



Friday 13th November 2020

Newsletter 299

www.gillespie.islington.sch.uk



Dear Parents/Carers,

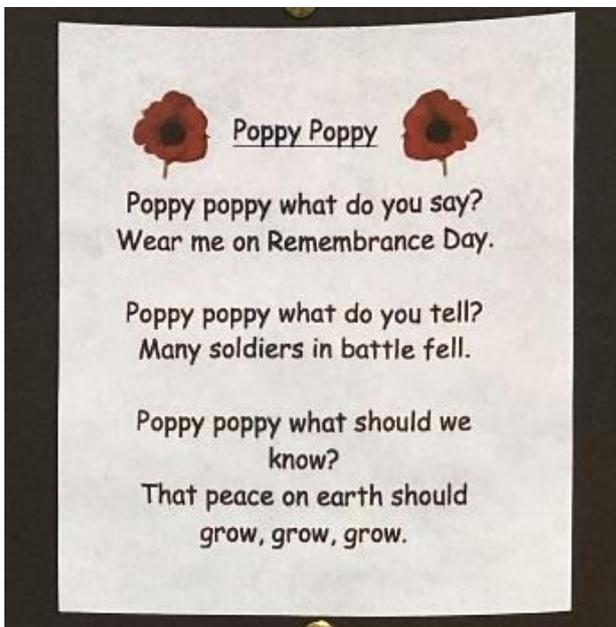
Gillespie's Catch Up Strategy

Parents will know that the government has provided all schools across the country with additional money to spend on catch up interventions to help make up for the lost learning that occurred for many children during lockdown between March and July 2020. Gillespie School has received just over £16,500 for this year only. Schools are required to develop and implement a catch up strategy plan which we have shared and discussed with governors and have sent to the Local Authority. Parents can read the plan on our website at <https://tinyurl.com/y6bsl2d7>.

We carried out our formal assessment week early this term and teachers fed back to you on your child's progress since the last time we assessed their learning in February 2020. Based on these early assessments, we have put in place an intervention plan to support all children who have either fallen back with their learning or made slower progress than they normally would have done. We are focussing in the main on reading, writing and mathematics. Our plan aims to support children in these subjects whilst still ensuring children receive a rich and broad curriculum. I am pleased to inform parents that we have been able to employ Megan our Resident Scientist and Orlando our Music teacher, who are experienced primary school teachers, for an additional day each week. They know the children in the school really well and have started an additional timetable where they carry out some interventions with small groups and also release the class teachers, who know them best, to enable them to provide additional support to children to help them accelerate their learning and progress. The catch up plan is supported by the interventions that the school already has in place including the SEN provision that Lyn leads and the parallel teaching and interventions lead by Katrina and myself.

The Nuffield Early Learning intervention

As part of our catch up programme we are very pleased to inform parents that the school has been successful in applying to engage in a DfE funded communication and language project to support the communication and language skills of pupils in the Reception class. This is a 20 week targeted programme designed to improve the oral language skills of pupils with the greatest need. The programme will also benefit the children in the rest of the class who do not receive the intensive programme. Reception parents will find out more from the EYFS Team shortly.



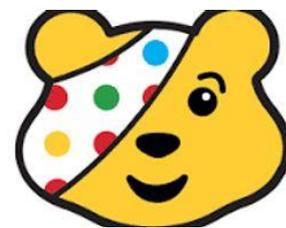
Remembrance Day

The children held a minute silence on Remembrance Day on Wednesday 11th within their classes and the Nursery children made poppies and painted pictures. They also read a special poem called 'Poppy Poppy' and made up some actions for the key words and re-told the poem together. They remembered the soldiers who were very brave and fought for their country in the war.



Children in Need

Today children delighted us with their spots and stripes today and raised a whopping £250 for Children in Need. Thank you all for your kind donations.



Anti-Bullying Week 16th – 20th November

This year's theme is 'United against bullying' – please can children wear odd socks on Monday 16th to help launch anti-bullying week. On Tuesday Steph our year Teacher and PSHE Leader will be leading a whole school assembly to share this year's national theme and to engage all classes in activities to ensure we are united against bullying! In our Friday assembly next week classes will have an opportunity to share some of the work they have done and we will share this with parents in next week's newsletter.

