

Newsletter

Spring Term

12th March 2021



Dear Parents and Friends,

Well done. It has been a fantastic and exciting week for us here in the Junior School and I know that it has taken a big change to routines to get back to learning on site successfully. Many of our parents have been kind enough to ask how it feels for us here to have School open again. The answer is... magical. It sounds and feels right. However, magical does not mean easy, and the wider opening of the School during the ongoing pandemic is a logistical challenge that we have enjoyed solving. The reward of a full, vibrant, energetic and friendly school makes any amount of planning worthwhile.

Although I cannot speak for all of my colleagues, as we find ourselves at the end of the week, I will admit to feeling some tiredness creep in at the edges. Where we have welcomed joyful children in the morning, we have, generally, said goodbye to tired ones in the afternoon. It is the good type of tired. The type of tired that says well done for going after your goals, living your days, working hard and reveling in the joy of being with each other. It is the sort of tired that lets us settle easily at night and wake up refreshed in the mornings.

I know that you will have had lots of conversations about the exciting experiences that your children have had this week, there are more to look through in this week's newsletter.

Being back together has been an absolute joy for us all and I am grateful to all families for playing their part in keeping the community safe. Our decisions now will help to support the children spending time in school over the rest of this year. As we get back into the routine of a busy site, please can I ask you to be especially mindful as you move around the School: use the hand sanitiser at entry points; wear a mask and to be careful when using the car park at busy times. Your support in this is much appreciated.

Staff Update

Following the birth of her son, Sacha, our wonderful Head of Art and Design, Mrs Bailey has decided to step down from her role and look for the flexibility that will allow her to balance family life with her passion for teaching. Very sadly, this means that we will be saying a fond farewell to Mrs Bailey from the Junior School at Royal Russell. Mrs Bailey has done so much to promote creativity, passion, and excitement for pupils in Art and Design and across the School in general. We will have the opportunity to say a proper goodbye and thank you at the end of the summer term, however, we wish Mrs Bailey and her family all the very best for what the future may hold.

Recruitment is underway to find the right person to lead Art and Design in the Junior School and I look forward to bringing you further details in due course.

Have a relaxing and safe weekend.

Best wishes,

John Evans
Headmaster, Junior School



It has been truly wonderful to have our Junior School pupils back on site this week. Schools are very quiet places when they are not full of children so to see our pupils in person rather than on a screen, to hear the excitement of learning emanating from our classrooms and to feel the warmth of friendships being reconnected has been truly heart-warming.

Our Royal Russell pupils are nothing short of amazing. Just a year ago, we had no idea of the disruption to our normal lives that was heading our way. Throughout all the disruption and rule changes, our pupils have risen to new challenges and adapted incredibly well to new ways of learning, new ways of connecting and new ways of being.

As adults, the impact on our daily lives can be difficult to process. For our children, they are trying not only to understand the world around them but also to make sense of the effects of the pandemic. Some of us will have adjusted to the restrictions; others will have found this more difficult. The majority of us will have experienced a wide range of emotions and may, at times, have needed support to process and understand our feelings. This is no different for our children who may find it difficult to understand and express how they are feeling. Each individual will react and respond in different ways and it is important that we acknowledge there is not a 'correct' way to respond. It is also important to recognise that these are very normal ways of responding to an unprecedented situation.

Our Junior School pupils continue to explore, at an age-appropriate level, ways in which to look after their mental health and wellbeing. This week, our weekly Wellbeing Wednesday sessions have focused on positivity, with Year 2 celebrating the wonderful things about their mummies and other family members and Year 6 exploring feelings in their hearts as they returned to school as well as focusing on things they were grateful for. Pupils in both Reception and Year 4 reflected on happy lockdown memories as well as thinking about things they are looking forward to. It is vital that we continue to support our children's mental wellbeing. There are a number of resources available in the Wellbeing Section of Firefly and the government has published this guidance - [*Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Should you be concerned about your child and their wellbeing, please do not hesitate to contact their class teacher in the first instance, who will be happy to discuss your concerns and signpost you to available support.

Nursery

Nursery Ducklings have had a wonderful and busy week.



They have been investigating facts about Ladybirds.



They have enjoyed the breaks in bad weather, by spending time outdoors.



They had their first return visit to our beautiful Library.

