



# Whole School Newsletter

Friday 26th March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

There has been much talk in the media of late about 'lost learning', 'lost school time' and even a 'lost generation'. We discussed this at our virtual governors' meeting this week and agreed that it is an unhelpful rhetoric.

As one governor pointed out, 'Children don't stand still; they don't stop developing'. As is the case for children across the world, Meridian children have lived through an incredible experience in the last year. Whilst the pandemic has highlighted some inequalities and presented challenges for children, it is also the case that children have demonstrated immense capacity for change - adapting to new normals and developing their resilience. They will have learnt important things about themselves and the world they inhabit, and we cannot underestimate the importance of such things.

The notion of lost time is a little misleading. Time has been well spent over the last year keeping children safe and secure. Furthermore, with your support throughout the wider school closures, the vast majority of Meridian children engaged really well in remote learning (or were taught in school). What an incredible achievement! Children have therefore acquired new curriculum knowledge and consolidated previous learning; many have developed independence and new IT skills. True - children may have some gaps in their curriculum knowledge, but this is not a catastrophe and these gaps do not need to be filled overnight.

Rather than thinking children should 'catch-up' quickly through summer school or longer school days, Meridian believes that it is more helpful to take a long-term view. We need to start from where children are at now and ensure there is a firm foundation for future learning. These things cannot be rushed. Indeed, the pandemic has brought the importance of children's emotional well-being into sharp focus. Our priority since 8th March has been on nurture - giving children time to talk, rebuilding and strengthening relationships between classmates, and between children and teaching staff. We believe this is time well spent: children cannot learn well unless they are safe and secure.

We are all too aware that children have had different experiences over the last year. During lockdown, we built in extra support for our most vulnerable children (places in school, extra Google Meets, the provision of laptops and telephone consultations with our music therapist). Now all the children are back in school together, we are continuing to build in extra support for those children most in need. Similarly, in relation to all children, teachers are not making assumptions about what children know and can do. What they are not doing is steaming ahead with new content without finding out what children recall and understand first. They are settling children back into routines and rightly focusing on key skills - speaking and listening, social skills, reading, the fundamentals of maths - as well as capitalising on children's curiosity and enjoyment of their topics (read all about it below!).

Whilst a pandemic and school closures are out of our control, there are some things we can take control of. As parents, these extraordinary events may present us with an opportunity to support our children in some of the broader characteristics of childhood development. As lockdown restrictions lift, maybe we can think about the opportunities we can provide for our children outside of school - visiting others, staying away from home overnight and, for older children, walking to school alone or with friends.

Children at Meridian know the importance of making a difference to themselves and others. They raised an incredible £501 for Red Nose Day - well done! Likewise, during a very challenging year, FROMS have done a marvellous job of fundraising - thank you to everyone involved and to the whole school community for all your support in this. Please do read the FROMS newsletter (attached to Sharon's email) for information about all you have achieved together, as well as information about Easter niceties planned for next week!

Best wishes,

Jo  
Jo Graham - Headteacher

This week marks an end to our whole school history topic 'Kings and Queens'. Here's what the children have particularly enjoyed learning about this term...



Nursery and Reception have been exploring what it means to be royal. They have learnt that Queen Elizabeth II is our current monarch and were surprised to find she was not the first queen called Elizabeth! Children have taken on the role of kings and queens, imagining how they would walk and talk, and discussing the rules they would insist on if they were monarch for a day. Having compared and contrasted royal costumes and jewels from different countries, children then had a go at designing their own. Reception children were also thrilled to take a virtual tour of Buckingham Palace to discover what it is like to live as a royal!

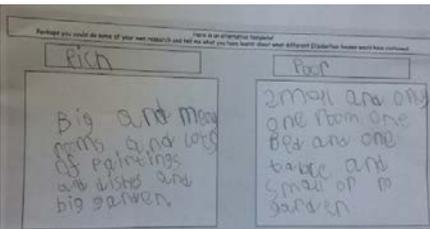


If I was a prince, I would live in a house-castle. I would bake some food including cupcakes and jelly!  
Oscar, Nursery

I am King Sebastian when I wear my crown! I have 650,000 coloured gems on my yellow crown!  
Sebastian, Reception

If I was a queen, I would tell all the children to go to school and to eat Swedish food!  
Naomi, Reception

In exploring the role of monarchs and the different jobs and responsibilities they have had to do throughout history, Year 1 and Year 2 have loved learning about Queen Elizabeth I. Having found out lots of facts about her - some of which were pretty gruesome! - children created their own fascinating fact files. To see how Greenwich has changed over time, they studied photographs and paintings of Greenwich Park and Greenwich Palace (where Queen Elizabeth was born). Children found out about what life was like for people during the Elizabethan era and looked at the divide between the rich and poor - they looked at the differences in the food people ate, the clothes they wore and the houses they lived in. Finally, they found out about the impact that Queen Elizabeth made during the Golden Age of Exploration and the battle against the Spanish Armada!



