

Lucton News

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Jan 29th 2021
Issue 18



From the Heads



We were delighted to hear that the government has begun to put plans together for the re-opening of schools in England.

If it is to be March 8th, then it can't come fast enough, even if the return of pupils is staged! In the meantime, well done to all the students and staff for the ongoing effective remote teaching and learning. We are grateful, too, that so many parents are able to support their children at home, but we do need gently and respectfully to remind all concerned that the work (especially in Years 11 and 13) must be the pupils'

own and that even in other years, pupils should really be allowed to engage as they would in school, even if means making mistakes which can be learned from.

On a completely different note, and with more difficult weather forecast for the weekend, please remember that with Boarders and House Staff permanently on site, the School really only ever closes if absolutely necessary. Unless you hear from us otherwise, then, the School will be open. Having said this, safety is the priority and we certainly do not

expect anyone to take risks.

Bus drivers will use their knowledge and experience of their individual routes and will be in contact with parents should they foresee problems. Equally, parents who bring their children into school should use their best judgement about whether it is safe to do so. If the snow does fall this weekend, we hope that everyone is able to enjoy it safely.

Heads of Lucton
John Goode & Elmien Niblett

Prep School



Lots to talk about this week - well, snow - but before that, let's glance back to last Friday's Assembly.

The theme was Happiness and what is happiness? Now, this has been discussed since humans became conscious. There are quotations online that range from Goldie Hawn to Mahatma Gandhi, but for us, happiness is a feeling that comes over you when you know life is good and you can't help but smile.

We thought about whether success, wealth, safety or being lucky meant that you were happy. And then we looked at some smiling children - and children smile a lot. Groups of friends show that friendship and sharing bring happiness. These will certainly help us be happy.

We continued the theme on Monday and added to it through the story of the Shirt of Happiness. A grumpy king was given the Shirt of Happiness and was

then always happy when he put it on. However, he then discovered that it was his own shirt. He decided that every shirt would be a Shirt of Happiness. So, we can decide to try and be happy as well.

Certainly, we were all happy on Monday morning; with blue skies and snow producing a lot of smiling faces, as you can imagine. It was great fun but, sadly, we watched the snow disappear until it is only a lovely memory. I can assure you that there was a lot of

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descriptive writing and poetry going on. Teacher's love to use the weather as content for lessons. What with the floods last week and snow this week, weather will have had quite an input into some lessons!

I watched Year 4 pouring water off the fire escape this week. It turned out to be a lesson on solids, liquids and gases. Year 3 have been using Newton metres to measure forces. Year 5 have been getting to grips with weather and what makes rain (last week was great!). Year 2 have been making chains of paper dolls. I did wonder why they have kept on appearing around the school, only to find out that

they are writing an extended story. Year 1 have been going all Victoriana; looking at some artefacts - a slate and chalk could almost be an iPad! I wonder what the Victorians would make of these remote lessons? Reception Class went on a fairy hunt. They couldn't find any so made some fairy homes instead.

Perhaps happiness is using our imagination? Learning can sometimes make us happy as well. I suspect throwing water off the fire escape made a few Year 4s happy!

Mr Bicker-Caarten, Head of Prep School



LAMDA

Another year of superb LAMDA results in the Prep School!

I have finally had a chance to see everyone who took a LAMDA exam back in November, to give them their certificates, go through their comment sheets and discuss their wonderful marks.

All of the children passed the exams with flying colours and an incredibly high percentage achieved Distinction.

Speech and Drama offers the children a superb foundation in so many life skills, from reading exam papers correctly to presenting a speech in public, and ensuring that these are instilled from such a young

age is essential.

I am so thrilled to be able to continue to teach many of the Prep School lessons at school and it's great to see that the children at home are really getting to grips with working remotely - all fantastic learning opportunities; this week we had 'Pet Show and Tell', which was somewhat lively!

Sadly, the Hereford Performing Arts Festival is not going ahead this year, but we are working on a date in March for the children who have lessons to perform in front of each other and celebrate their superb work. Each child will prepare a poem and some are

even having a go at acting and prose recitals. More on this to follow!

Keep up the excellent work and I look forward to hearing more of the children's final choices.

Mrs Rogers



Sixth Form

One of the great privileges of teaching Sixth Formers is seeing how they develop into independent, insightful thinkers over the two years we have them here.

It has been particularly fascinating for me at this stage of my life as, having young children, I can see how initial curiosity grows and develops; how the things that interest us as prep schoolers grow and take on new form in Sixth Form.

This has been very apparent, lately, as a number of our Sixth Formers have been

working on their Extended Project Qualifications, which give them a chance to pursue and engage with topics that are of real personal interest, outside the scope of their usual courses. It shows how an engaging topic, when you are seven or eight, can stay with you even when you turn seventeen or eighteen!

We continued our assemblies this week, on the theme of Adaptability, with the emphasis on trying to make the most out of the present situation. Specifically, we looked at ants and how adaptable they are - Google the Honey pot ant and

Colobopsis Saundersi to see what we mean! Overall though, we are all now working our way through content and feel that when the government make their final announcement on how students in Year 13 are to be assessed, we will be as prepared as possible for whichever outcome is decided upon. This we will obviously communicate to parents and staff just as soon as we know!

