



# Newsletter

## Autumn Term

### 25th September 2020

Dear Parents and Friends,

It has been another wonderful week in the Junior School and there has been much to celebrate. In this newsletter you will find a special focus on Reception classes, Sport and Music that has been happening across the year groups. You will also find a special piece from Mrs Bannon, Deputy Head Learning and Teaching, focusing on how our pupils have developed positive learning habits over the first few weeks of term. In and amongst all that is happening around us, it continues to be a privilege to see the hard work, commitment and progress of our pupils here in the Junior School.

I am also very pleased to properly introduce our Heads of School and Prefect team and share their thoughts on why they feel their positions of responsibility are important to them personally and the wider school community.

### **Covid-19 Response**

As the national response to Covid-19 evolves, I thought it prudent to share some of our procedures and preparation for possible eventualities regarding our response to Covid - 19 cases. Attached to this newsletter is a letter from Mr. Hutchinson shared with the School Community this week. I have also attached a letter from the NHS outlining further information around the test and trace procedures.

### **Additional Measures**

No doubt, you will be aware of the additional safety measures that have been implemented both across the country and also here at Royal Russell. This week, Mr. Hutchinson wrote to members of the School Community explaining the need for all Senior School colleagues and pupils to wear their masks in shared communal areas as they move around the school. Both the age of the pupils and the scale of movement around the Senior School make this a sensible precaution to take. Face masks are not advised for our pupils in the Junior School and we are able to move around the school with minimal contact between groups as our younger pupils are supervised by our teachers and teaching assistants. Further guidance on the use of facemasks in educational settings can be found [here](#).

### **If Cases are Confirmed in the Junior School**

In the event of a confirmed case of Covid-19 within the Junior School, the school is obliged to contact Public Health England and report the case. The PHE Health Protection Team will then advise us on the next steps. The PHE Health Protection Team will advise how many pupils need to be asked to self-isolate at home.

We anticipate this to include pupils who are in the same Year Group and any others that may have had close contact with that pupil. We know from other schools, who have already had confirmed cases, that the number of pupils sent home can vary. Once the Year Group affected have been sent home (or asked not to attend depending on the timing of the case being confirmed) we will then work with the PHE Health Protection Team and the family of the pupil who is a confirmed case to identify those individuals who are close contacts. Those identified as close contacts would then be asked to self-isolate for 14 days. If a pupil was initially sent home and subsequently not identified as a close contact, they would be permitted to return to School.

### **Confidentiality**

I know that parents will appreciate that we are not allowed to share the names or details of any member of the Royal Russell Community with COVID-19 and so, if a pupil is contacted about Test and Trace, we will not be able to share the name of the person who has been confirmed as having the virus.

Please can we ask you to respect this confidentiality and avoid any speculation and gossip that could lead to heightened levels of anxiety for those asked to isolate.

### **Remote Learning for Groups who are Isolating**

If a significant number of colleagues, pupils, or Year Groups are isolating, we will revert to our Remote Learning model for the duration of that isolation period.

This will differ from the model of Remote Learning that was in place at the end of the previous academic year as, in this scenario, most pupils will remain on site. When a group of pupils are moving to Remote Learning, timetables and detailed instructions will be sent via email to both parents and pupils. Remote sessions will involve 'tasks' set on Firefly, followed by live, interactive sessions with your child's teacher. All pupils in isolation will receive four, hour-long, daily sessions, three of which will have live, interactive sessions on Teams including daily Maths, English and other subjects delivered by class teachers. 'Tasks' will be set on Firefly and the 45-minute interactive sessions will take place on Microsoft Teams. The fourth daily session will be a 'task' set on Firefly from one of a pupil's specialist teachers. Specialist teachers will not offer routine live sessions as they will continue to work with other groups here on site in the Junior School. All pupils will receive feedback on completed tasks throughout the period of isolation. All staff will remain contactable through the usual means. As well as these academic sessions, pupils will be invited to join whole school assemblies and form times throughout the week.