United against bullying

Whether it is verbal, physical, online or in-person, bullying has a significant impact on a child's life well in to adulthood. This year, more than ever, we've witnessed the positive power that society can have when we come together to tackle a common challenge.

Anti-Bullying Week is no different. Bullying has a long lasting effect on those who experience and witness it. But by channelling our collective power, through shared efforts and shared ambitions, we can reduce bullying together. From parents and carers, to teachers and politicians, to children and young people, we all have our part to play in coming together to make a difference.

We are all a piece in the puzzle, and together, we are united against bullying!



Class photos

Children will have their whole class photo taken on Tuesday 17th November – please ensure they are wearing full school uniform. Information of how to purchase the digital copy will be sent shortly afterwards.

School Uniform

<https://www.roughcutcasuals.co.uk/home/>

Our retail outlet, *Rough Cut Casuals*, will be closed from 5th November until 2nd December due to Government advice related to Covid-19.

We will update our website with any further developments as and when possible.

You can continue to order online and we will deliver your order within 2-3 working days subject to availability.

Attendance Matters 2nd – 6th November 2020

Overall school attendance for the week – 98.59%

Nursery	98.93%	Year 3	98.62%
Reception	99.32%	Year 4	97.67%
Year 1	98.25%	Year 5	98.40%
Year 2	99.31%	Year 6	98.31%

Attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE)

On 5th November 2020 the DfE [updated guidance](#) to schools as we entered a further national lockdown period, as follows:

- Schools continue to remain open for all children and young people
- Being at school is vital for children's education and for their wellbeing.
- The risk to children of becoming severely ill from coronavirus (COVID-19) is very low, with greater risk of negative health impacts from being out of school.
- For the vast majority of children, the benefits of being back in the classroom far outweigh the low risk from coronavirus (COVID-19), with schools taking action to reduce risks still further.

Clinically vulnerable children

- Children who are clinically vulnerable or have underlying health conditions should continue to attend school. Non-attendance will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Clinically extremely vulnerable children

- The evidence confirming a very low risk of children becoming very unwell from coronavirus (COVID-19) extends to children with existing health conditions. Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) no longer need to follow original shielding advice. Parents should be advised to speak to their child's GP or specialist clinician if they have not already done so, to understand whether their child should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.
- Those children whose doctors have confirmed are clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend education whilst the national restrictions are in place.
- Parents of clinically extremely vulnerable children will receive a letter confirming this advice.
- Schools will need to make appropriate arrangements to enable these children to continue their education at home.
- Children who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, but who are not clinically extremely vulnerable themselves, should still attend education or childcare.

Updated guidance for parents and carers from the DfE

We have updated our guidance for parents and carers on [what they need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#). This update provides information on the national restrictions that came into force on 5 November, the latest advice for clinically extremely vulnerable children and young people and advice on the use of face coverings in education settings. This guidance can be shared with your parent networks.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Owen, Headteacher

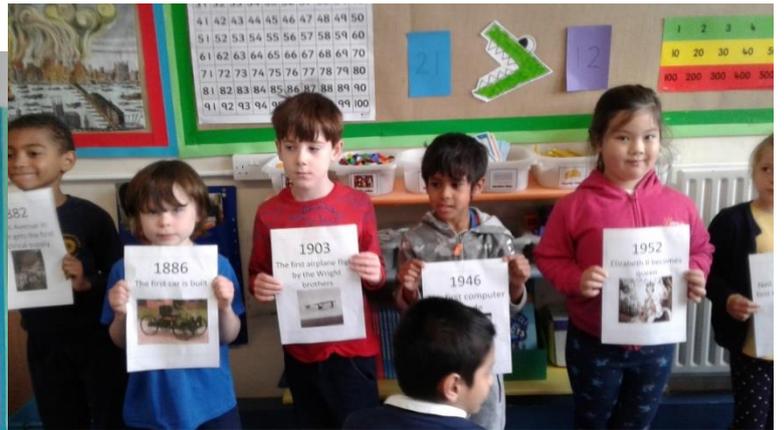
Year 1 Learning

We had a toy workshop with History Off the Page where we looked at metal, wooden, paper, moving and very old toys. We then did an archaeological dig to see what toys we could find. After we sorted them into groups depending on their material and then if they were a toy or not. Finally we made our own toys. We could make a peg doll, hook a fish, a spinning top, boat or cup and ball toy.