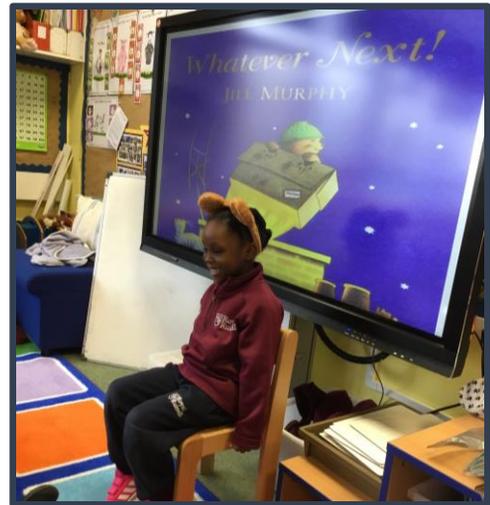
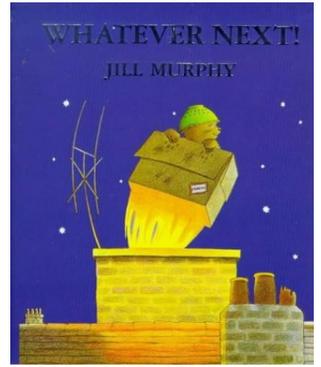


The children created some incredibly artistic collages.

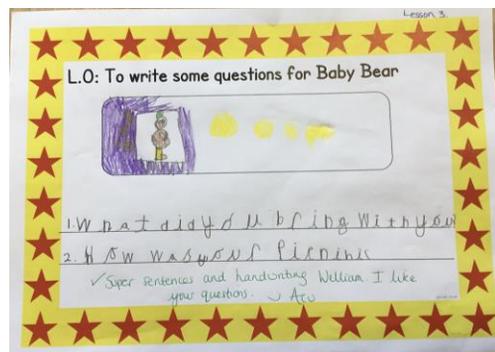


Reception

This week the Reception Squirrels and Foxes have been reading and exploring '*Whatever Next.*'



Baby Bear hot seating



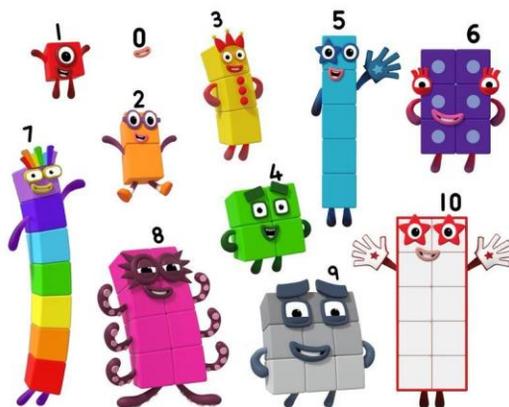
The children thought of questions for Baby Bear and then interviewed him!



They have created lists to take to space in their rockets and have been reporters investigating Baby Bear's adventures.



In Maths, the children have been exploring number bonds to 10 with practical activities in their classes.



“What We Missed Most”

Some of the children were asked what they had missed most about being at school.



Max, Year 3

I missed my friends, the playground and school food.

I missed fun activities in the playground and class.



Ashanthy, Year 3

On Teams, we sometimes had technical difficulties, whereas in school we can learn things more easily.



Taymar, Year 5

I find that I can engage with the learning more when we are in the classroom.

You can learn more when you are at school as there are more chances for you to focus.



Charlie, Year 5

It is easier to work in groups and to socialise, that's what I missed most.



Ava, Year 5

I get to see my friends and be more active than at home.



