



Learning-Laughing-Achieving



School Closure

School feels very different today with so many of our school family helping to keep everyone safe by being at home in either self-isolation or following the Government's guidance on social distancing. The actions that people take today and everyday moving forward are going to have a significant impact on our NHS and their capacity to care for what is expected to be unprecedented numbers of people who develop serious symptoms associated with Covid-19.

As a school we are open today with a significantly reduced staff team to provide care for the children of Key Workers who are critical to the Covid-19 response. This is to enable our key workers to still work where alternative childcare arrangements cannot be made. I would like to thank those families who we had agreed a place for on Friday but who have made alternative arrangements over the weekend. We are also open to the families of some vulnerable children. Please contact me via mrjsclosure@millrythe-jun.hants.sch.uk if you are able to make alternative arrangements for your children.

I would like to ask all of the families that have children coming to school this week to reflect upon whether their children can be at home with partners, this would enable us to keep fewer children and staff in school safer for longer. It will also keep your own families safer; the less contact we can have with each other at this time the better.

Home Learning

We have been inundated with positive feedback about the home learning that has been set by staff for children across our school; thank you for taking the time to provide this feedback which has also been shared with all staff. I have also spoken to a few parents who have had a few teething problems and we have been able to address these quickly. If you are encountering any problems or have questions please contact me via: mrjsclosure@millrythe-jun.hants.sch.uk

Parents are not teachers and as such pupils should be able to complete the work that has been set independently; they will love to share with their families what they are doing and I would love to see work and other activities that are being completed at home. If you would like to share photos with me please email them to mrjsclosure@millrythe-jun.hants.ch.uk with the heading instagram. Some of these will be added to our account and shared with the MRJS family over the coming days and weeks.



There is flexibility for parents to guide children to complete work for the year group above and below their own if this is appropriate. We have also emailed individual learning home for some children. Please refer to the 'home learning during self-isolation' letter that can be found on the home learning page of the school website.

Top tips for supporting families working at home:

- **Opening your new school:** establish a place for your children to work from and get them involved in setting up their learning zones.
- **Establish routines:** draw up a plan with your child(ren) for each day so that they can see what work they will be completing when. Children react well to structured routines but these can also look different for different children. Not all of our children can sit and maintain focus on their learning for an hour at a time. You know your children better than anyone else so build in physical and mental breaks to help them with their learning.
- **Encouraging good learning habits with positive interactions:** think about the teachers that inspired you at school; what was it about their relationships and interactions with you that ensured you fostered a love of learning with them. Now is your chance to apply these with your own children.
- **Feed their love of learning:** it is more important than ever that we are all making good choices with the food we are eating and drinking plenty of water. Avoid sugary snacks and take regular fresh air breaks with opportunities for exercise beyond those that we have planned for each day.
- **Good teachers lead by example:** put plans in place to care for yourself too. Take time to relax; make sure your own diet is varied and balanced and that you partake in physical exercise.

If you would like me to speak to any children whilst they are at home with you then please let me know via: mrjsclosure@millrythe-jun.hants.sch.uk

Audible books

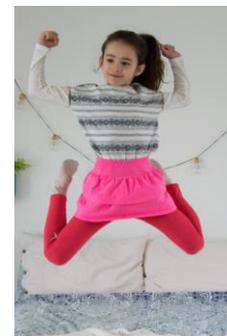
I was delighted to learn that audible books have made all children's books available for free to families whilst schools remain closed. I would encourage everyone to make the most of this opportunity - there are so many wonderful stories for children to be able to enjoy over the coming weeks. Please follow the link below to access them: <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Mrs Brydon has identified the following broad categories that different year groups may like to choose from initially:

- Year 3 – choose mainly from 'Elementary', although there are one or two classics in 'Littlest Listeners' that children will love, such as 'Timeless Tales of Beatrix Potter' or 'