



**THOMAS A' BECKET INFANT SCHOOL
SPRING TERM NEWSFLASH – ISSUE 2
29th January 2021**

Dear Parents/Carers.

As we come to the end of the 4th week of this term, we have been reflecting in school on what we have accomplished so far. We have managed a second lockdown situation, although this one feels very different from the first. We have many more children eligible to be in school this time (currently **33% of our children**) and all our staff (who are able) are in school full time. In addition to this, they are also ensuring they monitor the home learning for the children in their class who are not in school and providing support for families where we can. Following the recent Government announcement regarding when schools may reopen, we have had an increase in requests for spaces. Once again, we are asking that you only send your children into school if you have *no other alternative*. We continue to follow the government guidance which states: *'Parents and carers who are critical workers **should** keep their children at home if they can'*.

We very much want to get the children back to school as soon as it is safe to do so and we appreciate that this Lockdown feels much trickier. We hope that you are reflecting on your achievements at home and knowing that you are all doing the 'best you can' - adjusting to a home learning situation again, juggling learning for your children in different year groups with varying levels of need, working from home yourselves and managing all the other activities that everyday life brings.



We want to stop and congratulate everyone in our school community for their resilience and perseverance through some of the trickiest times we have ever known. Please know that we are 'doing our best' to provide support and learning activities that are in line with the curriculum expectations and our philosophy. We know we won't always get it right for everyone all the time, but if you feel you require more support or advice for you and your child, please let us know.

Many of you have already done this and we hope we have been able to reassure you that you are doing a great job! Some days will be better than others and that's ok, we just try again tomorrow. Please don't think that you are the only one finding things tricky, there are lots of people finding it tough and we want to reassure you that we know you're doing your best..

Let's hope that we can all be back in school again soon. We miss our busy school community and look forward to you all being back as soon as it is safe to do so.

February Half Term

We have had confirmation from the DfE that schools **will not be expected to be open** over February half term, This means that school will be shut from Monday 15th February until Friday 19th February.



Lateral Flow Tests for Staff



From Monday 1st February, the staff in school will be carrying out the Lateral Flow Tests twice weekly. These tests help to identify asymptomatic carriers of the COVID virus and thus the reduction of community transmission. Should a member of staff test positive following one of these tests, we will of course be informing the families of those children who have been in close contact as soon as possible and the usual isolation expectations will be in place. We hope that this will be another layer of safety, ensuring the staff and children who are in school, as well as their families, are as safe as possible.

COVID Update

Please do not send your child to school if they are showing symptoms of COVID (see below)

You should also NOT be sending your child into school if someone in the household has symptoms of COVID 19. They must get a test and everyone in the family should isolate until you either receive a negative result, or for the time you are asked to isolate.



**If your child has:
a high temperature
a new, continuous cough, or
a loss of, or change in, sense of
smell or taste**

**This could be a sign of
coronavirus**

Book a test

**If your child has:
a runny nose, is sneezing or
feeling unwell
But they don't have:
a high temperature
a new, continuous cough, or
a loss of, or change in,
sense of smell or taste**

**These are
not normally symptoms of
coronavirus**

**Seek advice from a pharmacy, dial
111 or see your GP**

Mrs Dingwall's Weekly Challenge

Thank you to all those of you who have completed this week's challenge. There were some really lovely responses from you and I hope you are able to display your Head Teachers Award certificate somewhere where everyone can see it. Here is a picture from Ivy in Turtle's class of her cat. I love that she has written that being with her cat, helps her feel calm. Please keep your pictures and writing coming. It really does brighten our day!



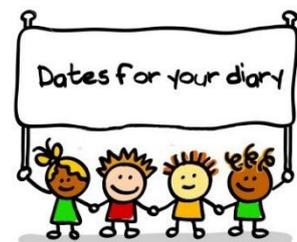
This week's challenge is all about independence and responsibility. Have a chat with your grown ups about something you could do to help around the house. Maybe you could tidy your room each day and make your bed. If you already do all those things, then how about asking if you could help with jobs around the house - carrying washing down to the machine, setting the table for dinner, or maybe even playing with a younger brother or sister and helping them learn a new skill. (lego, jigsaws, colouring etc)

I'm sure your grown ups can think of lots of things you could do to help. Good Luck!!

TERM DATES 2021

INSET DAYS:

Thursday 1st April 2021
Friday 28th May 2021



Spring Half Term:

Monday 15th February - Friday 19th February

Easter Holidays:

Friday 2nd April - Friday 16th April

Summer Half Term:

Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June

Last day of Summer Term 2021:

Friday 23rd July



School Places

We are having increasing requests for children to return to school over the past week. Whilst we would love to have all our children back in school, we are already accommodating higher numbers than in the last lockdown and all our staff are in school every day.



We appreciate that juggling home schooling with work and family life is very challenging at the moment, but we would ask that you do not request a school place, unless you have no other options.

The current government advice is that "Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can" as this is the safest place for them.

Keeping numbers down in school also means that we are reducing the risk to our staff and their families, as well as the families who are currently attending school in the vulnerable and critical worker groups.

We have had positive cases in school and continue to have families who are isolating due to contact outside of school with positive cases.

Please get in touch if you need extra support with the home learning.

Younger children will always need more support with their learning, but their class teacher is more than happy to chat to you to help with this if possible.



This weekend is the 'Big Bird Watch' which is organised by the RSPB. It runs from Friday 29th until Sunday 31st January 2021. In school we are hoping some of the classes will be able to spend time observing the different birds around the school environment. Those of you at home can also take part. Below is a link to the RSPB page which will give you further information;

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/everything-you-need-to-know-about-big-garden-birdwatch/>

This week's Forest School home learning challenge also relates to the RSPB bird watch. Please find attached the activity ideas.

