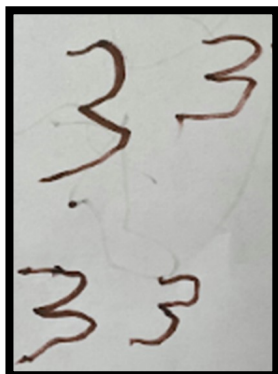
If your circumstances have changed as a result of the pandemic you may qualify. While children are at home, there are food vouchers for those entitled to free school meals. For each child who is entitled to free school meals there is extra funding available for schools to support your child with their learning. To apply click here:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/#how-to-apply>

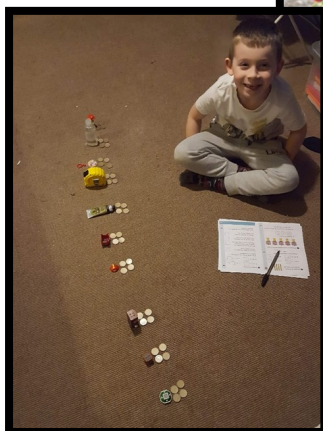
Achievers

Well done to all our achievers this week:

Squirrel Class: Arham, Lucia, Xanthe, Isla, Jonathan and Darcey



Arham's numbers



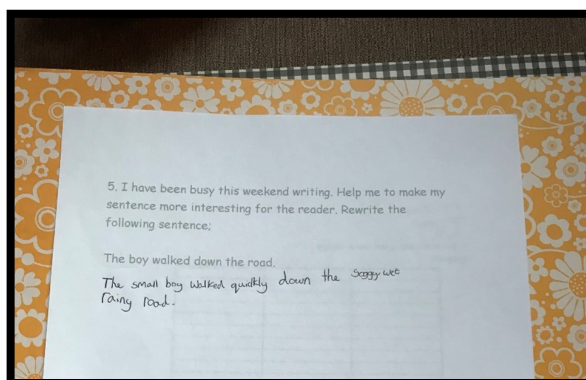
Jonathan's pirate coin maths



Isla's words made with loom bands

Fox Class: Elodie, Michael, Lollie and Teddy

Elodie's measuring




Lollie's writing

Owl Class: Iyla, Max, Archie and Leon

Max's tourist leaflet

<p>The Northern Lights</p> <p>The Northern Lights is a spectacular event that takes place every few weeks or months. You can watch it with all its glory with Night Light Travelers, our mini-bus will take you right there. With information on where the lights will be appearing, coming from satellites up above us.</p> 	<p>Night Light Traveler</p> <p>The Night Light Traveler is a small company that works in Finland. Planes take off from Edinburgh on Fridays. We take people to watch the lights before they sleep in a small hotel or accommodation. Travellers can have breakfast as well as lunch and dinner there, but they leave on Monday morning at 10 AM.</p>	  <p>Prices</p> <p>Adult - £525 Child (10-18)-£475 Child (4-10)-£425 Family (4 members) - 1525</p>
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	<p>Arctic owl stalking its prey, Ready to pounce, Critical blow, Talons its killing machine, Its victim snatched, Cautiously watching its prey, Ongoing journey back to nest, Wayward breeze swish swosh blows it back, Lunch is served, Safe at home.</p> <p>By Archie Woodard</p>
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Archie's acrostic poem