Individual circumstances allowing, we would expect all pupils to attend these sessions and be in regular contact with their teachers.

For our Pupils in Nursery and Reception, resources will also be placed on Firefly and you will receive detailed timetables of live carpet and support sessions and also story times that will take place.

As ever, I would like to thank you for your support, patience and understanding as we work together in this continually changing situation.

My best wishes to you and your families for a wonderful, if slightly chilly, weekend.

**John Evans**  
**Junior Headmaster**

# Meet our Heads of School

I am delighted to introduce our Heads of School and Prefect team to you. It is always exciting when we are able to choose pupils who accept the responsibility of leading by example and putting others before themselves. I have asked the pupils to share a few of their initial thoughts about what their new roles mean to them and what they might look forward to over the coming months.

**John Evans**



**Ava and Tegan  
Heads of School**



I am really excited about being one of the Heads of School although I know that it is a big responsibility.

I am looking forward to helping the younger children and lots more. I will try my hardest every day and wear my tie with pride.

**Ava B (6KE)**

I am happy and proud to be chosen as one of the Heads of School!

I am excited to work with Ava and the Prefects to help lead the school with positivity. I intend to be a good role model and show the Royal Russell pupils how important it is to be caring, kind and to be respectful to, not just their friends, but to family, adults, teachers, themselves especially and others in general! I feel honoured that the teachers and staff trust me with the responsibility of this role, and I'm enthusiastic about helping others!

**Tegan B (6KE)**



# Meet our Prefects



I am over the moon to have been asked to be a prefect. I am looking forward to carrying out my tasks and hope that I do them to the best of my ability and make everyone proud. I really like my new tie!

**Lucas - 6W**



This Tuesday I was asked what it means to be a prefect. To me being a prefect is about showing positive attitudes and behaviour whilst being a good team player, offering help to any person who needs it. Finally a sense of humour is important.

**Frederick – 6KE**



It is a great honour to be able to represent the school in a sensible manner. It means a lot as I have been here since I was ten days old, as my sisters came to this school too. I want to be someone who new people can turn to and younger children as well. I will keep my eyes and ears open and if anyone has an issue, they can come to me.

**Arabella – 6T**



I feel really happy, excited and honoured to have been chosen to be a prefect. I like to think that I am someone who is always friendly, helpful, approachable and happy to help anyone who needs me, whatever their age. It is also great to be given the opportunity to not only help others but to represent the junior school as well.

**Sophie – 6KE**



I am most honoured to be a prefect at Royal Russell Junior School. I will strive to set the best example I possibly can, and support my peers and teachers always. I would particularly like to encourage kindness and help everyone get along together.

**Maria – 6W**



I am so proud and honoured to have been chosen to be a prefect, and to represent Royal Russell in this way. I am looking forward to the responsibility this role brings, and I also look forward to helping the Junior School pupils, teachers and staff in any way I can. I would like to be a good role model, as I want to help others be the best they can be.

**Nicholas – 6KE**

# Learning to Learn



As part of our inset training in August, we took the opportunity for teaching staff to reflect on the characteristics of effective learning that we would like to nurture in our pupils to ensure that they are ready to make progress. In sharing a snapshot of these characteristics, we hope that you will be able to discuss them with your children and support them at home as well.

This notion of 'learning to learn' is not new, but it remains of paramount importance as we strive to achieve consistency and safety in what was essentially a new school environment at the start of term. At Royal Russell, we seek to equip children with the skills and tools they need in order to become successful learners. In year groups and phases, we prioritised and agreed consistent areas of focus.

Year 5 and 6 aimed to promote responsibility and respect. This encompasses many areas including taking care of personal items, cleaning their iPads, being role models for our younger pupils in the way they transition around the school and showing patience and kindness for one another. This also means taking responsibility for their learning and engaging with independent tasks to the best of their ability.