Rayaana, Year 5

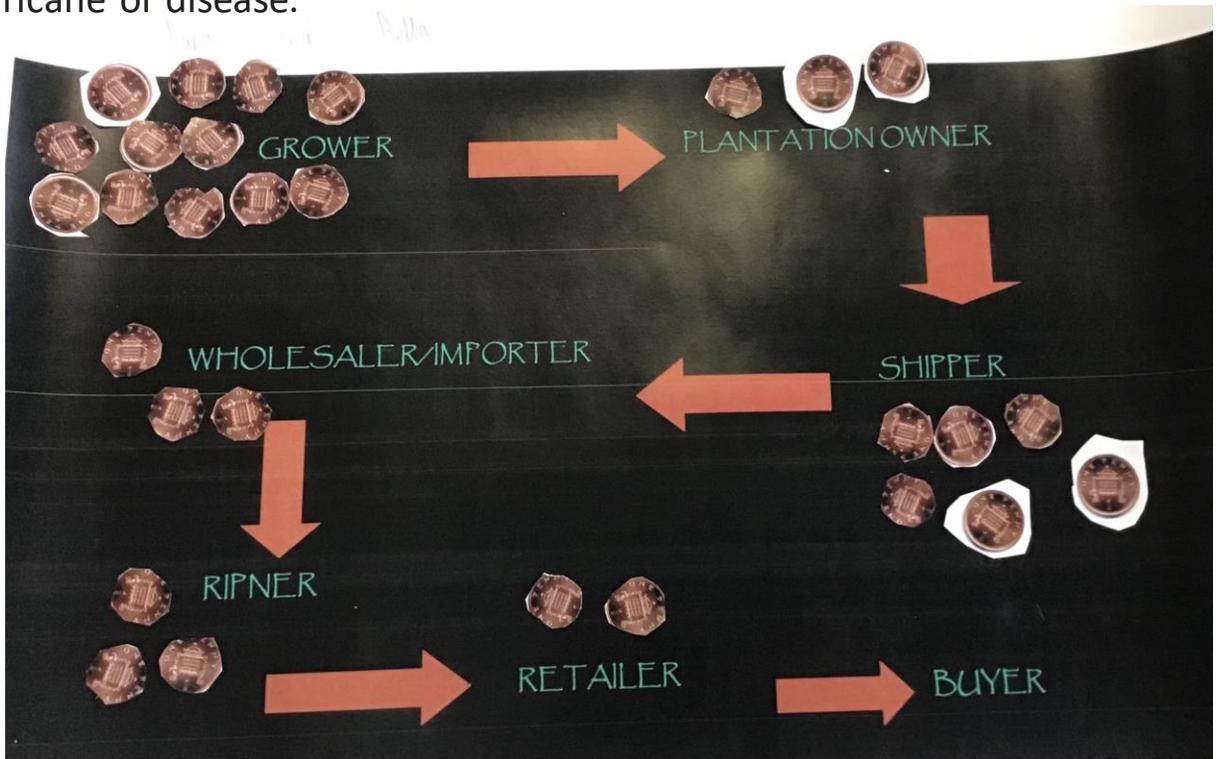
Kailan, Year 5

Everyone agreed, they missed their friends, all of the grown ups that work at school and after school clubs.



Year 4

In Year 4 this week, the children have continued to learn about Fairtrade and banana production. They have explored the individual processes that occur to get a banana from the field to our plate. They learnt about the hardships for banana farmers, when sometimes all their hard work is wiped out by a hurricane or disease.