Michael Wolstenholme, Head of Sixth Form

Boarding News

Some might say that it's no fun in the boarding house at the moment, but last weekend we certainly all had "snow fun"!

The boarders woke on Saturday to a thick covering of snow, and most couldn't wait to get out and enjoy it. The boarders from School Cottage had built a whole community of snowmen before demolishing a hearty brunch to warm up those cold fingers. It certainly whetted the appetite!

Later on, Croft House got involved too. Tim and Howard made a very impressive snowball, almost as big as

them, and there were snowball fights galore! It was lovely to get out in the fresh air after a week of online learning and to see everyone, rosy cheeked, tired but happy at the end of the day. Sunday was a more relaxed affair, with a film in the cinema room and a takeaway in the evening. With more snow forecast for this weekend, it seems as though more outdoor fun will be had, and we can't wait!

Mrs Webb-Rogers, Head of Boarding



Equestrian

Tips For Cold Weather

With cold and snowy weather, we all need to be aware of what we can do to help our ponies.

Firstly, we need to be careful not to over-rug them; check them regularly by feeling their ears and put a hand under the rug. Also, check (especially with lightweights) that they are dry under their rugs. If your native has a good coat it doesn't necessarily need a rug. My black mare, Gypsy, who is warm blood x TB is really warm and toasty without a rug, and the chestnut mare TB x Arab x riding pony has amazed me by being really warm with just a lightweight rug on. She is prone to rain scald if I don't put something on her, especially when we seem to get continuous rain!

Rugs are just a way of making it easier for us to keep them clean to ride, really - Gypsy is doing light ridden work quite happily, but you must make sure the areas where the tack touches the horse are clean, to avoid girth galls or saddle sores. You must also move the rugs regularly to check what condition your pony is in and ensure that the rug isn't rubbing.

Winter is the time when the

native ponies need to lose some of their condition before the spring and summer, when it will go back on! Laminitis can also be a real problem at this time of year because the frost can lead to a sugar rush; if your pony is susceptible, they can have an attack. If you need to feed your pony because there isn't any grass make sure you put out at least one extra pile of hay to the number of ponies in the field; however, the natives will dig for the grass which is protected below the snow. Hay-nets or racks are a good idea to reduce waste.

Frozen water can be a problem. Make sure you check

it at least twice a day and break the ice, if necessary. Putting a ball in the water can stop the ice forming if it's not too cold. Automatic troughs need to be really well insulated to keep the pipes thawed, or you may need to fill them by hand during a cold snap.

You can ride a sensible pony in the snow, as long as it is deep enough for their feet not to touch the ice below. Put goose grease or oil in the foot which will help reduce 'balling' of the foot. However, if in any doubt don't ride - maybe lead your pony to give it some exercise or turn them out so long as, again, they aren't going to gallop about and maybe slip



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and injure themselves!

A warning to all of our pony owners.

Understandably, with lockdown, more people are encouraged to go for walks but not everyone knows or respects the Countryside Code.

Horse and pony owners have been warned to stay vigilant, as there has been a rise in cases of horses and ponies choking or being accidentally poisoned by walkers feeding titbits. Although well-meaning, many people do not understand the dangers

of feeding the wrong thing to horses and ponies; this can cause serious problems for our four-legged friends. Even if you are off the beaten track, we strongly recommend that you check on your animals a few times a day and, if you have a footpath going through or near where your pony is kept, it might be advisable to put up 'Please do not feed' signs.

Miss Coates, Equestrian Manager



House Merit Totals

Snow Closures

Those of you who keep one eye on the weather will have noticed that Herefordshire is forecast snow again this weekend!

Please note that, depending on the severity, we may be forced to close the School on Monday.

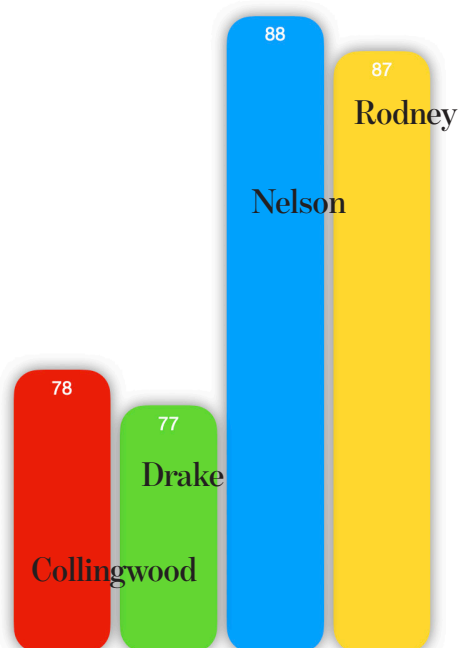
Please check our website and social media on Monday morning for any announcements (see example right). If we do make the decision to close we will also contact parents via email and text.

Stay safe and enjoy the snow while it lasts!



**SNOW
CLOSURE!**

**LUCTON SCHOOL IS
CLOSED TODAY DUE TO
SNOW. UNLESS
OTHERWISE STATED,
WE WILL OPEN AGAIN
TOMORROW.**



*Numbers accurate 29th January 2021