Year 3 and 4 decided to establish, amongst other characteristics, P.E.A.R. at the beginning of the day: 'Prepare Everything and Read'. In this way children were encouraged to ensure they had taken off jumpers if needed, had a sip of water, sharpened their pencils and prepared themselves in order to show a readiness for learning. Growth in independence is a key factor in this phase.

For our pupils in Year 1 and 2, focus was placed on classroom routines and expectations, particularly given safety measures being established such as hand washing and sanitising. Correct posture on chairs and pencil grips are encouraged, alongside speaking in full sentences and making eye contact.

As we have now completed our third full week back, these new routines and expectations are becoming embedded as 'usual practice' and, as such, children are learning the skills that will make them effective learners. We shall continue to refocus our priorities, in phases, and develop new priorities as the year continues and the children make progress.

**Ruth Bannon**  
**Deputy Head (Learning and Teaching)**

# A week with Reception Classes

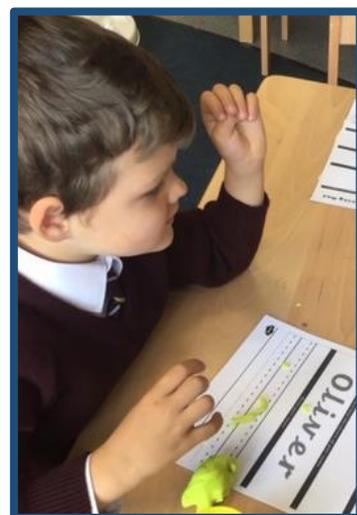


## Foxes

The children in Reception Foxes have had a jam packed week of learning. Our children have been making great progress starting their phonics lessons, and starting to practise their cursive letter formation.



To strengthen our muscles we have been using a range of activities, this game of 'snap the pom pom' was very popular.



The children looked so smart and grown up for their photos, here is a sneak peak of the Prêt-a-Portrait session.



Most of our week has had us basking in the sunny weather, so lots of opportunities for outdoor learning. We have been focusing on turn-taking when playing and sharing our resources. Thank you to our maintenance team who were really helpful, cutting and sanding some guttering for our vehicle ramps and tunnels.



# A week with Reception Classes



Squirrels

The children enjoyed dressing up and role play activities throughout the week. The babies have been very well looked after by the princesses!

We celebrated Mrs Hall's 50th birthday at Forest school with a party.



Mixing Mud Cakes!

The children enjoyed creating a birthday banquet of mud cakes and milkshakes!



During *Choosing and Learning* the boys enjoyed sharing books and talking about their favourite pages and characters!

Water play and exploration has prompted turn taking as well as developing communication skills.

# Music is the food of love...



It has been wonderful to welcome our specialist instrumental teachers back to School - and to hear the Music Department filled with the joyous sound of our talented young musicians.

I am working on my Grade 3 Musical Theatre Songs. I really love singing, as it gives me the opportunities to combine my drama skills, song characterisation and music.

I have been having singing lessons with Miss O'Hanlon for 3 years and it is one of my favourite parts of the week.

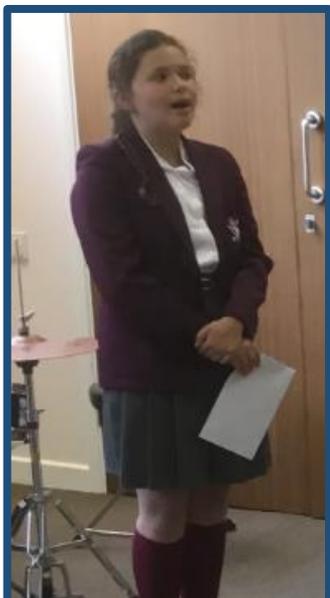
I love to make up my own piano turns as well as learning to play pieces from my music.



