

11 December 2020

**MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER**

**“The fundamental cure for poverty is not money but knowledge.”**

**– Sir William Arthur Lewis**

Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to my letter yesterday where I informed you of the decision to close the school on Friday 18 December 2020, please find below the guidance from the Department of Education on which the decision was based:

***End of term planning***

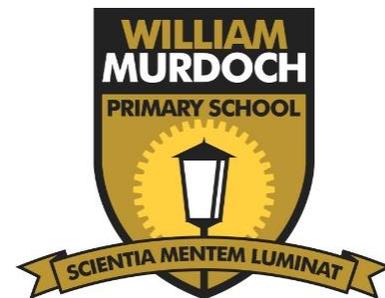
*We know that school and further education leaders, teachers and staff, as well as nurseries and childminders, have worked tirelessly over the last term. This has included their important role in contact tracing, to help in the national effort to limit the spread of the virus. We are aware that this has led to additional work over weekends and holidays and we are incredibly grateful for this.*

*We recognise the challenges of this responsibility at the end of term. Public Health England has agreed a 6 day window after the final day of teaching in which schools and further education providers are asked to remain contactable so they can assist with contact tracing where necessary. This will allow enough time for positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases to be identified and confirmed by a test and for relevant contacts in the education setting to be traced. We are clear that beyond 6 days after the final day of teaching, school and further education staff are not asked to play a role in any contact tracing. It is also likely that the need to support the tracing process will reduce dramatically over the course of the 6 days as the majority of cases should be identified earlier in the week.*

***End of term – advice for schools***

*To ensure that staff get the time off they need and deserve, schools may wish to use an INSET day, making Friday 18 December a non-teaching day and using the day for staff training, which could be delivered online...*

*We recognise this communication has arrived with schools late in the term but would ask schools to be as helpful to parents as they can by sharing any changes to end of term arrangements as soon as possible, particularly where schools choose to make Friday 18 December a non-teaching day. Your support with this is appreciated.*



*We recommend all schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information and relevant arrangements regarding positive cases in the holidays:*

- *Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.*
- *For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.*
- *School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where a school's last teaching day is on Thursday 17 December, there should be no pupil contact tracing asks beyond Wednesday 23 December.*

I hope you can understand our decision to follow this government guidance, which means we can further protect pupils in the run up to Christmas.

### **COVID-19 Reporting over Christmas**

As outlined in the government guidance above, myself and my office staff will be on call to deal with track and trace up to Wednesday 23 December 2020 if your child tests positive for COVID-19. Please note that beyond this date, NHS Test and Trace will take over contact tracing but you must also inform school of any positive cases in your household.

If your child tests positive for COVID-19 during the school holidays, please inform school immediately by emailing the Main Office at [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk). Please **do not use Class Dojo** to inform school of a positive test.

### **TikTok Update Parental Controls with Family Pairing Feature (SWGfL)**

TikTok is used by many teenagers and sometimes children younger than 13 despite its terms and conditions. Using the new Family Pairing feature parents can guide their child's TikTok experience in a safer way. Features include:

- **Search:** Decide what can be searched for. This includes content, users, hashtags, or sounds
- **Screen Time Management:** Sets how long your teen can spend on TikTok each day
- **Discoverability:** Decide on the account being private (you decide who can see their content) or public (anyone can search and view content)

To find out more information about TikTok's Family Pairing feature and to download a helpful poster to share with your child, go to: <https://swgfl.org.uk/magazine/tiktok-update-parental-controls-with-family-pairing-feature/>.

## COVID-19 Champions

The school has registered as a COVID-19 Champion with Birmingham City Council. The council will keep Champions informed of the latest advice and guidance, so that they can help your family, friends and other community members to make sense of the latest facts and guidance about the virus. This week we received the attached poster of simple rules to help keep safe whilst out shopping.

## Christmas Bubbles

Across the UK, people will be able to form 'bubbles' of three households over a five-day period. Between 23 and 27 December 2020, the three households in a 'Christmas bubble' can mix indoors and stay overnight. Bubbles will be allowed to meet each other:

- In each other's homes
- At a place of worship
- In an outdoor public space, or garden

The bubbles will be fixed, so you will not be able to mix with two households on Christmas Day and two different ones on Boxing Day. Households in your Christmas bubble cannot bubble with anyone else.



