



# Aston St. Mary's Newsletter

Our value this half term is Kindness

[www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](http://www.astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an unusual half term! It was two weeks before the Easter break that schools closed; the children left with their home learning packs and some reading books to enjoy and here we are, another whole half term later, having faced so many challenges and learnt so much. Most importantly, we have all done the right thing by staying home to keep ourselves and others safe. Children, parents and teachers alike have responded to the challenges of learning at home. We have all had to adapt; we have all been on a steep learning curve and we have all needed to support each other and understand that we are all doing our very best. We would like to thank our whole school community for being simply fantastic – by working together your children have been able to continue learning whilst staying safe. As a leadership team we have been monitoring feedback from parents of all classes via Seesaw and Tapestry; we have been absolutely delighted to see such overwhelmingly positive responses. Thank you. Your comments of support really do make a difference - particularly to the teachers - who are spending many hours setting and responding to learning often whilst managing their own family commitments.

We are not at the end of this new and unusual journey yet. Assuming the government's plans don't change, then we will begin our phased re-opening on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. On this date, school re-opens to children in Reception, Year One and Year Six. We are not sure yet exactly how many of these pupils will return at this point; our recent survey to the relevant year groups suggests that we may be expecting somewhere over half to return whilst other parents continue to keep their children at home. As a school, we have decided that we will continue to provide home learning for all year groups to help enable parents to make whatever decision they feel most comfortable with. Detailed information was sent out earlier this week to the year groups affected about the arrangements for the phased re-opening; we have included this information at the end of this newsletter to enable all parents to be aware of what measures we have put in place to keep everyone as safe as possible in school. Obviously, all plans are subject to change in line with government advice. Arrangements will need to be adapted as additional years groups are allowed to return.

### **Congratulations Miss O'Brien**

We are delighted to be able to share some very happy and exciting news with you. Miss O'Brien is expecting a baby later this year. As you know, she is a wonderful and dedicated teacher who is a truly amazing mum already to three young children including three-year-old twins. We are sure that you would want to share with us in sending much love and congratulations to her and her family at this very exciting time.

**Please take care and have a lovely half term break.**

Continue to follow the government guidance and remember:

**STAY ALERT. CONTROL THE VIRUS. SAFE LIVES.**

Should you need to contact us, for whatever reason, please use the temporary email address:

**[closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](mailto:closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)**

# Shackadell Class

This week was 'pirate week' in Shackadell class. The children, as always, impressed us so much with their creativity and enthusiasm for this topic. Some of this week's tasks included making a pirate prop using recycled materials, designing a flag, building a boat, experimenting with floating and sinking, making treasure maps and giving instructions to find treasure. One of our tasks was to also reflect on what we treasure most. I think our current life in lockdown really makes us realise who and what we treasure most in our lives... we certainly treasure you wonderful children and our very special school! In maths, we have been learning about number bonds using addition and subtraction.

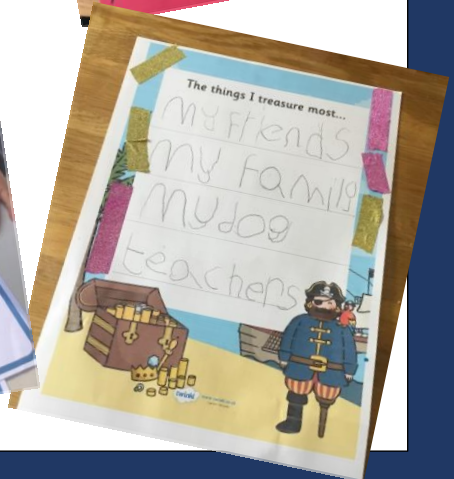
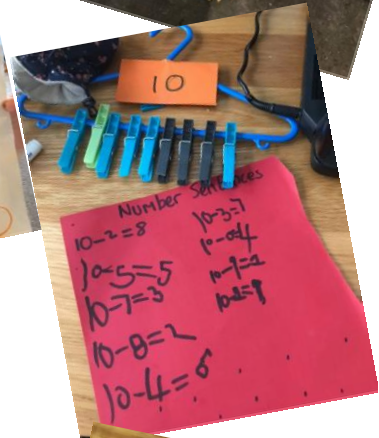
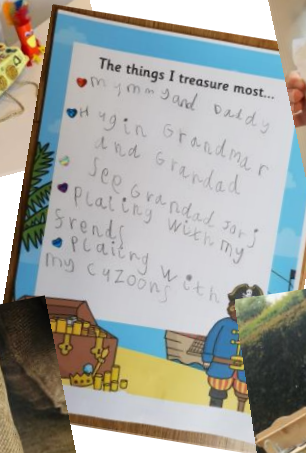
We have also loved seeing some of the other lovely things you've been doing with your families - including bike rides, baking and country walks!

