



Dear Parents and Carers

SHIRE OAK

C of E (VC) Primary School

It was so lovely to see so many of our pupils in this **morning's assembly**! It is great to still be together even when we can't all be in the same building.

You have probably heard that the prime minister has announced that it is unlikely that schools will begin to **re-open** before the **8th March**. Obviously it is disappointing that the half term date originally given is not going to happen because we are very eager to have all the children back in school as soon as we can. It is at least helpful to know what will be happening in the immediate future as parents liaise with colleagues and employers and we look at our curriculum and the aspects best suited to home learning. We have also started the twice weekly **lateral flow testing** of staff to help build the picture of community transmission. We are being careful not to let it lull us into a false sense of security though, and will be maintaining our hygiene practices, use of bubbles and other control measures to minimise the spread of infection in our school. It is not intended that this should be used in primary schools as an alternative to isolating and collapsing bubbles in the event of a positive case.

As time goes on we know that there will be even more pressure building on working parents and you have our full sympathy. We have been very fortunate at this school to have such good cooperation with our parents about taking up **places in school**. This time round the numbers have been higher than in the first lockdown, but we have really appreciated families only booking the sessions they need when the critical worker(s) are working outside the house (or inside the house on sensitive, confidential calls, for example) and there is not a second adult in the home or a support bubble/childcare bubble available to help. We also appreciate the two local universities rescinding their letter that their lecturing staff are critical workers (although I understand not all departments have passed on this change of advice.) By not taking places for the full week we have been able to offer occasional sessions to those families lower on the priority list and we want to be able to keep doing this. Marcelle Maver will be revisiting the school provision applications for after half term, so please make sure the Google form is up to date with information about the precise days needed, the nature of the role being carried out and – especially - what flexibility there is to drop certain days: <https://forms.gle/LjwG8HbwhMuCnvgqz> Unfortunately due to the pressure on places and our duty to keep numbers as low as practicable, we may need to start being more rigorous in asking for evidence of shift patterns, precise nature of COVID response role, etc.

If your child is **struggling with accessing remote learning** and is finding it hard to engage with home learning, we can often help. A word with the teacher, some strategies from Jane Hinchliffe, check-ins with Lawrence Nash, a loaned school computer and modified materials have all proved helpful to other families in the same situation. Please do get in touch with us if you are struggling! Jane's email address is jane@raisingfamilies.co.uk or phone the office to ask for a call back. Mr Nash can be reached via the Worry Box on Google Classroom, lawrencen@shireoak.leeds.sch.uk or again via the office. Class teachers can be emailed using Google Classroom, via office@shireoak.leeds.sch.uk or by sending a message on Tapestry (Reception and Year 1). When Lawrence and I analyse the weekly returns from the teachers on how well children are responding to tasks, completing work, participating in online sessions, taking phone calls, etc. we are very impressed indeed and recognise what a team effort it is at home to make sure children are able to understand what to do and organise their time to complete it all. Do not feel that your children at home are missing out as the children in school are also doing the work that is set online by their teacher! This photos shows Ian Martin talking to the children at home whilst the children in school are working independently.



As well as the fantastic support we receive from our families we are very fortunate to be so well supported by individuals, companies and organisations locally and further afield at this time. Some prefer to stay anonymous at the moment, but I can mention that the four local **Sainsbury's stores** have been supporting us with buying some new Chromebooks so that we can lend even more out, and also with food for those families that need it. I can

also mention that the **Speaking Volumes** charity is donating more books for us to use in school and in our mobile library. Thank you to everyone who supports us emotionally, practically and financially!

Well done to Year 4 who have been continuing their **djembe lessons** at home using drums, upturned buckets, boxes or anything that makes a good sound. Thank you to Avtar Manku for passing on the videos and resources to help!