**Caleb - Year 2**



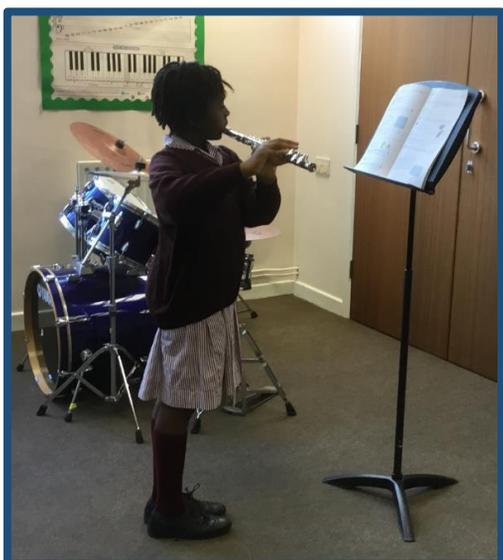
**Maisey – Year 6**



Year 2 have been extending their existing knowledge about the musical element of pitch, via musical instruments called 'boomwackers'.



...so play on!



I love playing fun pieces on my flute. The flute makes such a lovely sound!



Hannah - Year 5

Year 5 are exploring **World Music** this term. Most recently, we have been learning about musicians and traditional instruments from the continent of Africa. We have had fun, taking our practical drumming lessons in the Playground - making the most of the sunny weather whilst building up exciting layers of polyrhythm beats.



Playing the piano is great for my education. It helps me with all of my learning and helps me to multitask. It is also fun to play!



**Brendan – Year 6**

My name is Jasper and I have just started playing the guitar and I really like the sound of my instrument. Mr Sutton my guitar teacher is such fun.



**Jasper – Year 3**

Year 1 have been exploring fade and float sounds through musical instruments.



# Sports and Fitness with the PE Department



The PE Department have been working tirelessly, to increase the children's levels of fitness through a variety of enjoyable indoor and outdoor activities this week, during their HRF sessions, Games and PE lessons.



Competitive House sports in PE lessons.



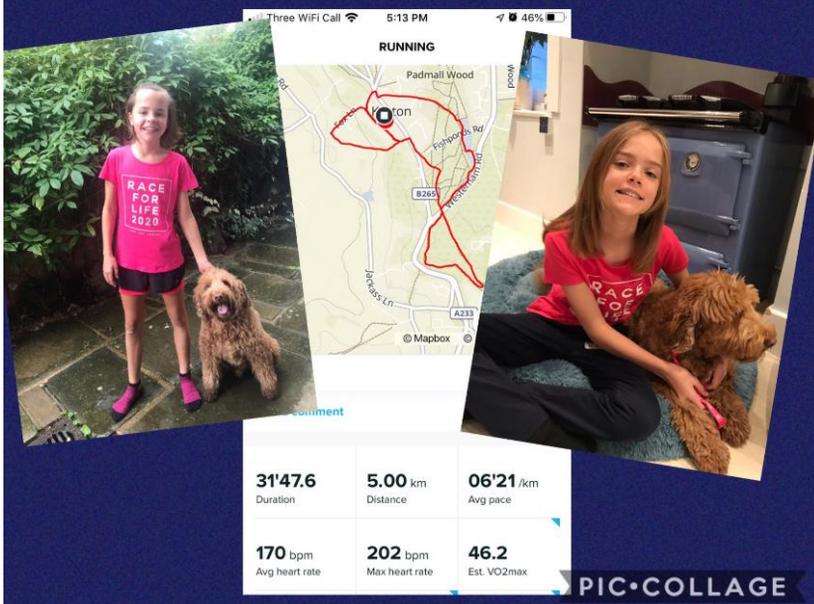
Year 6 being put through gruelling paces in their HRF session in the Senior Sports Hall



The children are so happy to be back, taking part in their favourite clubs. Trampolining Club and Running Club are two of the most sought after after-school activities and perfect for high impact exercise.



## #Very2020RaceForLife



On Wednesday, Arabella and Scarlett in Year 6 completed a 5k run for cancer research's **Race For Life**.

They were so happy to have raised £74.10 from sponsorship and by making dog biscuits.