We are really missing you all so much. You've been working so hard at home and we have been overwhelmed with the beautiful work, messages and activities that you've been sharing with us. They really do make us so happy. You definitely all deserve to have a well-earned break next week after working so, so hard this half term. We are really proud of you all.

Have lots of fun and keep safe.

Lots of love always

Mrs Lale and Mrs Holmes x



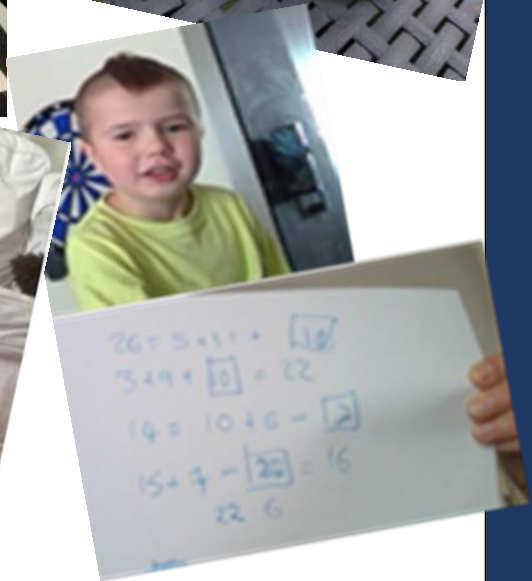
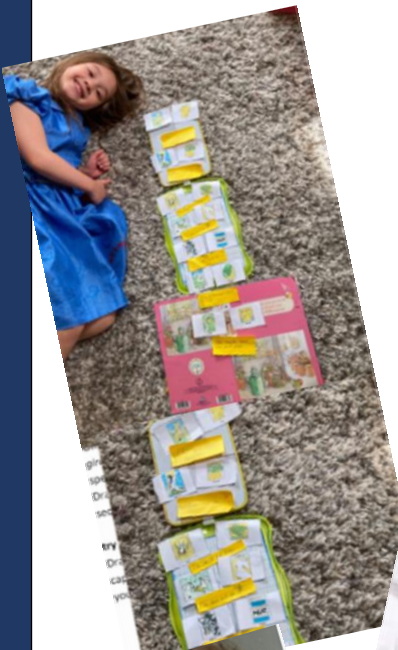


# Peartree Class

## HOME LEARNING

Hello Peartree,

I cannot stress how very grateful I am to you for all the work, messages and videos you have sent. You all are AMAZING!



So, this half term is now complete,  
It is time to take a rest.  
Sometime soon, again we'll meet,  
Of these times we've made the best.  
There has been much fun and laughter  
And sadness and lots of tears,  
But, we will have our 'Happy Ever After',  
And remember this for all our years.  
Stay safe



Mrs Baker



# Orchard Class

Hello Orchard!

Well done on another week of fantastic home learning, I'm so proud of each and every one of you. This week I wanted to show off some of our fabulous artwork inspired by Andy Goldsworthy 😊.

# Andy Goldsworthy ☺.

## My Chosen Piece of Art

Name of piece: Rainbow Nature

How did you create the piece?


I got some plants from my garden and went around the village to collect different colour things. I got poppies red and yellow from my garden. I got leaves from the park blue tree in my garden and dandelion flowers from the park and some other pretty little flowers.

What do you like best about the finished piece?

I like the blue flowers the most because blue is my favourite colour.

What did you find most difficult when creating this piece?

getting the line curved on the rainbow.