Year 2 Learning

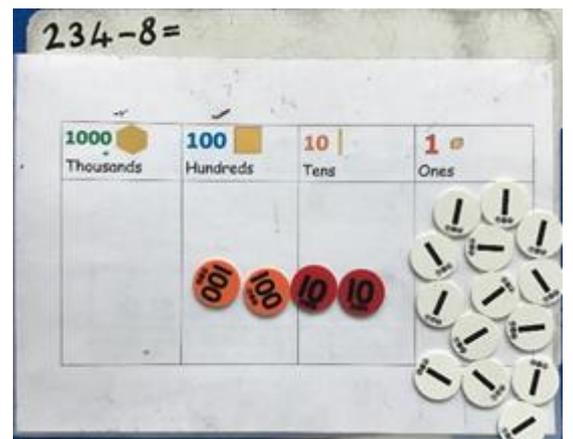
We discussed how to read dates and what they mean. We learned the meaning of **BCE** and **AD**. Then we made a giant human **timeline**! We were given historical events and had to put them in **chronological** order. We discussed how near each person should stand to the other person (if we had more space!) based on how close the two dates were in time. We also discussed how some events were connected – one may have **caused** another.



Year 3 Learning

In year 3, we used our place value grids to subtract and add using 3-digit numbers. Previously, we were using dienes, number lines and flashcards to make our numbers. This week, we used counters to show hundreds, tens and ones to make our number, which helped us solve lots of problems. We also learnt to exchange when it was needed.

Take a look at the subtraction problem below. What do you think needs to happen next?



FOG CHRISTMAS SILENT AUCTION

*Got a Gift? FOG needs
Parent skills or treasure
for Xmas auction prizes!*

PLEDGE PERIOD: TILL END NOV
CONTACT JACQUI BARRETT
BARRETTJACQUI@GMAIL.COM / 07900 188328

BIDS START: TUE 1 DEC 2020
BIDS END: FRI 11 DEC 2020

BID RESULTS: TUE 15 DEC 2020

You can offer to bake a cake; hold a masterclass (French-plaits, make-up, digital/legal/clever stuff); cook a dinner, paint a portrait... don't be shy about your skills!

OR maybe you could donate a special thing, eg a Banksy or a bottle of Bacardi?

Message Jacqui with any offering, no matter how random!

All Pledges will be confirmed on 1 Dec for everyone to bid on and impress a loved one with a unique Xmas present!



An important message from Richard Watts, Leader of Islington Council and Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Lead Member for Children and Families

Dear Parents and Carers,

These are extraordinary times. I'm quite sure none of us imagined what a challenging year 2020 would prove to be, and we have all had to adapt and respond to the very difficult circumstances that coronavirus has forced upon us.

Throughout this new lockdown, it's really important that we all stick to the rules and look out for each other, to keep our friends, family and neighbours safe.

Whilst some people contract coronavirus with few symptoms, for others it can have devastating effects and many of us have lost a friend or relative in this pandemic. So we want to thank you for your patience, your resilience and your positive spirit – we know that in Islington we stand together as a community and we will fight this deadly virus together.

Lockdown restrictions will be in place until at least 2 December. During this time **we must all stay at home and only leave for specific reasons**. The only reasons you should leave home are:

- for education or to provide childcare
- to exercise outdoors, with someone from your household or support bubble
- to work, but only if you cannot work from home
- to shop for food and essentials
- for medical reasons, appointments and to escape injury or harm
- to visit members of your support bubble or to provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer

We wanted to reassure you that the health and safety of children, education staff and their families is our priority. We know school is the best place for children to learn and support their wellbeing. Schools and settings have already implemented a range of protective measures to make them safe, and we continue to work closely with them to keep everyone safe.

To help protect ourselves, our families, our schools and everyone in our community, it's essential that we all continue to pull together and follow public health advice:

- **Wash your hands** regularly– for 20 seconds, with soap and running water, especially before and after school, before and after eating, and after using a tissue or the toilet.
- **Wear a face covering** in public places, including shops and on public transport
- **Create space** – stay 2 metres apart from people who are not from your household, particularly in public places. Please move away from the school as quickly as possible and do not stay and chat at the school gates at drop off and pick up times, and please encourage older children to come straight home from school.

