

OLD CATTON NEWSLETTER

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Dear Children,

Hello to all of you at home and to those of you who have been coming into school this week. I hope that you have had a good week and managed to start up your learning from home again after your week off for half term. Don't forget to have a look at the school website where you will find links to your new online tasks you can submit to your teachers as well as loads of other links and ideas for home learning. There's also the BBC Bitesize and Oak Academy resources online too. (I am sure by now you all know where to look to find what you need!)

This week your teachers and TAs have welcomed back some more of your classmates to school. The critical worker and Year 6 Bubbles are now all up and running and it has gone well. I am sure some of you may have been in contact with your friends who are attending school and have heard about the new ways we are having to operate. There's a lot of cleaning and handwashing needed throughout the day, much smaller groups in classes and less practical activities that we would normally do because we can't let the children share anything. We can't share books, or pens, rulers or even have separate books for work!

It definitely feels very different. However – it is also really lovely to be able to have more children in school. The noise of children together, the teachers and TAs all back in school and us being back in our school building all feels really great.



Bubble 4 working in their classroom with Miss Strange and Mrs Mac

I wish that we could be open to all of you. The reason that we can't at the moment is because of the Government guidelines on social distancing. In order to maintain this for everyone's safety, we simply have to follow the rules to limit the numbers of pupils in school. In order to have you all back I'd need a school 4 times

bigger, with 4 times the amount of teachers! (I don't think I can magic that out of nowhere do you?)

This week we trialled our first virtual assembly. I took the assembly from my office and the teachers projected it live, onto their whiteboards. Other than not being able to sing together - it worked really well so from next week we are going to have two assemblies every week on a Tuesday and Thursday. Our plan is to record the assemblies while they are happening and then post them onto the school website for you. That way even though we are not together, we can still share the same assemblies and you can still be part of Collective Worship at home. As soon as the assemblies are posted online we will let you know but look out for the first one next Tuesday!



Bubble 1 playing outside with Mr Eastwood

As my husband and I are both Teachers, Daisy and Freddie returned to school last week. As you know, up until then they have been at home with us and we have juggled home learning with our fulltime jobs. It has been a really testing time for our family and I know that for those of you still at home, your families are continuing that juggle. Daisy and Freddie have both enjoyed going back to school but they say that they miss elements of being at home. For Daisy she misses being taught by us and having quality time with both of us at home – a rarity when we are both working normally and not at home as much. For Freddie he misses being able to stay in his onesie for longer and have access to snacks when he gets hungry! Of course there are positives and negatives to both! The pupils in school probably miss some of the things that you are able to do because you are at home and you probably miss things that the pupils are able to do because they are in school! We have these two parallel worlds at the moment and it's hard to imagine what it's like in the other.

We also have two new sections on our website for transition. Year 6 – there is a section we have added



which gives you links to all of the High Schools you are transitioning to this year. Click on the links to take you straight to the website for your high school. Many of the high schools are posting virtual tours and meet the teachers videos for you. Have a look to keep up to date with information.

For anyone who has a little brother or sister in Year 2 who may be coming to Old Catton next year, please tell them to have a look at the Year 2 Transition section. In here we have posted videos to help Year 2 become familiar with their new school as well as a presentation for parents all about Transition.



This week as part of our online learning resources we have included a Picture News Special focusing on Black Lives Matter. Many people are angry about the unfairness and mistreatment of how black African American citizens are treated by the police and in other situations within their lives both here in the UK and all over the world. They want to raise awareness of racism and are trying to change the opinions and actions of others. As some of the protests have turned violent, they have caused divided opinion. Some people believe that more peaceful methods should be used to help educate and initiate change. The catalyst for this was the murder of George Floyd by a white Policeman in America. The Picture News resources are a great way into this debate and the issues of racism and white privilege. We all need to be discussing this with our friends and family in order for race to be a topic that moves to the forefront of our minds. Have a look at the resources and think about the questions it raises. This is a great time to get talking at home with your parents and carers.



Good news about our sunflowers! As you know last week I was worried. After moving them to a new spot at the front of our house they seemed pretty unhappy. For a while I thought I'd managed to kill them! (Daisy was not happy with me; Freddie didn't really notice.) However! This week, they seem to have settled in and are definitely looking perkier! I think they may be ok and I am remaining hopeful that at least some of them may flower later on in the year. Last week I asked you for

some positive sunflower energy and it seems like it did the trick! Keep that positivity coming everyone and fingers crossed the sunflowers will soak it up.



I know that it's harder for everyone when the weather isn't good and this week it has been pretty chilly and rainy. It makes it harder to get out into the garden to play and to go for walks and regular exercise. Hopefully it will be sunny again soon! But while it is not here are some ideas you could try to have fun indoors: build a den, draw a picture, bake some cakes, write a friend a letter or card, watch movies, play board games, reorganise your bedroom, tidy out a cupboard or drawer that needs a clean, facetime a friend, play online (safely), learn to sew, help around the house, play with face paints or makeup, dress up, make playdough, wrap up warm and ride your bike, put on your coat and wellies and stamp in some puddles! There is an old Norwegian proverb that says:



I have tried to live by this and keep up my running. Here is a picture of the sky over Catton Park this week. It's pretty moody but also very beautiful – look at that sky.



I hope that you all have a lovely weekend. Take care and stay safe,

Mrs Connelly