## Tree picture creation with natural resources

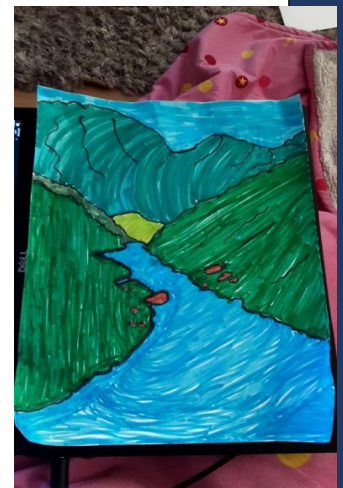
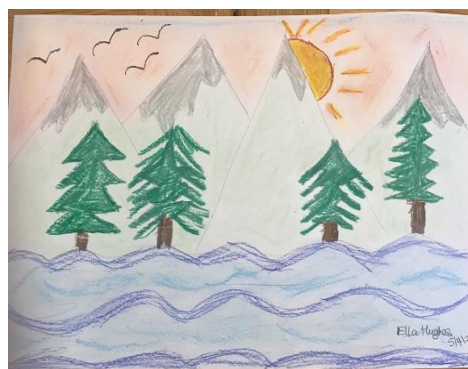
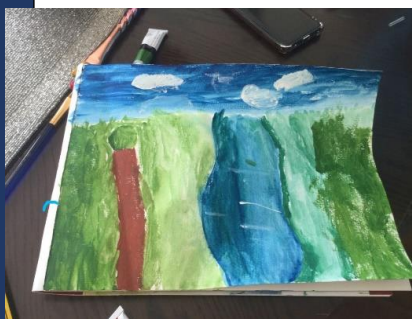




# Haffydown Class

Hi Haffydown,

Wow! What an incredible half term it has been for us all. You have all been so busy with your learning and different activities at home. Your perseverance continues to astound me. In my eyes, you are all little heroes. Equally, the support from parents has also been amazing. A highlight of this half term must be the wonderful artwork you created around the theme of rivers. I was so impressed by your creativity and your individual designs, which used a whole range of art materials. They all looked beautiful.

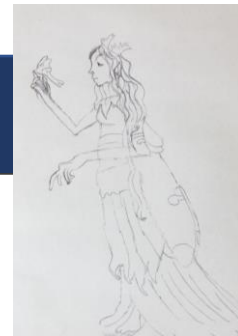


I hope you all have a wonderful and well-deserved half term break.

Love from,  
Miss Keen 😊 x



# Danes Class



Hi Danes,

You are amazing! I am just so impressed by the quality of your home learning – I feel very lucky to be your teacher. Every day as a look through your many Seesaw posts, I am so very proud to be working with such enthusiastic and dedicated group of students. Our English has been based upon Arthur Spiderwick's Field Guide for the last three weeks; today I thought I would share some of your art and writing for everyone to enjoy.

Boggarts, which are also known as bogans or bogies, are very troublesome creatures. If you do find that your house is home to a boggart, which is very unfortunate, you should prepare to tormented. If you ever think about leaving your house to get rid of the boggart, which is an idea that many people consider, you should immediately start thinking of something else as the boggart will flee with you. Many boggarts put something sharp, which is usually glass, on the floor or in your shoes to make you go lame. They also like stealing infants' milk bottles and drinking out of them.



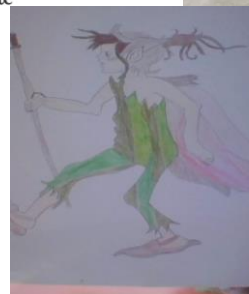
His teeth, that he hadn't brushed for weeks, were yellow and smelly!

The boggart, who needed a bath, smelled evil.

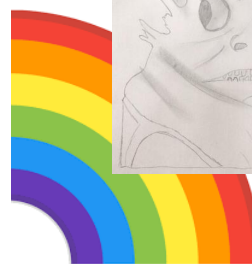


His wings, which are tiny and dirty, slightly flapped in the wind.

His shoes, which are old and grimy, he had stolen from a little girl's doll.



