

## Ickford News

Having remained safe and secure for so long, it was disappointing to get caught by Covid so close to the end of the term and at such an important and busy time of year. However, my first thoughts were with the family who tested positive and I am pleased to report that they have not suffered more than some cold symptoms and are all safe and well. I did have some hope that the Government were about to change the policy on isolation that has had such a detrimental impact on children's learning but it became clear by Wednesday evening that this would not happen and we are left with lots of healthy children at home.

I am proud of the staff and the speed with which we were able to notify parents and begin home schooling. There is some tweaking to do and today all of the children who are at home should have received more resources some literally by 'Snail Mail Services' as Mrs Snell (Children's Mrs Snail) has been driving around delivering.

I have asked Miss Vukomanovic and Miss Allen to take the opportunity to try out a more 'virtual' approach to the home schooling during the isolation period, not because I think it is the best way but in order to address some of the criticism I have received for the way in which we conducted home schooling during the lock down periods. In the space of just 2 days, it is very clear that the ZOOM classroom may seem like fun but it is certainly not going to be effective. We have already received several communications from parents who do not have good internet connections or enough devices to accommodate more than one child. Furthermore, those working from home are also compromised and I can empathise with their frustration. I sincerely believe that, had I bowed to pressure from a vocal minority during lockdown, we would be in a similar

position to other schools who have gaps in learning and progress that may prove insurmountable. You can be assured that Miss Vukomanovic and Miss Allen will be doing there very best to provide learning activities for the children throughout this period and using 'Virtual' when they feel is best.

Mme Basnett, Mr Shackleton and I spent a really great day at Longbridge Activity Centre last Monday with the children in Year 6. Activities included Kayaking, numerous team building activities, climbing and crate stacking and, in true Ickford style, everyone got thoroughly involved and pushed themselves. It is amazing how the opportunity to soak your friends with a large paddle can bring the 'Jack Sparrow' out of even the quietest and most retiring of children!



These children will have had their final parent evening this week and it has been a chance, I have no doubt, for Mme Basnett to extoll their virtues and share success with parents. Hopefully, everyone has managed to speak to a class teacher this week either in person or via the telephone and discussed progress since Easter when some appropriate targets were set. The engagement of the parents is never guaranteed but it is crucial in order for every child to be in the position that we find the current Year 6 children. That is, well prepared for Secondary School having all made significant progress from their own individual starting points and in possession of

strong values and a positive attitude to learning.

Amongst the several major sporting events taking place at the moment, the European Football Championship, Wimbledon Tennis, the British Lions Tour to South Africa, the Tour de France is also underway. I am popping down to Ladbrokes to see what odds they will give me for predicting a future winner, possibly around 2040.

Edward Nicholls, currently in Year 1 has throughout his time at Ickford, shared with me his stories of cycling with his parents. During lockdowns, as a child of Key Worker parents, he sometimes came and went to school on his bike and this year he has started competing against older children. I learned yesterday that he had won his final race meeting of the season, winning 3 out of 4 races in the under 8 yrs. category and the under 8 Championship overall. One to watch out for in the future!



I can also report that, past pupil, Amelia Glead who came second in the National Schools Rowing Championship recently, won in the Senior Cup at the Marlow Regatta and in the GB Senior Boat Rowing Championships. We wish Amelia every success [in](#) her future.



(Please check the website for more Longbridge pictures)



Sport, it appears, can be an area of contention and in the Parent Survey, someone questioned the inclusivity and opportunity. I am tempted to would like to point people in the direction of other state funded Primary schools to see what they offer because all of our children receive over and above statutory curriculum time for PE lessons as well as the luxury of ample outdoor space in which to play in. We run a number of co-curricular clubs at a very reasonable cost and we make every attempt to ensure that the children have access to plenty of suitable

equipment in good condition. Two of my previous schools had more children with a third of the hall space, no field or grass and tiny playgrounds one of which was on the roof. I can assure you Ickford is very lucky.