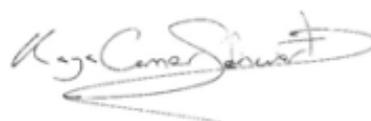
Please find more useful information over the page on Covid-19 and support that is available.

This year has already shown us how people in Islington step up and support each other in difficult times. We will get through the coming weeks by keeping that strong community spirit alive and supporting each other, as we each continue to do our part to keep ourselves, our schools and our community safe. Thank you for continuing to do your bit.

Yours,

Richard Watts, Leader Islington Council

Cllr Kaya Comer-Schwartz, Lead Member for Children and Families



Check your symptoms

The symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

If you or someone in your household start to develop any these symptoms make sure you self-isolate straight away and book a Covid-19 test - either by calling **119** or booking online at www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test

We know it can be hard to get a test - but please keep trying because new appointments and test kits should become available throughout the day. There is now a local test centre in Islington - but you must book before you visit.

Support if you're on a low income and need to self-isolate

People on a low income and who cannot work from home may be entitled to a one-off payment of £500 through the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme. Details of how to claim are available on our website: www.islington.gov.uk/coronavirus

Support with work and training

If you need help to find work or training our iWork team can help match you to local opportunities, coach you and advise you on sorting out benefits while you train. Just email iWork@islington.gov.uk or call **020 7527 2706**. If you are working but your job has been affected by the Covid-19 crisis visit www.shawtrust.org.uk for advice on a range of issues including furlough. Free training and courses available in Islington can be found at www.adultlearning.islington.gov.uk or visit www.candi.ac.uk/adult-students/free-short-courses for the options at City and Islington College.

Mental Health support for young people

In Islington, our Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) Services are available to support any young person in the borough of Islington who may be displaying difficulties with their emotional wellbeing and/or mental health. The services include counselling and therapeutic services and also support to help you get involved with activities. Call **020 7527 7400** where the team will help find the best service for you. **Young people** can access free, safe, anonymous, online wellbeing support at www.kooth.com

Islington Family Information Service

Islington Family Information Service (FIS), is a free and impartial telephone and web-based information and advice service for families with children and young people 0-25. Information provided includes: childcare, things to do, after-school clubs, services for disabled children, how to find jobs working with children and young people, health, family support services, tax credits and any other issues relating to family life. Call **020 7527 5959**, email fis@islington.gov.uk or visit www.islington.gov.uk/fis

We are here to help

Please remember that the council continues to support people in the borough who are struggling due to coronavirus and need practical help or support and the **We are Islington** helpline is open 7 days a week.

Call **020 7527 8222** or email weareislington@islington.gov.uk

Covid-19 Key reminders

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 31st October, new national restrictions came into force on Thursday 5 November.

Full details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>

In light of this we are reminding families of the following:

- Parents/Carers should follow social distancing guidelines at drop off and pick up times – it is YOUR responsibility to ensure you are at a safe distance from other families.
- Parents/Carers are not to enter the school building. You should call or email the school office with any messages you have
- You must ensure your child comes to school equipped with all the resources they need for their day including water bottle, coat, musical instruments if applicable
- Punctuality Matters: it is important that children arrive to school on time to ensure a good start to their day. If your child arrives late they will need to be dropped at the front door and the office will sign them in as Parents/Carers are not to enter the school building
- Children should not be bringing in any other personal items from home! This includes match attack or other gaming cards. All personal belongings should remain at home
- Years 1 & 2 children should be dropped in the playground at their allotted time in the mornings and Parents/Carers should promptly leave the playground to avoid congestion. Please do not stand and wait on the ramp at drop off but leave as soon as your child has arrived on their spot.
- At collection time Parents/Carers should enter the playground, collect from the football pitch and leave immediately or stand around the perimeter if waiting for a sibling. Small children should be supervised at all times
- Parents/Carers should arrive promptly at your allotted drop off/pick up time and not hang around the school gates. This eases congestion on the ramp and Gillespie Road

Elizabeth House Food Hub

Elizabeth House is expanding its Food Hub for the duration of the lockdown and can support families eligible for free school meals with a weekly food bag. To register for this contact Elizabeth House on 020 7690 1300, Monday to Friday 10 am to 5pm. Food bags will be ready for collection on Fridays between 10.00-3.00pm (families will be required to complete a registration form for this service).