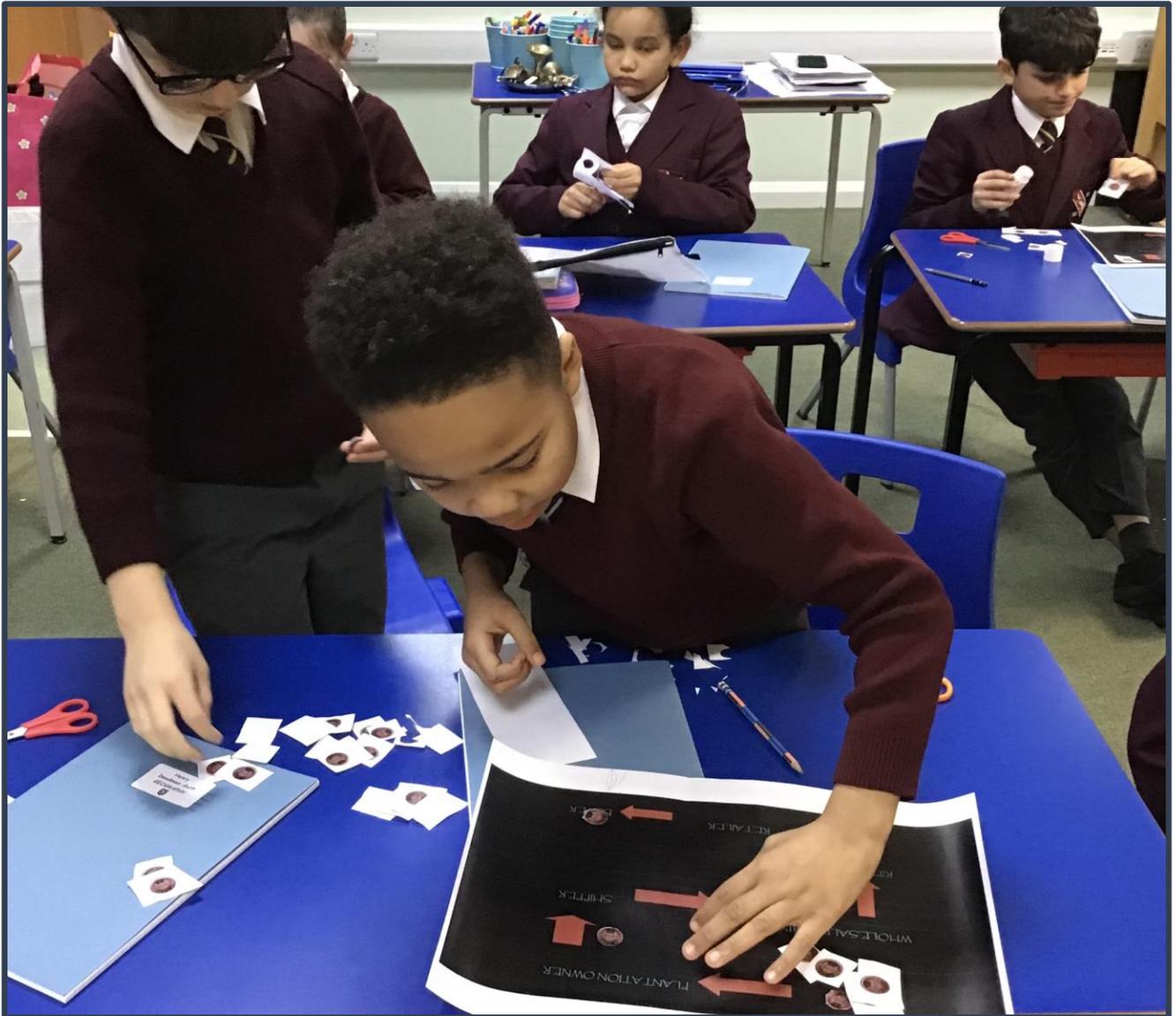


The children were tasked with thinking about the cost of one banana and sharing this out fairly between all the different people involved in the production.



There were various thoughtful discussions, with some children thinking that everybody should get the same amount because without one person the whole banana production chain would collapse.

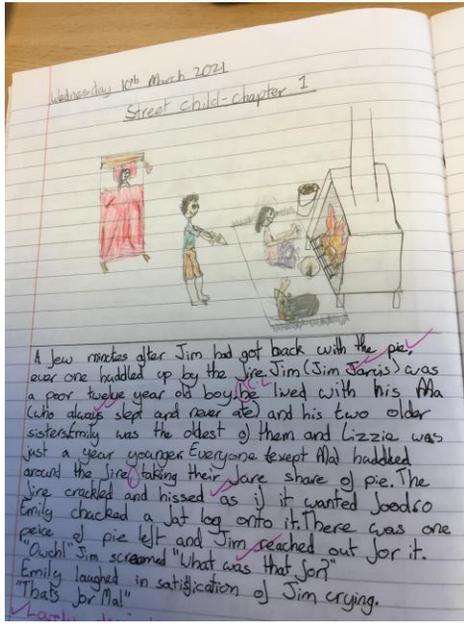
However, others felt that the banana farmer should get the most money because they spend nine months looking after and tending to the crop until it is ripe.



At the end of the lesson, it was revealed that the person in the production chain who gets the least amount of money, is in fact the banana farmer. This shocked the children and there was a sense of outrage and injustice. Next week we will be exploring more about how the fair trade corporation ensures a fair price for the farmer.

