



Parents' Update: Friday 29th January

Dear Parents,

Pope Francis's prayer request for January asks us to consider our Human Fraternity:

May the Lord give us the grace to live in full fellowship with our brothers and sisters of other religions, praying for one another, open to all.

In last week's newsletter, the weekend's snow was mentioned. Hopefully, you managed to all get outside with your children and really enjoyed even a small change and small difference to the weekend. As a family, we certainly made the most of a few hours in the cold, relishing watching the countryside changing from its greens and browns, to its whites and blues. Just making a slight change to routines seemed to give us all a lift amongst the darkness of January, and amongst the darkness of the pandemic.



In our staff briefing this week, we remembered that it was Holocaust Memorial Day on Wednesday. We also looked at the poem that Amanda Gorman wrote and presented at the inauguration of Joe Biden last week. As you can see, I have quoted just a few lines of the poem, and it is certainly an inspiring read for us all. Here in school, we reflected that the poem is not simply about the change of regime in the USA, but about looking forward to a brighter future - and facing that future with courage and with the confidence to change the world. Perhaps sharing sections with your children might help them to reflect upon what could be achieved once we are through these challenging times.

Extracts from "The Hill we Climb"

*When day comes we ask ourselves,
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?*

*And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us.
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside.*

*When day comes we step out of the shade,
aflame and unafraid,
the new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it.*

Hot Chocolate Friday

This week's winners are announced in this [video](#). Well done to you all – fanfare included!



Wednesday Word

Please find the Wednesday Word support for this Sunday's Gospel reading. [Click here.](#)

School Website

We have completed the reconstruction of the [school's website](#), with the aim of creating a more user-friendly space to locate information. In doing so, we intend for this to become a more unified place for communications. Please visit the site and navigate your way through some of the links. Any feedback on the site would be welcome, via the office@sspp.merton.sch.uk email.

RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

We are taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch. Click on the link to find out more information [RSPB bird watch](#)
Share a photo of your weekend stories of bird spotting to office@sspp.merton.sch.uk

Donation of mobile phones

This week we had a delivery from Siobhan McDonough, our local MP. She continues to work hard for the local schools and has been able to supply a small number of devices for our school. We have given these out now to those in need. If you are still having problems with devices, please let us know and we will do our best to provide you with something to make remote learning more accessible.

Remote learning "catch-up"

At the end of this coming week, we have organised for the remote learning to be reduced somewhat, in order to enable children to catch up with any learning that might be piling up. We also recognise that there is a key issue around children's well-being at this time, and so on the Friday, we are encouraging all families to have a screen free day. Activities will be sent out to you. Children attending school will also benefit from this catch-up and a range of different activities at the end of the week.



Safer Internet Day



With many children now spending extra time on the internet, it seems that this year, [Safer Internet Day](#) is more relevant than ever.

News about how we are managing children's learning in safer internet use, plus information for parents, is coming next week

Half Term Week and Beyond

This week, you will have heard that the government has announced that the schools will be closed for half term, even for children of key workers and the vulnerable. I do hope that this half term closure does not increase the pressure upon any of you. As a reminder, the [school is closed on 22nd February too](#), for a planned Inset day.

We also learned that schools will remain closed to all but key workers and vulnerable children, until eighth March at the earliest. This has given us a marker point for which to work to and we will be thinking how best to make improvements to our remote learning strategy in order to ensure best learning for the children. Your feedback from the parent questionnaire is also helping to shape this future strategy.



Support for Learning – Children and Parents

Merton College

This term we are delivering all our courses remotely and here is the link to our new website <https://stcg.ac.uk/merton-college/adult-education>. We have some new and free online courses and also some new distance learning courses.

Maths Explorers

Website www.roots2grow.org

Facebook [@Maths Explorers](https://www.facebook.com/MathsExplorers)

- Maths Explorers offer free resources for families to engage in relaxed maths chat and investigations with their children at home; past content can be found here <https://momentofmaths.roots2grow.org/category/weekly-challenge/>
- The sign on for families is at bottom of their website www.roots2grow.org
- There are EMC/Clarion resident Clubs (x2 groups, one Yr3-5 another Yr6-9)

Here is a video about this term's content - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MvObiF2V7aI> (tessellation/shapes)

Maths Explorers
CLARION RESIDENTS
emic
Online Maths Club
Explore **BIG MATHS IDEAS**
Train to think like a mathematician!
Free to attend Wednesdays 4.15pm (Years 3-5)
5.30pm (Years 6-9)
Priority for Clarion Housing residents (east Merton, Bromley & Croydon) & all other east Merton residents*
Numbers Patterns Networks
Contact the charity Ethnic Minority Centre (EMC) for more details at ethnicminority@btconnect.com
Sabitri Ray (EMC) 07944 273 718
*Wi-Fi & Laptop/ Notebook needed
IT support is available to help you access this service

Merton Home Tutoring Service
FREE COMPUTER CLASS FOR BEGINNERS
When: Thursday mornings, 10.00 – 12.00
Where: Online
Dates: Starting 28th January 2021 (for 6 weeks)
DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THIS CLASS? CONTACT:
LINDA ULRICH: 07598 824 809 / LINDAULRICH@MHITS.ORG.UK
This is a 6-week course for learning basic computing skills. If you understand beginner English but want help with emails, using Zoom and online security, this is the course for you.
CITY OF LONDON
Global Women
Community

Available Food Support

Thanks to one of our mums here at the school, we have learned that the Power Centre Church, in the centre of Mitcham (where McDonald's used to be) is offering food to local people and families every Thursday between 10.00 - 2.00. Of course, donations there are always welcome too. Follow [this link](#) for contact.

With blessings for a safe and relaxing weekend,

David Hennessey
Headteacher