

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

'Stand up straight and realise who you are, that you tower over your circumstances' – Mary Angelou

As we enter the sixth week of the government's lockdown measures, I am humbled by the compassion and care for their communities that individuals up and down the country have shown. The government will next week outline a 'comprehensive plan' of the next steps it intends to take. In the meantime, I want to thank you for your continued efforts in supporting the home learning programme, working with your children whilst also trying to work from home and manage your own households and anxieties.

Free School Meals Vouchers/Edenred

We are continuing to send out FSM vouchers each Friday through the Edenred system so please check your email accounts from Friday afternoons onwards, including the junk folder. It is imperative that the school has an up to date email address from you and therefore if your details have changed, please inform us at the earliest opportunity by emailing enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk. Unfortunately, due to the scale of this task nationally, the Edenred system has continued to experience issues over the past several weeks, meaning that there has been a delay in some of the vouchers being sent. Often there is a delay of several days between the school requesting the vouchers from Edenred and the vouchers landing in the email address of the recipient. This is not a fault with the school, but with the system which distributes the vouchers themselves. Guidance of how to redeem your vouchers can be found in the COVID-19 section of the school website.

Teacher telephone calls

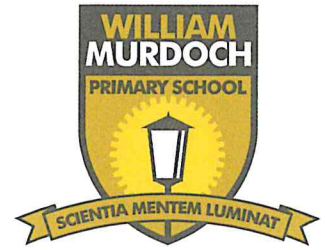
We are aware it has been a few weeks since your child and teacher last spoke to each other. Your child's teacher will be contacting you and your child by telephone next week. Most calls will be made between 1.00pm and 3.00pm each day (spread across the week) and will show on your phone as No Caller ID. The purpose of this call is to do a general check, get an update on home learning and is a way to let children know that as a school we are still here for them.

Parenting advice leaflet

Anxiety, boredom and being away from friends and the routines of school can make children and young people's behaviour particularly challenging. It is hard for everyone when you are all in a confined space together! Children learn from watching others and will mimic the behaviour of the adults in their lives. Speaking kindly, being consistent, admitting when you are wrong, staying calm and talking about your feelings are all behaviours that you want to model during this difficult time. Please find attached a very useful leaflet packed with advice for parents, created by the City of Birmingham School who specialise in behaviour support.

Storytime with Mr Panichi

During this period of lockdown, we know that some children have missed being in the classroom, learning new things, seeing their friends and hearing a good story. Therefore, Mr Panichi will be doing daily readings of a book during this time so that your children can see a familiar face and tune into a good book. He will be reading 'The Wild Robot' by Peter Brown - a good page turner that leaves you wanting to hear/read more. The book focuses on a robot called Roz who is washed up on a deserted island. She has to figure out her purpose in life. The only other inhabitants on the island are the animals that live there and they are initially petrified of Roz. They soon however, come to change their minds towards her as she becomes a wonderful mother and friend through an unfortunate event. The book is primarily aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils but can be enjoyed by others.



To access the video, type the following link into your internet address bar:

<https://youtu.be/TPPoVXZuZX4> Subsequent videos will be made available daily (Monday-Friday) via the school's website, COVID-19 section, Storytime With Mr Panichi . Let's carry on reading!

VE Day

Next Friday is the 75th Anniversary of VE Day and to mark the event there will be additional activities in the home learning resources for next week. Please also ask your child to keep an eye on the television next Friday for the Queen's address to the nation and other programming around the commemoration.

NHS Update - Mental health support offer

A range of new, easily accessible mental health support is now available for patients in Birmingham and Solihull, based around four groups:

- 0-18 year olds in Birmingham
- 0-19 year olds in Solihull
- Over 18s in Birmingham and Solihull
- Key workers.

These services are provided by a range of local organisations, and offer emotional help, guidance and reassurance to people in Birmingham and Solihull who may be finding the current Coronavirus situation overwhelming. Further information is available by copying and pasting the following link:

<https://www.birminghamandsolihullccg.nhs.uk/your-health/mental-health-support-offer>

Ramadan

Many of our parents will be observing the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. It is a time of reflection but also togetherness and community. Ramadan 2020 will be a very different experience during the COVID19 lockdown in accordance with public health advice. Our best wishes to all those observing.

Mr Dharni

Many of you will know of Mr Dharni, the sitar and tabla teacher who works with groups of children both during and after school. He also helps and supports pupils perform at special events organised both in and out of school. He has been busy supporting his family's business to produce over 8000 items of personal protective equipment (PPE), including scrubs and gowns, which they have donated to the NHS. Please copy and paste the following link to read more about it:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-52426247>

Please continue to observe social distancing and hand washing advice and stay at home where possible in order to protect the NHS and save lives.

Stay safe. Stay well.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Singh', written in a cursive style.

Mr M Singh
Headteacher