Year 6 have started reading 'Street Child'

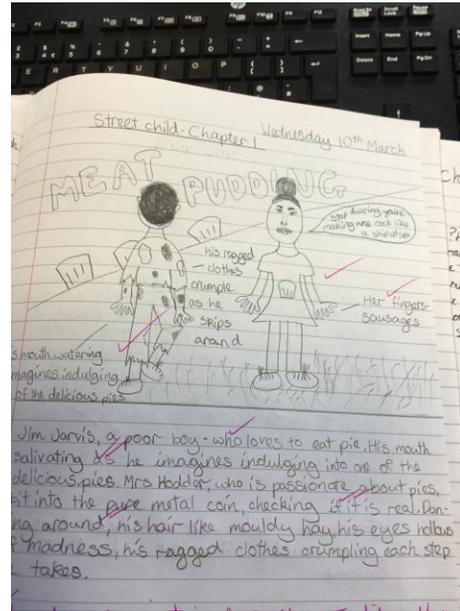
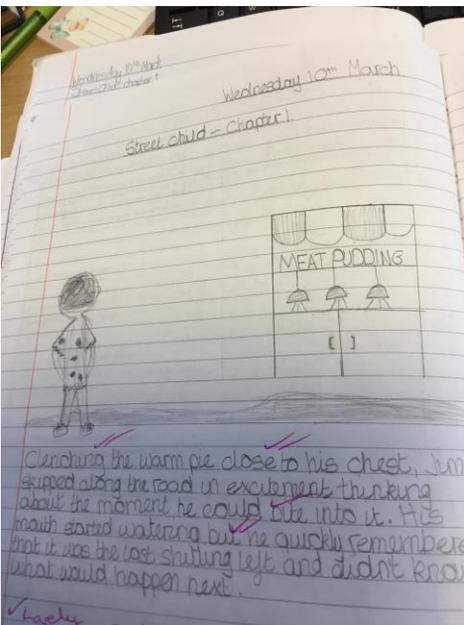
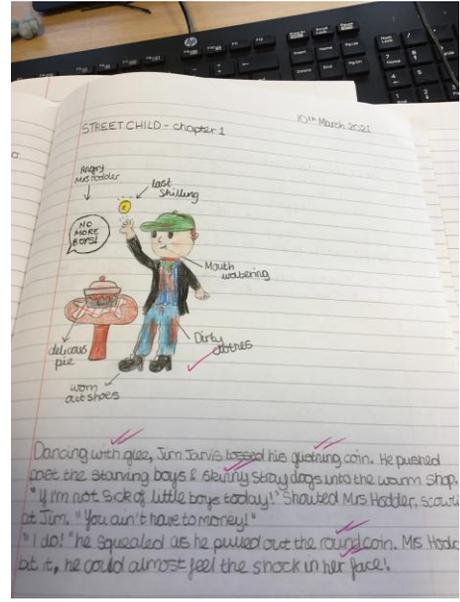
Year 6 have started looking at 'Street Child', a book by Berlie Doherty. We have met 'Jim Jarvis' and his family and the children created a sketch from the first scene and then described this.



Bea



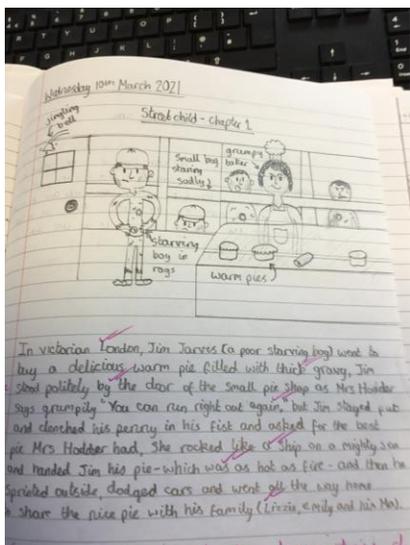
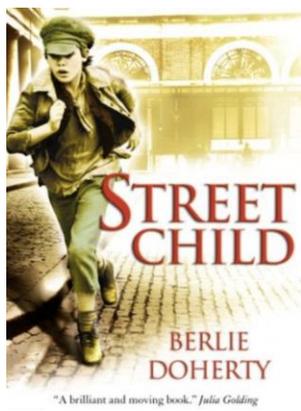
Avni