I think that dissatisfaction with our offer stems from the competitive sport side and because not every child will get the opportunity to represent the school during their time here. However, this may not be a problem in the future as the powers at be combined with Covid have all but destroyed any decent competition for Primary children but, where and when there is, I would like to think that Ickford will still be involved.

I believe that many parents want a school that offers opportunity for sport and games and like the fact that we compete. It is an unavoidable fact of life that, some children are naturally more adept at sport than others and we are limited financially and by time as to the amount of different sports we can provide. I try to give as many children as possible the chance to compete hence house competitions, sports day etc, but against other schools we compete to get the best result we can because ultimately that is what competition is about and that is what the children want to do. There will always be those who shine and some may also shine in other areas but some do not. If we kept records of the number of children who have represented the school, I think there would be a great many more than people imagine.

Personally, I am happy that we do a great deal in encouraging the children to be active and I celebrate the fact that almost every morning, we have approximately 50 children from every year group playing a variety of sports, learning to socialise and happy to support each other, that is inclusive and that is an achievement in itself.

I look forward to following the paths of our elite athletes just as much as I look forward to

hearing of the success of the academics, the artists, the musicians, the designers, the engineers, the farmers, the list is endless.

In fact, one of my highlights from the past few days was to see Matthew Shackleton, the eldest son of Mrs and Mrs Shackleton who popped in to say hello on his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. I have followed Matthew's pathway and, in spite of his brilliance as a musician and his talent as a writer, it has not always been straightforward and at times, it is fair to say, he has found it challenging. Nevertheless, at 18 he is kind, fun, caring, resilient, full of personality and particularly aware of and empathetic towards others. I am very proud of him and I know that every teacher who worked with him here is. I now look forward to him stepping up to the bar and getting his wallet out to buy his old Headteacher a beer!

Have a good weekend.

Mr Ronane

### **Sports Day**

As Sports Day has been moved to ensure our KS1 children can take part, I recognise that some may not be able to transport children as before. If your plans have now changed, please get in touch with the office as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements to get everyone there.

### **PE kits**

Please remember that all children in Key Stage 2 must come to school in PE kit on Monday July 5<sup>th</sup> and school uniform on Wednesday July 7<sup>th</sup> as the PE day has been changed.

# Ickford News from the office



## This Week's Celebration Assembly

### Hall of Fame:

#### Music Award:

Amelia Hargreaves

Daisy Coke

Molly Sayer

#### PE Award:

Emily Coxon

Timothy Issitt

Thomas Betteley

Zak Flood

Frank Wilkinson

Emily-Jay Friday

Stanley Johnson

Samuel Pierpoint

Sophie Winspear

Brayden O'Malley

Chloe Betteley

Lucas Jayasekara

Jake Fletton

Zara Luckhurst

Alexander Snell

#### French Award:

Bruce Dingle

Georgina Preston

Isabelle Parsler

Emily-Jay Friday

George Wallace

Jago Miller

Brayden O'Malley

Harry Johnston

Zara Smith

#### Deutsch Award:

Alexander Snell

#### Latin Award:

Oscar Neal

#### Headteachers Award:

Kathryn Hargreaves

Rose Dighton

Gethin Walters

### Dates for your diary...

7 <sup>th</sup> July 2:45pm	Year 6 Music Recital
13 <sup>th</sup> July	Cricket Engagement Day
13 <sup>th</sup> July 9:15am	Latin Assembly
13 <sup>th</sup> July 7pm	Class 4 & 5 Play
14 <sup>th</sup> July	Sports Day
14 <sup>th</sup> July overnight	Year 6 Camping
16 <sup>th</sup> July 9:15am	Leavers' Assembly
16 <sup>th</sup> July	Last day of Term

## Sponsors



On behalf of all the children and teachers I would like to give sincere thanks to SAS Wireless for their incredibly generous sponsorship of Ickford Sports. Look out for their Logo in the future.



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