I am loving the **learning** that I see shared on Tapestry, Google Classroom and by email. It is encouraging to see how children are tackling both the tasks set by the staff in school as well as how they are working on their own or with their families to pursue their interests, practise key skills and learn facts. I am also immensely pleased to hear about the time children are spending **reading** – of all the things to be doing at home right now, this is probably the most valuable. It is the hardest to photograph and share in the newsletter, but that does not make it any less important. Hopefully we will be able to make it more visible soon: World Book Day is **Thursday 4th March 2021** and we are planning to mark the day with dressing up and other fun activities. We don't want people spending money on costumes, so adapting things around the house is the name of the game. As the costumes don't have to stand up to a day's wear in school they can be even more inventive than usual!

Have a good weekend.

Jane Astrid Devane

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Kienna has made a great start to mixing colours for her African skies artwork.

Ms Virgin liked the way E had interpreted the gratitude rainbow task she set.

← Sophie has worked hard at her African sunset artwork.

Black mask and Arete

English Tuesday write a Myth

There used to be an island called Sartorini. On Sartorini there was palace in the palace there lived a girl called Arete. Arete's dad did not like Arete. He looked forward to when he could kill her away like a scab but her mum treasured her like gold and said if Arete was not there she would do nothing without her. One day Arete's dad said "Arete go and kill black mask".

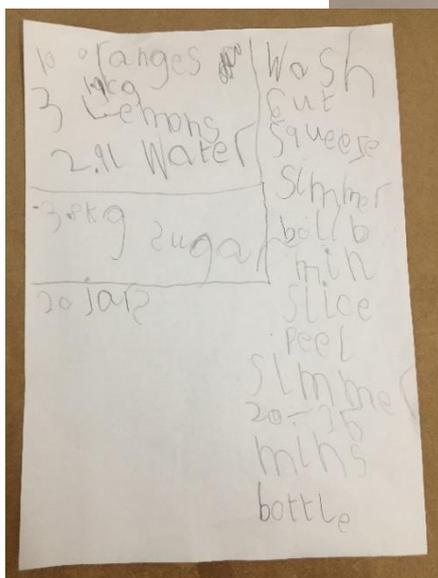
Black mask is a creature with bat legs for hair! soggy watery skin when you press his skin water and acid comes out. Black mask loves to eat cow hearts. Arete thought "I will never make it" but she was determined to do it to make her dad happy. He is never happy. Arete sailed away in a little boat to a mountain called Mount Olympus she got given a dagger to kill him, a gem which can make her bigger or smaller, a gold string, water and sand when you put the water on the sand it becomes a pouch with a shielded in it.

Arete got given the dagger from Arete! The gold string and the water and sand got given by Hermes! Arete rowed and rowed and rowed at last she got to the island where Black mask cave. Arete went into Black mask's dark cave bravely even though her head was knocking her knees fell like string she touched the gem and made her small. She saw his wet skin glisten and became normal again. Black mask hissed "I suppose you are here to kill me like lots of other stupid people tried and I suppose the super one will win again I always win so I will win this time".

As quick as a flash she poured the water on the sand then a pouch emerged she grabbed the shield that was in the pouch. Black mask made water and acid come out of him but the shield was from Hermes and did not break or melt. It sped firm as Arete plunged the dagger in to him and out of his head. Arete stuffed Black mask's head calmly into the pouch and started of home.

As she rowed she sang "I have Black mask's head right in my pouch yes I have Black mask's head in my pouch yes". When Arete got home the town people were so relieved to see her some cheered the rest just cheered and she ran as fast as her legs would go to the pats she bursted in on her mum and her dad thought that he would never see Arete again but now she was back he died in surprise.

I enjoyed reading Molly's story that was a retelling of a Greek myth.



J has been doing Marvellous Marmalade Maths at home! Looks delicious and used lots of maths skills.

24TH JANUARY - 29TH JANUARY 08:00 - 18:00 FINISHES IN 3 DAYS	
Greg the Gecko	130
More...	
Class Results	Pupil Results
Rock Names	Real Names
1	EDEN PHOENIX Poppy the Hamster 728
2	DELROY DROPDEBASS Greg the Gecko 698
3	CUB NICKS Poppy the Hamster 498
4	BEAT STARFOOT Greg the Gecko 473