

4 December 2020

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

*"The future rewards those that press on. I don't have time to feel sorry for myself. I don't have time to complain. I'm going to press on."* – Barack Obama

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been another very busy week. Unfortunately, following Public Health England advice we recently had to close a Reception bubble and a Year 2 bubble. We know these are very challenging times for everyone involved and we are sincerely grateful for your understanding and support. We understand how difficult and disruptive this can be; many of us have had our own children self-isolating from their schools!

On Wednesday Dr Justin Varney, Director of Health for Birmingham, held a webinar with Birmingham Headteachers in which he stated that although cases of COVID-19 in Birmingham are falling, they are doing so at a slower rate than other big cities. There are over 23,000 pupils self-isolating across the city. He asked that we continue to remain vigilant and follow Tier 3 guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

### Free School Meal Hampers

If your child is eligible for benefits related Free School Meals and they are off school due to having to self-isolate, we can offer a hamper of food as they will not be receiving their Free School Meals. If you are eligible and would like a hamper, please contact the Main Office on 0121 554 0999 and we will arrange for this to be put together and either collected or delivered to you.

If you feel your circumstances have changed and you may be entitled to benefits related Free School Meals, you can check online here: <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/birmingham>

### Reminder about Self-isolation Rules

Several children who are supposed to be self-isolating have been spotted walking in the local area and even in supermarkets. We know it is difficult, but please keep children at home who are self-isolating. If you need any help or support, please let us know as we are happy to help.

### Changes to 2021 National Curriculum Assessments

In light of the ongoing disruption caused by coronavirus (COVID-19), the Secretary of State has changed a number of national curriculum assessments.

For 2021, the following tests have been removed:

- all key stage 1 (KS1) tests for Year 2 pupils
- the key stage 2 (KS2) English grammar, punctuation and spelling test for Year 6 pupils

To further support schools, the DfE have delayed the statutory introduction of the multiplication tables check that would have been undertaken by Year 4 pupils.

This means that only the following statutory assessments will continue in 2021:

- The phonics screening check for Year 1 pupils (and Year 2 pupils who have not met the expected standard previously)
- KS2 English reading and mathematics tests for Year 6 pupils
- KS1 and KS2 teacher assessment (excluding science)

### **Nursery Parents – Apply online for a place in Reception**

A reminder that Nursery parents should visit <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions> and submit an online application for a place in Reception by 15 January 2021 (the final closing date). Online applications will receive an immediate email confirmation when the application is submitted.

Please visit the school website at <https://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk/new-nursery-reception-2020-intake/reception-intake-2020> to see our excellent early years offering.

### **Staffing**

Miss Buchray will be leaving us at the end of the term. On behalf of staff, parents and pupils, I would like to pass on our thanks for her hard work and contributions to the school and we wish her well with her future endeavours.

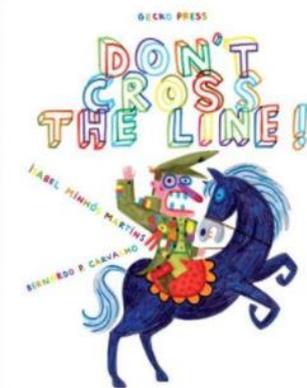
### **Little History Quiz**

On Wednesday this week, four pupils from Year 6 (Elyon, Arooba, Ridwan and Eshan) took part in the annual King Edward VI Camp Hill for Boys Little History Quiz. The event was held virtually over Zoom this year, but was no less enjoyable as a result. The pupils tackled rounds including *Kings and Queens*, *Ye Olde Mathematick Challenge* and *Medicine Through Time* and thoroughly enjoyed pitting their wits against 10 other teams from around the city. They did particularly well in identifying cities from old pictures and photographs including Babylon, Paris, Rome and Athens. The team ended up finishing in a very commendable 4th place in what is undoubtedly a very tricky test of knowledge!



## Book of the Week – Mr Panichi

### Lower School



#### **Don't Cross the Line - Isabel Minhós Martins**

'STOP!' shouts a guard. 'I'm very sorry but no-one's allowed onto the right-hand page.' In this book every word, line, shape, colour and white space conveys meaning. The longer you spend exploring each page, the greater your appreciation of the circumstances in which the characters find themselves. The first end paper introduces the rather submissive-looking characters. Few of them are smiling. In fact, many don't have mouths to smile or speak. Each group that enters the pages is held back by the guard. The left-hand page becomes more and more crowded. Two boys accidentally kick their bright red ball on to the right-hand page. Now what will happen?

A clever and thought-provoking book which readers of any age can enjoy.

Look at the final end papers; the characters are not subdued anymore but loud, opinionated, unruly, active and free to roam wherever they wish.

### Upper School



#### **Running on Empty - S E Durrant**

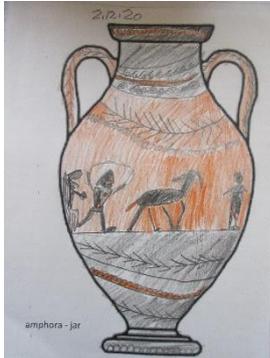
Incredibly emotional and powerful storytelling make for a truly compelling read. AJ loves to run, swept away on the belief and hope that anyone can achieve their dream. After watching the 2012 London Olympics, all he wants is to be like his idol Usain Bolt. His incredible running ability makes him different from most 11 year old boys but the thing that makes him really different, well that's just too difficult to talk about. AJ's determination and desperation to succeed in his ambition is just heart-breaking. There are so many moments of sheer sadness met by sheer joy that make for an emotional rollercoaster of a story but ultimately it's uplifting without being unrealistic or overly sentimental. An outstanding, empathetic read that deserves to be in every school library.

## Artists of the Week



Jannat Y1.2

In Year 1 the children have been exploring how lines and colour can be used in art work. They used paint to create a row of buildings. Jannat chose her colours very carefully and created a very good piece of art work.



Amrita Y3.1

In Year 3 the children have been using a variety of drawing techniques to draw different objects. They looked at amphora jars and created their own studies in colour pencils. Amrita took lots of care with her work and included many interesting details.

## Pupil of the Week



Y4.1 - Kani



Y4.2 - Mankush



Y4.3 - Gagandeep

## Good Work Certificates



Y4.1

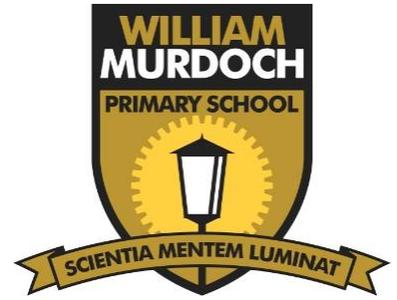


Y4.2



Y4.3

# KNOWLEDGE LIGHTS UP THE MIND



Many thanks for your continued support and cooperation.

Stay safe. Stay well. Have a relaxing weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Singh', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Mr M Singh  
Headteacher

**WILLIAM MURDOCH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

ANTROBUS ROAD, HANDSWORTH, BIRMINGHAM, B21 9NT, TEL: **0121 554 0999**, FAX: 0121 554 6332

EMAIL: [enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk), WEB: [www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk](http://www.williammurdoch.bham.sch.uk)

HEADTEACHER: MR M. SINGH