

OLD CATTON NEWSLETTER

Tel: 01603 426973

www.oldcatton.norfolk.sch.uk

e-mail: office@oldcatton.norfolk.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher:

Mrs. A. D. Best-White MA

Head of School Mrs. K. Connelly



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Dear Children,

This will be the final newsletter that I write to you this academic year and what a year it has been!

I want you all to know how very proud of you all your teachers are, about the ways in which you have coped, adapted and managed during this difficult time. If last September, we had asked you – who would like 4 months off school this year!? I wonder how many of your hands would have flown up, eager to imagine what that would be like. In reality, I am sure that many of you have loved being at home a great deal more than normal and have benefited from all the amazing time that you have spent with your family. However, losing school from your life and the routine that brings, not just for you but also for your whole family unit, is something that I don't think any of us could have anticipated.

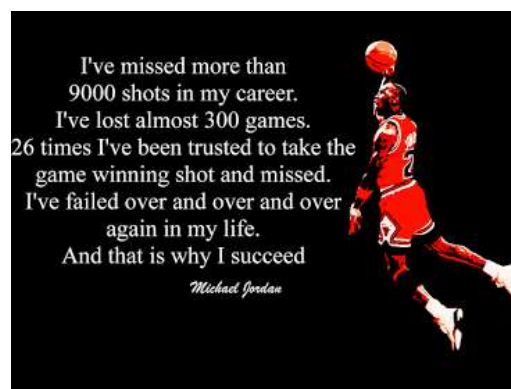
I have always known that school isn't just about education – it's about so much more than that. I hope that you can see that school is about friendships, new and old, it's a place to feel safe and secure, it's a place to grow and ask questions, it's a place where you can explore, experience and adventure through your subjects and learning, through trips, residential and events, through the new challenges that we face and new roles we take on. It's about making memories, laughing at jokes, sharing moments, eating lunch together, playing outside. It's about conversations, discussions, arguments, disagreements, make-ups and break-ups! It's about learning from others, about others, seeing the world from someone else's perspective, learning about new ways to think, exist and be and making mistakes. It's about discovering who you are, what you like and dislike, what you'd like to try to achieve and aim for, both now and in the future. It's about learning to be part of a team, a class, a year group and a community. And when we suddenly had all of this taken away – it's all those things that I missed and I am sure you missed too.

Yes the lessons, curriculum and objectives are important but it's the school community that I missed. It's each and every one of you and all our teachers and staff.

So as we look back on this academic year we can definitely say that it is one that will go down in the history books forever!

Today we have said our goodbyes to Year 6 who have now finished at Old Catton Junior School. I know that they will go on to achieve amazing and exciting things at High School next year. Don't ever let anyone tell you, (especially not those nagging voices in your head,) that

you can't achieve anything you want to. With hard work and determination I really believe that you can achieve great things. It may take time and it may take various plans, many of which may fail but if you really put your mind to it – you can achieve anything.



Year 3, 4 and 5 I hope that you are looking forward to coming in to see us on Monday, to meet your new classes and that you are excited about next year and returning to school.

We can't wait to have you back and introduce you to our new normal. Things will be different but we will work together to make sure that everyone is kept as safe as possible.

This week something uncanny happened in my garden. On the very first week of lockdown, I planted some sunflower seeds with my children so we could watch them grow and learn about how this happens. I don't know why it seemed like a good idea to include this in my first newsletter to you, all those weeks ago but I did and then I kept it as a weekly update. This week, in our final, full week of school, one of the sunflowers has flowered. (It's one Freddie planted, so in his opinion he has won the sunflower competition in our family – although Daisy has a taller one, so it depends on how you measure success!?) I couldn't help but think – what a coincidence that we have finally got a flower in our last week, when we planted them in week 1. Maybe I was right about the sunflowers being a sign of hope?! It seems very fitting that on my last newsletter of the year, I am able to include a photo of one of our sunflowers in bloom. Maybe it can represent the hope that we all have for a great year next year.

Have a safe, relaxing and wonderful summer holiday.

Take care, Mrs Connelly