## Stay safe in your Christmas bubble

**Healthy Brum**  
Birmingham City Council

- 1 Sanitiser Stations**  


No one likes uninvited house guests.

Stop coronavirus at the door by keeping hand sanitiser in your porch or hallway.
- 2 Staggering Mealtimes**  


COVID-19 can turn up unannounced at any family table.

Staggering mealtimes is a great way to reduce the risk of the virus spreading across members of your household.
- 3 Shared Spaces**  


COVID-19 spreads more easily in shared spaces – even at home.

Going for a walk while Nan watches the soaps will reduce her risk of catching the virus.

## Christmas Card Competition

We received a large number of entries this year and the standard of the entries was also very high. After careful consideration, a card designed by Shahan Foridi in Class Y3.1 was chosen as the winner. He has received printed copies of his card along with a voucher. Congratulations Shahan.



## Book of the Week – Mr Panichi

### Lower School

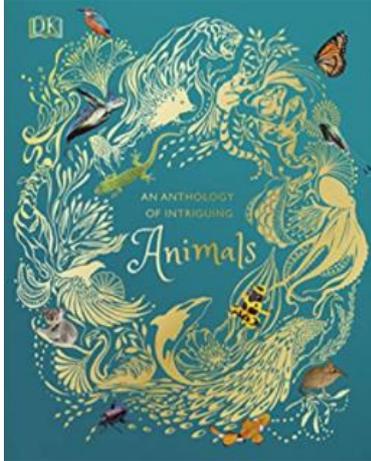


### **The Big Book of the Blue - Yuval Zommer**

This book is an absolute beauty. It is part of Yuval Zommer's series of Big Books and it certainly lives up to its name - big in size, big on facts and big on interest. It begins with an introduction to the animal families in the ocean: perfect for keen scientists. Throughout the book, we read lots of technical vocabulary and I love the 'Fishy Phrases' section at the back, encouraging readers to sound like an expert. The clever 'can you find?' challenge is a lovely little motivation to get readers scouring the pages, skimming and scanning. As they do, they will meet double-page spreads of sea turtles, seahorses, dragonets just to name a few. It is jam-packed with stunning illustrations and tons of facts. I like all the word play that Yuval sneaks in too! This is a fun, informative read, great for Key Stage 1 classes and perfect to link with plastic pollution themes

(which Yuval nods to on the dolphin page.) If they have knowledge of the wonderful creatures of the sea, they will care about it.

## Upper School



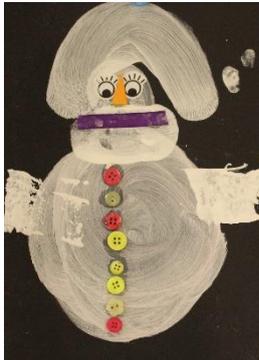
### **An Anthology of Intriguing Animals – Ben Hoare**

Facts and stories about over 100 creatures from the animal kingdom. Alongside interesting facts are the stories and myths behind children's favourite animals as well as incredible pictures and stunning illustrations.

Containing more than 100 species, this beautiful modern collection will take children through the animal kingdom from the huge whale to the tiny spider. Discover how the koala got its name or which animal the Ancient Egyptians thought rolled the Sun across the sky. Each page features fun animal facts and detailed close-up photographs for children to pore over, including firm favourites such as dolphins, tigers and butterflies as well as more unusual animals such as walrus, lemur and peacock. This book makes a perfect

Christmas present for any child who loves all things to do with the animal kingdom.

## **Artists of the Week**



### **R.2 - Manha**

In Reception the children have been reading *The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs. The children created their own snowman using white paint on black card. They then stuck different materials onto the snowman. Manha painted a snowman very carefully and stuck the different materials on in a sensible and creative way.



### **Prabjoti - Y5.3**

In Year 5 the children have been studying 'Islamic Art and Architecture'. They created a piece of Islamic Art using clay. They then painted their clay tiles using acrylic paint. Prabjoti created a beautiful and realistic piece of art.

**Pupil of the Week**



**Simranpreet – Y3.1**



**Mahul – Y3.2**



**Muavia – Y3.3**

**Good Work Certificates**



**Y3.1**



**Y3.2**

Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation.

Stay safe. Stay well. Have a relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Singh  
Headteacher