

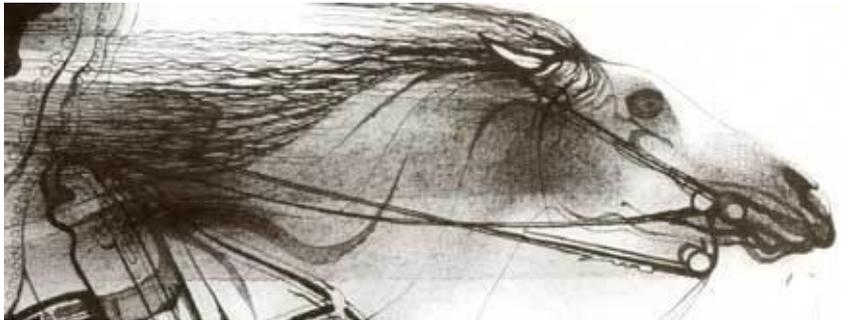


Update Friday 22nd January 2021  
Head Teacher Mrs Lynne Osborne

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, another week of remote learning is over and it's time for weekend relaxation. Hopefully most of you will be able to make the most of the local area and look for signs of spring. As I am currently working from home, I can now really appreciate the frustrations of poor broadband and home working. However, what's really cheered me up is seeing lots of the St Mary's children at Google Meets and 3 O' Clock Stop! (I am told that a very special mention needs to be made of Miss Gray who embraced my instruction to just 'be a bit crazy' at today's Celebration Assembly!)

This week's 'reasons to be cheerful', some of Year 5's fantastic 'Highwayman' writing.



### THE HIGHWAYMAN

It was the middle of a stormy night. As the eerie moon peeked through the angry clouds, bursts of moonlight beamed to the ground.

The bleak moor stretched for hundreds of miles. Fog as thick as mud fell to the ground and the remote landscape was intense. The lonely road carved through the eerie moor.

The wind thundered through the damp, gnarly trees making their branches twist and turn. As they burst about with horror the atmosphere was tempestuous.

Excellent imagery Marley
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### The Highwayman

It was Pitch Black the sky was dark as coal. As the clouds slowly floated across the midnight Sky, the ghostly moon peeked through them. Below the eerie sky there was a vast expanse of land, which was covered in a bleak thick mist. There was one lone winding road that seemed to never end.

Through the bleak mist, dark silhouettes of trees could just be seen, and the gnarled branches swayed in the powerful winds.

There was nobody to be seen, except one eager smartly dressed man, who galloped on his powerful horse along the winding road. The outlaw's heart thumped in his chest with urgency to arrive at his destination.

Fabulous use of figurative language Oliver.

### **Great big thank yous :**

Thank you to 'Woods' of Berkhamsted who very kindly donated six plants for Year 4's science experiments.

Thank you also to your School Association who have kindly agreed to fund not only the fabulous Sir Linkalot but also outdoor musical equipment for the EYFS area.

### **Wow! What an achievement :**

Another fantastic turnout at today's celebration Assembly. Do please keep sending in your news about great home learning or going the extra mile!

Next week is week 2 of **3 O'clock Stop!** on Google Classrooms. (There's a separate classroom and all your children should have been invited.)

<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Miss Forsyth's story time – ages 7-11 Chapter 2 of 'One dog and his boy.' By Eva Ibbotson
<b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Miss Gray Bible Story – whole school
<b>Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Mrs Osborne famous faces talk This week Marie Curie
<b>Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Mrs Bishop story time – suitable for 3-7 year olds
<b>Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January</b>	Mrs Osborne story time – Children's choice whole school <b>Children which book should I choose? Drop your teachers a line to let me know.</b>

### **Testing for staff :**



Some of you may be aware that, from next week, all Primary School staff are being offered lateral flow testing in an attempt to reduce the transmission of Covid-19. These tests have 80% efficacy at detecting people who are Covid-19 carriers but are asymptomatic. All staff who work at St Mary's will be offered these tests (they're entirely voluntary) and we will begin testing next week (28/1).

As the tests will be completed in the morning (Mondays and Thursdays) there is a possibility that we may need to close critical worker bubbles at short notice should a staff member working with their children's bubble test positive. While we are hopeful that this will not happen, it is important that nursery parents and critical workers whose children are being sent into school are aware of this possibility. However, I am sure that every one of you is with me when I say, we must work together to reduce the transmission of this horrible disease and get all children back into school.

### **Keeping your children happy :**

It's fair to say that a few of us have struggled this week. Please do remember that your family's health and well-being is more important than any maths or English task. We love seeing your children on our Google Meets and, as a staff, this is the most important part of the school day. Just do as much or as little as your child feels able. Remember, we are the educators and can help your child get back-on-track with their academic learning. However, you are the parents and carers and supporting your child/ren's emotional well-being is the most important job you can do.

For those of you who haven't come across her, and those who have, I highly recommend Dr Kathy Weston's Zoom talk on 'The Power of Positive Parenting' which takes place next Thursday evening. Booking details are on the school website.

## Remote learning update



Thank you to those of you who have made suggestions for how we can continue to develop our remote learning provision. A Year 4 mum asked if teachers could provide a brief outline at the beginning of the week of what the week's learning would entail. This is something teachers will try to provide from next week.

Thanks also to the Year 6 mum who suggested getting the older children to 'lead their learning' and pose questions. This is something that Mrs Taylor will trial next week too.

I am mindful of sending out lots of different Home Learning suggestions so am trying to add these to the website. Do have a look at the 'Lockdown Learning' page on the website (Pupils) where we will post a range of activities and ideas.

### A final note:

If your child only does one piece of remote learning every day make it reading a book - there's no better learning to be had!

