



29<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear parents, carers and children

I do hope you are all well and staying safe. Thank you again for following the guidelines and staying at home as much as possible, this is making a real difference. I hope the children enjoyed my hello video. In it I said that I would write again and explain a bit more about the importance of rainbows. I haven't forgotten my promise and I will send them this letter soon. Today, Mr Burns and I put a banner outside the school gate. It has a picture of the Cottesmore logo, a love heart and the NHS sign with a rainbow over the top. It is to show those working for the NHS, and other key workers, that we are supporting them, just like the rainbows in your windows at home. The children of key workers, and staff, that were in school today, added their handprints.



I, along with the teachers, continue to spend my days completing jobs linked to the school closure, completing jobs linked to the hopeful reopening (at some point) plus the usual day to day jobs, linked to running a school or teaching a class.

### Joining and leaving the school

I have been working virtually with Mrs Yahiatene, our Pupil Services Lead, from the school office, and Mrs Coleshill, from Reception, on the admissions of the new Reception children who will join our school family in September. Back in November, we held numerous tours and met with over 80 families. We are thrilled to say that we have filled all 60 places, plus have 13 families on the waiting list. This is incredible because we know that, across the city, there are more school places than children so it is a real privilege to be so in demand. I do think that lots of our success was down to all the wonderful things that we offer but that a big part was thanks to the brilliance of our Year 6 tour guides. These children showed families around the school and were incredible ambassadors of what makes Cottesmore great. A huge thank you to every child that helped out, they were incredibly professional, positive and mature. They certainly inspired many families. I have sent a separate letter to Year 6 children and families today highlighting all the plans we have for them, to ensure that, regardless of what happens, we will make sure that they get the proper send off that they deserve, as and when restrictions are altered. This Year 6 cohort has been a particularly special one. They have been a delight to teach and watch grow, throughout their whole seven years at Cottesmore. They will always be remembered as being a cohort full of caring, thoughtful, considerate individuals who are brave, talented, determined and incredibly supportive of one another, not to mention the world in which they live. They really are a special bunch of children and, as said, when the time comes, we will make sure that they leave with the fanfare with which they deserve.

### What we offer at school

I have also been working virtually with Ms Hodgson, our school Business Manager, on our new school budget. We are pleased to say that we have created a budget plan for the next three

years that means that we remain in credit which, again, is super, as this isn't the case in many schools both locally and nationally. Our plan includes everything that we currently offer. For example, continuing all the specialist provision, school funded Forest School, our school counsellor, many Teaching Assistants etc. Opportunities that many schools sadly are not able to offer. I have also had virtual meetings with some school Governors to discuss such matters which was actually surprisingly easy – we can still work well together even if all in different places. We are really pleased that children will return to the same Cottesmore, with all the great things taking place as per usual. We are also working to provide refunds for all parents who paid deposits or full amounts for any school trip that hasn't taken place and will be in touch, over the coming weeks, with regards to how refunds can be claimed.

### Curriculum

As you know, we are all busy working to get the school ready for return, whenever that might be. One of the things we have been working on is the Curriculum. Mrs McLoughlin has been working alongside teachers, who all lead different subjects, to make sure that our curriculum is the best it can be. We are in the process of making some changes that will make the learning even more inspiring and engaging, plus we are working to ensure that lessons progress with more clarity and that increasingly useful information, knowledge and skills can be learnt and retained. I will write more about this when we return to school.

### Home Learning

It has been super to hear about so how well everyone has been engaging with Home Learning. Thank you again to all families for their support with this. Obviously the more you can do the better, but, emotional wellbeing and a harmonious family life is much more important at present so please just try to get the right balance. I have seen many great things that the teachers have passed my way and thought it would be uplifting to share some examples, of what the children have been doing at home, just as we share great work and exciting activities via our usual school newsletter.

Reception children enjoyed a topic all about transport. Children designed cars using junk materials based on the story 'Mr Gumpy's Car', which Mrs Coleshill read aloud via video, and some have been exploring drawing round their shadows. In Art, in Year 1, the children have begun exploring self portraits.



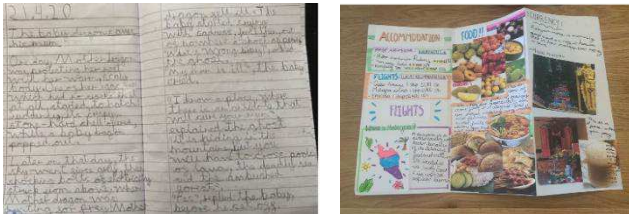
Georgia, Year 2, designed a poster to explain to an alien what a plant needs to grow. India created a brilliant presentation for her Science learning and found out about plants that grow from bulbs and plants that grow from seeds.