Danes be proud of what you do  
Be proud of who you are  
Keep the smile on your face  
And remember you are special  
Keep safe  
Love  
Mrs Branagan x

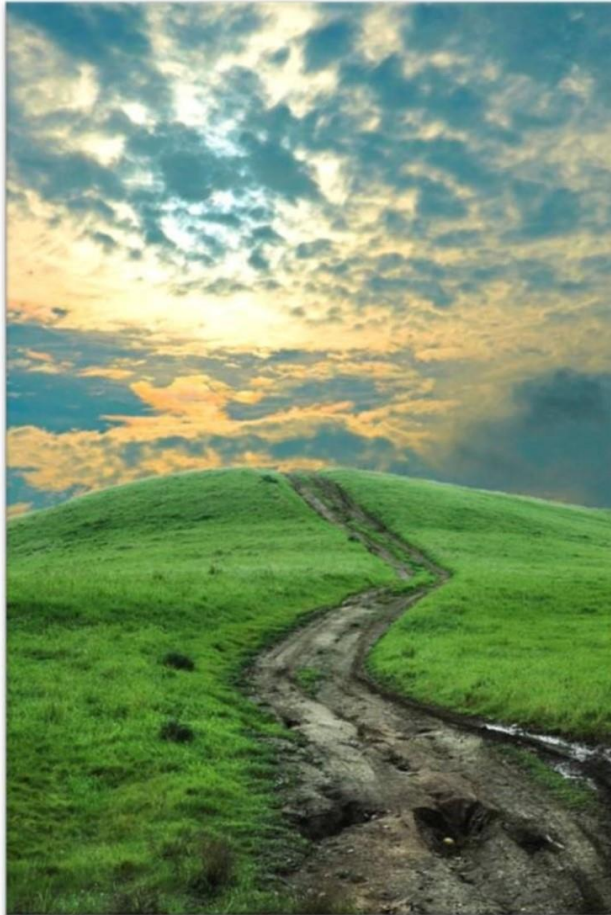




## A Thought from Reverend Jenny

### Five ways to be happy – not easy but so true

1. Keep your heart from hatred
2. Keep your mind from worries
3. Live simply
4. Give more
5. Expect less



The

*Living God's Love*

Prayer:

Living God,

Draw us deeper into your love;  
Jesus our Lord,  
send us to care and serve;  
Holy Spirit,  
make us heralds of good news.  
Stir us, strengthen us,  
teach and inspire us  
to live your love  
with generosity and joy,  
imagination and courage;  
for the sake of your world  
and in the name of Jesus,

Amen.

*Living God's Love*

[www.livinggodsllove.org](http://www.livinggodsllove.org)

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE PHASED RE-OPENING OF SCHOOL**

Dear Parents and Carers of Year R, Year 1 and Year 6,

As you will be aware the government are planning the phased re-opening of primary schools from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. School will therefore open for children in Reception, Year One and Year Six from this date, assuming there is no change in government guidance before then.

The government recognises that social distancing will not necessarily be possible in primary schools - though we will clearly do all that we can to **minimise contact** as much as possible. Most importantly, we will ensure that **good hygiene** practices are established and reinforced throughout the day. Children and staff will work in smaller groups (**'bubbles'**) and will not mix with other classes. Government advice is that **PPE** is not required in schools; should staff or children wish to wear PPE, then they will be allowed to do so; we have purchased face shields for staff, to allow children to see their faces.

The leadership team have carried out a detailed risk assessment and the purpose of this letter is to share with you the arrangements we will be making in order to minimise any risk to children, staff or parents.

**Please read the following information carefully, taking note of the arrangements (in particular the timings of the school day and drop-off/pick-up arrangements) as it is essential that we have full compliance.**

### Government guidance for schools states:

"The safety of children and staff is our utmost priority."

"The advice seeks to support staff working in schools, colleges and childcare settings, to deliver this approach in the safest way possible, focusing on measures they can put in place to help limit the risk of the virus spreading within education and childcare settings."

"In education, childcare and social care settings, preventing the spread of the coronavirus involves dealing with direct transmissions (for instance, when in close contact with those sneezing and coughing) and indirect transmission (via touching contaminated surfaces.) A range of approaches and actions should be employed to do this."

### **Arrangements for re-opening**

#### **1. Changes to the timings of the school day:**

We have arranged for staggered start and finish times as well as staggered break and lunch times. The school day will be shorter than usual as will lunchtimes. These timings are outlined in the table below.



|                  | Arrival at school | Morning Break    | Lunch Break | Departure from school |
|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Reception</b> | 9:15am            | Own outdoor area | 11:45-12:30 | 3:00                  |
| <b>Year 1</b>    | 9:00am            | 10:45-11:00      | 12:15-1:00  | 2:45                  |
| <b>Year 6</b>    | 8:45am            | 10:15-10:30      | 12:00-12:45 | 2:30                  |