I can't believe Queen Elizabeth threw her shoes at people when she was angry!  
Ilia, Y1

Queen Elizabeth didn't want to get married because she didn't want a boy to take her power!  
Maya, Y1

Year 2 also produced some fabulous writing linked to their topic - here is Vigo's newspaper report spilling secrets about Queen Elizabeth I and Ben's job advert seeking a servant to work in Greenwich Palace!

Queen Elizabeth I is sassy, strong and powerful, like her father King Henry VIII.  
Lia, Y2

SECRETS SPILLS  
All about Elizabeth I, secrets you don't know!  
What Queen Elizabeth I is really like!  
I am a secret servant of Queen Elizabeth and I am going to spill some amazing secrets about what she is really like.  
Amazing Elizabeth I!  
She throws shoes at her servants.  
She has a bad temper.  
She wears a wig.  
Elizabeth I has very disgusting teeth which she brushes with honey!  
Fun Facts  
She wears lots of make up.  
Did you know that she is afraid of mice?

We need a talented cook!  
Are you good cook? Do you make delicious food? Well come and get a job as a cook! yes, it's true, the queen Elizabeth I, fied us just because we wrote a rude article about her secrets! Liz needs a new cook, maybe you'll be perfection for the job! But you have to know how to make a good goose, pheasant and spare ribs. For the job you have to peel potatoes and, cauliflower, bake bread and stir whatever is in your cooking pot. Just to remind you Liz has so many servants, so you better be her ally cook! so for the job that

**Year 3** and **Year 4** have been on a long and enthralling journey with their history learning this term: they have learnt about the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings, King Alfred the Great and the events that led to his grandson Athelstan becoming the first king of all England. To help them develop a deeper understanding of this absorbing period of British history, they became historians themselves and studied artefacts that were discovered at the Anglo-Saxon burial site of Sutton Hoo.

People thought Athelstan was the first king of all England because he conquered York which was the last Viking kingdom in England.  
Walid, Y4

An Anglo-Saxon king could have used this. It is made of metal. Maybe the king wore this for protection in battle?  
Joseph S, Y3



The citizens would have used the coins. Maybe it was found underground. It is made of silver. This tells me that you can make coins out of silver.  
Sinead, Y3

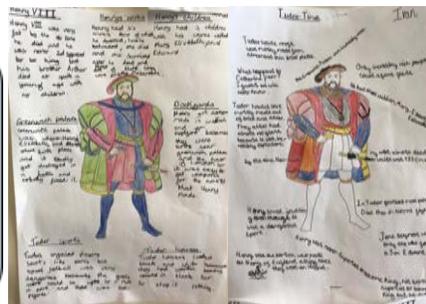


Started at home, children have now finished their amazing artworks inspired by Viking longships - check out these beautiful collages created by Jack and Max, Nicole and Iga, and Leia and Jolie!



Throughout this term, **Year 5** and **Year 6** have been learning all about the Tudors and the role Greenwich played in Tudor London - did you know Henry VIII, Mary I and Elizabeth I were all born in Greenwich Palace? Henry also built two dockyards in Deptford and Woolwich so he could keep a close eye on the work on his ships! As historians, children looked into the beginning of the Tudor reign, Henry VIII's six wives and how the Tudors spent their leisure time. They also found it interesting to learn about the divide between rich and poor people during Tudor times and how this was reflected in the houses that they lived in.

I can't believe that in the Tudor times football used to kill more people than sword fighting! This was because there was no set amount of people in a team and the goals could be up to a mile apart.  
Louie, Y5



I enjoyed learning about Henry VIII because he had so many wives! Divorced, beheaded, died; divorced, beheaded, survived! Did you know that Henry VIII lived in Greenwich Palace where the school is right now?  
Toha, Y6

Greenwich Park was Henry VIII's garden. He used to play sports and hunt there!  
Omar, Y6



I definitely think that Katherine Parr was the better off queen because Henry died before he could get bored of her!  
Eoin, Y5

To celebrate the end of their Tudor topic, children enjoyed learning about William Shakespeare and the Globe theatre; they pretended they were on stage at the Globe and performed Macbeth!