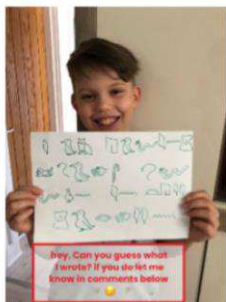
Francis, Year 3, created a colourful picture based on the work of the artist, Hundertwasser. A brother and sister duo from Year 3 and Reception (sorry, I am not meant to put names next to clear photographs, for safeguarding purposes, hence the ambiguity!) have made a family shop at home. Children in Year 3 took on Mr Burns' challenge to recreate a famous work of Art and some have written prayers of thanks. Others have designed roller coasters using lego.



In Year 3, Noah wrote a story about a baby dragon. Seesaw is great for uploading pictures of your work so that your teacher can see it. Well done Noah, it's a super story. In Year 4, Jo Li worked really hard to create a travel brochure of a country of her choice. She chose Malaysia and she informs her readers of the types of food and currency you would find there and even gives recommendations of accommodation nearby. She makes a very convincing holiday sales pitch!



As Year Four's topic for this Summer term is 'Walk Like an Egyptian,' Children have used hieroglyphics, the Ancient Egyptian form of writing, to code secret messages to their class via Seesaw. Can you work out what this message says?



In Year 4, a video was also created, in the style of James Bond, titled, 'There's Only One Woman' and Kamro completed some brilliant fractions work, also using lego.



I'm amazed at the creativity that children have been putting into their learning. Fantastic! Please do remember that, as a family you can only do what you can do. It's not easy, juggling family life, your own work, family wellbeing plus, in some cases, more than one child's home learning. Please just do your best and don't compare yourself to what you think others are doing - remember that social media etc. rarely shows the truth!

In Year 4, Conor and Leon have also been very creative, creating their own Egyptian Pharaoh masks. They used different colours, materials and textures to create their masks inspired by that of the famous Tutankhamen.



In Year 5, linked to their Space topic, incredible rocket designs have been made, some using lego, and Ed created his by drawing it. Juliet wrote an amazing diary in the role of an astronaut. Impressive writing Juliet!



10 February 2010

Dear Diary,

Today, I was getting ready to board the spacecraft Jolly Roger 2. I started with doing the last of my training which was parachuting as it helps you land safely back to Earth. At first I did not know why we needed to parachute but after 2 years of training I learnt a lot about how the rocket works and how it is like to be in space.

After the last of my training, I had a lot of interviews with interested journalists. They were asking a lot of questions about how I felt. I said that I was overjoyed that I got a opportunity like this. However I also said that I was terrified as I did not know what will happen and I may not be able to control what will happen.

Later on, me and everyone that worked with NASA were running around to check if we had enough food, water and medical kits on the Jolly Roger 2. We were also checking if the communication system was working and the spacecraft was programmed correctly for the journey. We had to add a lot of rocket fuel to the spacecraft as if we did not we would never get to space.

While the spacecraft was ready, I was putting on my spacesuit. There are a lot of layers to put on so it took a long time but after I put it on I felt safe, warm and even cosy. It felt like I was in my bed or next to a warm fire I could just fall asleep.

Know that the spacesuit was on, I entered the Jolly Roger 2 for a one in a life time opportunity. Immediately my stomach had butterflies and I began to feel sick. I was so anxious that I could not move but the people coming with me looked fine. They were laughing and enjoying them self like nothing would go wrong. Suddenly, I heard a count down from ten everywhere around me was shaking that I could not sit up right. More nerves started to kick in as I new in any second I would be in space.

Jack, Year 6, and his brother made an amazing video to uplift the spirits of his class. What talented musicians! Mrs Fletcher said she and her daughter danced around their kitchen listening to it. Whilst Ella, Noah and Eloise have made an online, children's activity guide for ideas of how to pass time spent at home. Both of which can be found on the new Community page on the school website (you will find the icon next to Current Updates on the Home page. Mr Burns was delighted with the responses to his Easter Art challenge. Here are some of the entries. They are all so fantastic!