Arabella



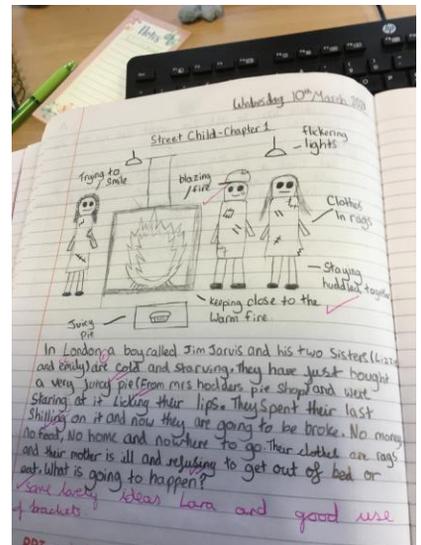
Jade



Sophie



Lara

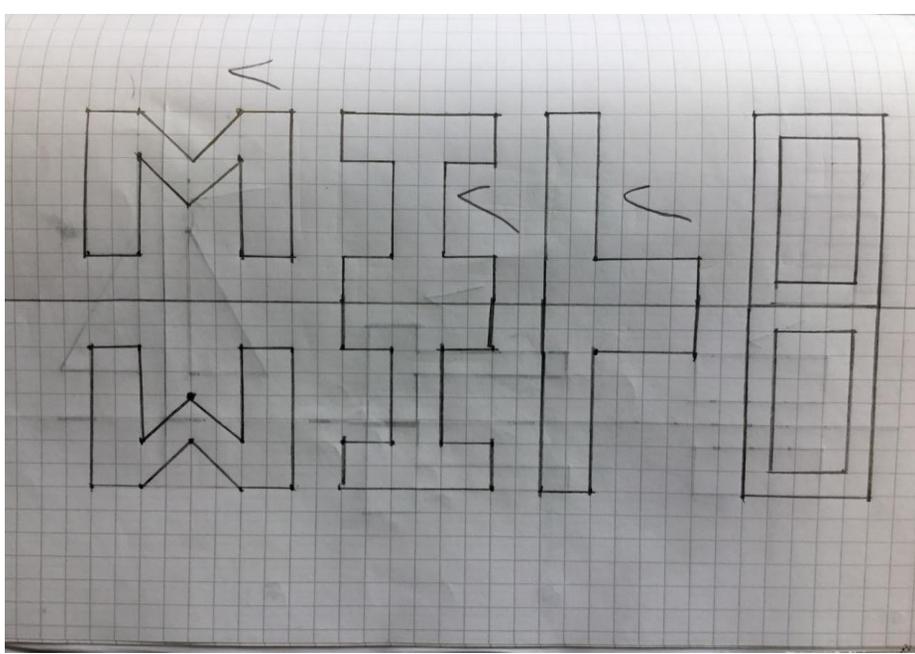


The children had great fun acting out scenes from 'Street Child'.

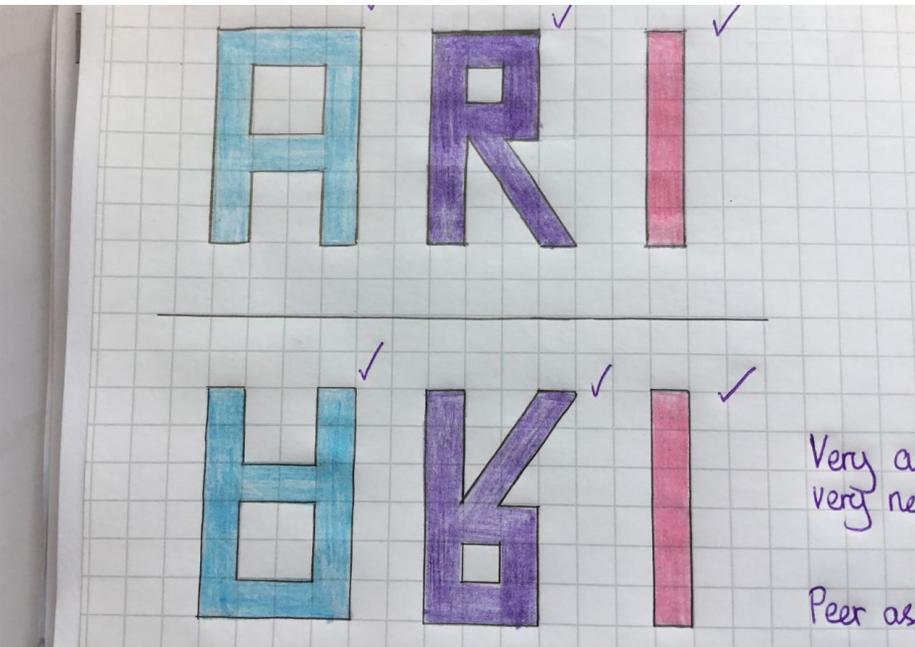


Melissa

In Maths this week, Year 6 have been reflecting their names, as well as learning about other Mathematical transformations.