I acted as Macduff - I stormed Macbeth's castle with my army and helped my friend become King!  
Ayomide, Y6



Year 1 said a fond farewell to Eggbert, Captain Cluck Cluck, Fluffy, Roly Poly and Lightning on Thursday, but not before giving them their first swimming lesson! The ducklings have now returned to their farm.

It was hard to teach the ducklings to learn to swim because they didn't like it that much at first and kept splashing around! They liked the shallow water better than the deep water. I can't wait for the pool to reopen so I can go swimming - I am going to jump right in the water! Splash!  
Gaia



### FROMS update

Please see the attached letter from FROMS which details the Easter arrangements for children this year! Please also find information about company match funding, an important way of boosting much needed funds for the school.



### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please remember to notify the office of any changes to your contact details or those of your child's emergency contacts. Please email [sao@meridian.greenwich.sch.uk](mailto:sao@meridian.greenwich.sch.uk). Thank you!



## Diary Dates

**Wednesday, 31st March** - Last day of Spring Term 2

**Thursday, 1st - Friday 16th April inclusive** - Easter school holidays

**Monday, 19th April** - First day of Summer Term 1

**Monday, 3rd May** - Bank Holiday Monday - school is closed

**Thursday, 6th May** - Due to the London Mayoral elections, the school is being used as a polling station and will be closed to children on this day.

**Friday, 28th May** - Last day of Summer Term 1

**Monday, 31st May - Friday 4th June inclusive** - May half term holidays

**Monday, 7th June** - First day of Summer Term 2

**Friday, 23rd July** - Last day of 2020-21 school year

## Payments



Fees for activities up to the end of Spring Term 2 must be settled by the 31st March 2021 which is the end of the 2020-21 financial year.

Thank you to everyone who has made payments this week. Whilst the online payment deadline for this financial year has passed (Tuesday 23rd March), you should continue to make payments for any monies owing. Online payments are preferable to cash or cheque but if you are unable to pay online, please send cash or cheques in an envelope marked with your child's name to the school office - these payments can be accepted up to **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March**.

### Dinner Accounts

If you have received a text or email with details about what is owing on your account, please pay the amount outstanding as soon as possible. Please note that the balance does not show on ParentPay—please contact the office if you need to know your up-to-date balance.

A reminder that payment for school dinners should be made in advance; the cost of dinners for **Summer Term 1** is **28 days x £2.75 = £77**. Please note that if your child is entitled to Free School Meals or is in Reception, Y1 or Y2 there is no charge for dinners.

**If you are having any difficulty paying, please talk to Jo or Sharon by calling the school office.**

*Thank you for your continued support.*

# EASTER ONLINE WITH GREENWICH THEATRE

This Easter, Greenwich Theatre is delighted to present a series of online activities for all the family to enjoy. From a live-streamed interactive adventure, a fairytale extravaganza or a girls' journey to save her igloo, there's something for everyone.

Please visit <https://greenwichtheatre.org.uk/easter-treats/> for more information

The image contains three promotional posters for online activities. The first poster, 'SIR WILLOUGHBY'S CHALLENGE', features a blue background with a hand holding a tablet displaying a snowy scene with a castle and reindeer. The second poster, 'HAPPILY EVER AFTER', shows a man in a crown and a woman in a purple dress on a stage. The third poster, 'Where's My Igloo Gone?', depicts a girl in a winter coat and a missing igloo. Each poster includes dates and a 'STREAM ONLINE FOR FREE' badge.

**SIR WILLOUGHBY'S CHALLENGE**  
Join us for this unique, interactive online adventure!  
THU 1, FRI 2, SAT 3 & WED 7, THU 8, FRI 9, SAT 10 APRIL 2021  
GREENWICH THEATRE CONNECTS

**HAPPILY EVER AFTER**  
MON 12 - SAT 18 APRIL  
STREAM ONLINE FOR FREE

**Where's My Igloo Gone?**  
MON 12 - SAT 18 APRIL  
A MAGICAL ARCTIC ADVENTURE  
STREAM ONLINE FOR FREE

## Free Trial Session and £40 discount at Perform

Popular children's drama and dance school Perform is offering a Free Trial Session and a **special introductory discount of £40 for members of Meridian School** if they sign up by Monday 3rd May. Parents should quote MERS030521 when they book their free session by going to [perform.org.uk/try](https://perform.org.uk/try) or calling 020 7255 9120.

You can find out more about the classes at [perform.org.uk/try](https://perform.org.uk/try). Alternatively, pdf flyers can be downloaded from [here](#).