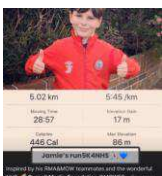
## Captain Tom Moore

Captain Tom Moore, a 99 year old veteran, is an inspiration to us all and represents all the great qualities that we should celebrate. Captain Tom Moore had hoped to raise £1000 for NHS Charities Together by his 100th birthday, which is on 30<sup>th</sup> April (tomorrow), through walking 100 laps of his garden. This was despite being 99 years old and needing a walker to help him move. He initially only hoped to raise £1000 but his determination and resilience has touched the hearts of so many and over £29 million has now been raised. He has recently been given The Pride of Britain award. How proud we are of him too – what a super idea and a great story to bring us all together and motivate us to do something to help others. Captain Tom served in the Second World War many years ago. On 8<sup>th</sup> May, we will remember VE Day which is the incredible moment, 75 years ago, when this war ended and peace returned after six years of war. On that day, back in 1945, the then Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, told the whole country, on the radio, of the news. Church bells rang out and people spilled onto the streets to show joy and celebration. This day was another momentous time in our history. We will be posting some activities linked to VE Day on Home Learning Grids and Seesaw.



## Supporting the NHS

Well done to all of those who have done things, like Captain Tom Moore, to help raise money for the NHS. Some of you have run, or walked, 5K to help fundraise. We are proud of you. Thank you also to those of you who have written messages of thanks. A Year 5 member, shaved his head to raise money. What a selfless act of kindness. His football team also raised £2929 by all doing the same. Amazing.



Thank you also again to all the families who have donated food, or money, towards our own Cottesmore Foodbank. This has been much appreciated and we have been able to help those needing some support.

## Music clips

Mrs Connannon has launched a music clips page on our school website. Here you can find links to songs that link to the learning grid. There is also a link to a body percussion work out. The link is

<http://www.cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk/page/musicclips/>



## Congratulations

Huge congratulations to two new babies born to members of our Cottesmore family. Bluebell and Maxi, plus their parents (!), have welcomed a baby sister called Violet and Fabian has also welcomed a baby sister. How wonderful to hear such news. All are doing well and we look forward to cuddles one day in the future.

## Forest School award

We are delighted to say that, due to our great start with Forest School and the lovely activities the children participated in, we are now the proud owners of the Bronze Award from the Woodland Trust for Green Schools. To aim towards our Silver Award, the trust would like the children to tell us what they loved, remember or hope to do in Forest School in the next sessions that we will hold. Teachers are uploading a document, via Seesaw, for children to complete. Ms McCartney is looking forward to reading these as am I. Thank you to Ms McCartney and Mrs Wells for all their work providing us with the most fantastic Forest School experiences.



## Children's Parade

We were disappointed that the Children's Parade was unable to go ahead, especially as children from Years 4 – 6 had been busy making amazing head pieces, T-Shirt prints and items to carry / wave. However, we are looking forward to using the same items in the parade next year as the organisers are just postponing the whole event. They will keep the same theme so that the same children can join in next time round. In the meantime, this Saturday, on the date that the parade would have taken place, a virtual parade will take place and anyone can join in!

Whether you want to conga around your kitchen, wave a flag from your window, blow a whistle from your balcony, shimmy in your sitting room or dress-up on your doorstep – there is no set theme and anything goes! At 10.30am on Saturday, the parade organisers will signal the start the mini parade by sharing a samba drumming call on social media. **Share your creativity #ChildrensParadeAtHome and @brightonfestival.** If you are not on social media you can send pictures to [marketing@brightonfestival.org](mailto:marketing@brightonfestival.org). Visit the Brighton Festival webpage for more information.

## Support

As we find ourselves in week six of the current situation, I just wanted to remind you that, as ever, the staff team and I are always here to help you in any way you need. We are a school family and we are always here to support and listen, please just get in touch. You are not alone. A reminder that my email can be found on the Contact Us section of the school website and that all teacher emails can be found under Year Groups and then by clicking on the relevant year. I have sent many full letters with a range of information regarding many different aspects of the challenges that you might face e.g. financial support, safeguarding, online safety etc. Please do make reference to all previous letters and note that all helpful documents can be found on Current Updates on the Home page (click on the icon). As ever, we miss being a physical community but we are still a community nonetheless and you are in our thoughts every day. I do hope that you have found the phone calls home this week helpful and please, just remember to keep in touch. We are always here for you.

Much love, Rachel Breen, Headteacher