We really hope you can take part in this in some form of other and would love to hear about any interesting birds you may have spotted.

Primary Forest School

ONLINE LEARNING – BIG SCHOOLS/GARDEN BIRDWATCH



Activity	Resources Required	Potential Risks	Impact
Skill – Making bird food/ feeder	Fat Balls – fat, bird seed or crushed cereal. Apple Feeder – Apple, sunflower seeds, string	Consumption of lard/ fat, Nuts in bird feed – nut allergies, Use of scissors	Children to make feeders or food to prepare for birds visiting
Main – Participate in Big Schools/ Big Garden Bird watch	Using Big Schools Birdwatch sheets	Possible injury if using binoculars	Children to identify different birds and submit their findings to the RSPB and us
Extended – Identify species and their characteristics, i.e. Beak shape and size...	As above and bird book if you have one or internet resources	As above	Children to identify and classify, finding reasons for differences and similarities
Mindfulness – Listen	A nice spot to sit (preferably outdoors first thing in morning or dusk)	Don't sit in/ on anything yucky!	Listen to the bird song around you – really listen, how many different birds can you hear

The important bit for parents and teachers... but you can have a sneak peek at the activities too!

Did you know about...?

Big
Garden
Birdwatch
29-31 January 2021



The Main Event!



If your garden isn't very chirpy – don't worry!

Click here to find the Big Garden Bird Watch live webcam
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2YXRazll4Y>

How many birds can you count on the webcam ?

What do you think the birds are eating?

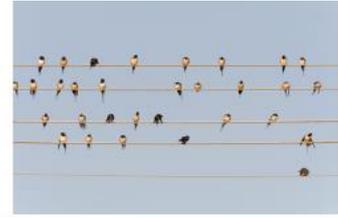
How many birds can you see here?

Big
Garden
Birdwatch
29-31 January 2021



Which was your favourite bird?

Be our Guest!



How to make Fat Balls;

Step 1: Soften the fat – whether it's lard or left over (cooled) cooking fat

Step 2: Mix the fat with the bird seed/ old cereal. You should have no fat blobs – it should all be mixed with the seeds especially inside the ball!

Step 3: Use your hands to make into a ball shape

Step 4: Put outside (off the ground) and wait for any visitors

Top Tip: Use cookies cutters to make different shapes!



Still a little peckish?

How to make an apple feeder;

Step 1: Get an apple and some sunflower seeds

Step 2: Using the pointy end of the sunflower seed push them into the apple. Add as many seed as possible to your apple!

Step 3: Attach sting to the stalk or place on bird feeder table



Can you make a pattern on your apple with the seeds?





Count the birds from one place, for one hour

How to take part in the survey...

1 Pick a time

You can choose any hour between Friday 29th and Sunday 31st January 2021. So whether you're an early bird or a night owl, you can still take part.



2 What did you see?

Count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony or window. To avoid double-counting, just record the **highest number of each bird species you see at any one time** – not a running total.

TOP TIP: Put some bird food out a few days before you count the birds



This year our advice is to take part in the safety of your own home

3 Submit your results

Online: You can submit your results online at <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/> from 29 January until 19 February.

Whose t-who?...



By looking at colours, shape and size we can name the birds we see.

Can you name the birds in your garden or on the live webcam?

Are you able to draw the birds that you have seen? What colours will you use?



Which bird is the biggest here?

Which bird has a red/ orange chest?

Mindfulness Moment

Watch and listen to the birds and other wildlife

Find a nice spot to sit (outside in morning or dusk if possible!)



Can you Find...

5 birds that you can see?



4 birds that you can hear?



3 places a bird could perch?

2 places a bird could hide?



Can you imagine that you are a bird? How would you feel with wings?



How did you get on?



What was your favourite activity?



Share your feedback by;

Emailing - ellen.blackwood@primary-forest-school.co.uk

Find us Facebook or Instagram

@PrimaryForestSchools





Thomas A'Becket
Infant School
@tabinfantschool

Home

Respect
Effort
Attitude
Collaboration
Honesty



Handwriting Challenge

Congratulations to the following children who have been awarded their
'Handwriting Star Pencil Topper':

Ralph – Dolphins



Congratulations to the following children who have completed **100 'reads'** at home:

It is so lovely to see the excitement and pride of those children who have achieved the next stage of the reading challenge. Reading is such a key skill and we want to encourage regular reading as much as possible, both in school and at home.

Cooper - Dolphins



Congratulations to the following classes, who have reached 100 stars:

Dragonfly Class
Rabbit Class
Hedgehog Class
Turtle Class
Starfish Class
Grasshopper Class
Badger Class

Community Corner

Identifying as a PARENT CARER & Vaccination Information



If you are the parent of a child with a Special Educational Need and/or Disability, whether diagnosed or not, then you are also a parent carer

By identifying and registering as a carer you will be able to access support from a variety of West Sussex services. [West Sussex Parent Carer Forum](#) is here to help you navigate this support (from support phone lines to applying for the carers grant).

You will need to be registered as a carer to receive your Coronavirus vaccination; hence, we urge you to register ASAP via the following link: <https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/register>

Carers Support West Sussex is frequently updating vaccination information for carers, including FAQ's: <https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/covid-19-hub>

If you have any further vaccination questions, you can email: sxccg.vaccineenquiries@nhs.net

Please DO NOT contact your GP regarding vaccination concerns.

Please contact Carers Support West Sussex directly if you have questions regarding clarifying/proving your status as a parent carer: <https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/register> or email: info@carerssupport.org.uk