## 2. Drop-off and collection of children - adults on site:

Only one adult per family should enter the school site and only at the times outlined above. We will be operating a one-way system for entry and exit from the school site:

- Entry will be via the path and onto the playground
- Exit will be via the gate to the left of the building, past Danes classroom and into the school car park.
- No adults, other than staff, are to enter the school building.
- All adults to leave the school site immediately after drop-off/pick-up.
- One adult only allowed into the school lobby.

|                             | Arrival   | Departure   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Reception and Year 1</b> | <p>Children who are happy to do so should be left to enter school independently having been escorted to the playground gate.</p> <p>Those who need an adult to wait with them will need to queue across the playground (markers will be in place)</p> | <p>One adult per family should wait on the main playground being aware of social distancing.</p> <p>Children will be escorted to the playground by a member of staff.</p> <p>Please leave the site according to the one-way system.</p> |
| <b>Year 6</b>               | <p>Children to enter school site independently (please say goodbye at the entrance to the site). Children to enter the building via Danes class fire door which will be open ready for them.</p>  | <p>Parents to wait outside the school grounds on School Lane. The children will be escorted to the gate by a member of staff.</p>   |

### **3. Minimising Contact and good hygiene inside school:**

- There will be no contact between children of different year groups.
- There will be a maximum of 15 children in each classroom (if necessary, Year 1 will be split between Peartree and Orchard classrooms).
- Where possible, Staff will remain with a particular year group instead of working across several classes.
- Furniture will be organised within classrooms to ensure that children sit apart. Each child will have an allocated place. Clearly, this will look different for the Reception aged children as their day is structured very differently.
- Classes will agree a 'distancing charter' and children will be praised for following the agreed rules.
- Teachers will plan for children working individually instead of in pairs or groups.
- Each classroom will have an example 2m distance clearly marked as a reminder to the children.
- Coats and lunchboxes will be kept under tables to avoid busy cloakrooms. This will be organised differently for Reception children.
- Only one child from each class will use the toilets at a time (unless there is an urgent need for the younger children)
- Reception children will use their classroom toilets throughout the day, including breaks.
- Year 1 children will use the library toilets throughout the day, including breaks.
- Year 6 children will use Danes class toilets throughout the day, including breaks.
- Children will wash their hands thoroughly and regularly throughout the day.
- Hand washing procedures will be demonstrated by staff and frequent reminders given.
- Internal doors will be kept open throughout the day to avoid contact and allow ventilation.
- Classroom windows will be kept open when possible.
- Staggered lunchtimes mean that Reception children and Year One children will have separate lunch sittings.
- Year Six children will eat lunch in their classroom.
- Children will not queue for their school dinner – instead they will be sent in very small supervised groups to the library to ensure they are 2m apart as they wait.
- Wherever possible, classroom resources will not be shared between children. Instead such resources (e.g. glue sticks and scissors) will be distributed for individual use.
- Tables, door handles and other surfaces will be cleaned regularly.



#### **4. Outside Play – Morning Break and Lunchtime**

We are very lucky to have plenty of outdoor space to enjoy, especially in dry weather. We will incorporate as much outdoor learning into our timetables as possible.

- Staggered break and lunchtimes mean that each year group will be outside at different times. Should two classes be outside simultaneously, then they will play in different areas of the school grounds.
- School play equipment will be limited to items which can be easily cleaned.
- We would like to encourage children to bring their own equipment (should they wish to do so). This could be a small ball, a skipping rope or similar. These items need to be taken home each day to be cleaned.
- Appropriate games will be discussed with the children which minimise contact.

#### **5. Well-being**

We appreciate that most of the children returning to school are very young and can not be expected to fully comprehend the current situation. We also understand that periods of transition can be difficult for children; they have now spent many weeks at home and will be returning to a school which will 'feel' rather different to the school they are familiar with.

Please be assured that we will be doing everything we can to support each and every child and to meet their personal needs. Within our small 'bubbles' we will allow time just to talk and share our feelings. We are proud of how Aston children and staff look out and care for each other – this will be more important than ever as the children settle back into school.

Whilst we can no longer allow parents or carers into the building, please remember that we are more than happy to discuss with you any queries or concerns that you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need to do so. This could be by phone or email ([closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk](mailto:closed@astonmarys.herts.sch.uk)) or via Seesaw or Tapestry. Like you, we want your child to be safe, feel settled and happy in school.