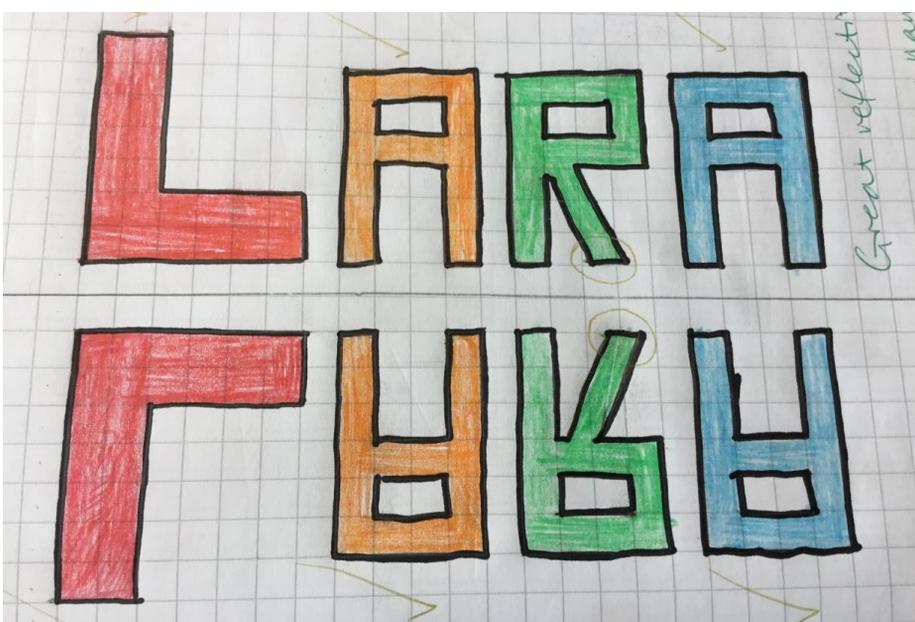
Milo



Arabella



Maisie



Lara

We're Back and Being Active



The PE Department set a Lockdown House Steps Challenge, to see which House could travel the furthest. The winners of the Challenge were



YORK who travelled 31 Miles.

In 2nd place, **Durham** travelled 27 miles, 3rd place **Exeter** with 26 miles and **Canterbury** came in fourth with 12 miles. Well done to York.

All pupils from Nursery up to Year 6 were encouraged to get involved and earned 'steps' for their House. There were lots of ways to earn 'steps', for example by completing 20 star jumps or 30 hops, each star jump or hop completed counts as 1 'step'.

The pupils and staff have thoroughly enjoyed being able to take part in sport this week. They have been full of energy, jumping into our new activities and it has been delightful to have them back on the sports pitches.



The children used this work out chart during Book Week to spell out their favourite characters or a part of their Book. Perhaps you could get active this weekend using the chart to spell out 'Mother's Day', or another word or name of your choice?

A	20 Star Jumps	J	15 Kangaroo Jumps	S	20 Side to side jumps
B	20 Hops on the right leg	K	10 heel raises	T	Dance/Go crazy for 20 seconds
C	20 Running on the spot	L	Balance on 1 leg for 30 seconds	U	5 tuck jumps
D	20 Jumps	M	20 hops on the left leg	V	10 squats
E	20 Frog Jumps	N	5 Spins	W	15 throws and catches with 1 hand
F	Complete an activity of your choice	O	20 forwards and backwards jumps	X	20 Spotty Dogs
G	Walk on your tip toes for 30 seconds	P	20 High knees	Y	20 heel flicks
H	20 Climbing a ladder	Q	Hold a balance for 30 seconds	Z	10 Big stretch jumps
I	25 throws and catches	R	20 Skips		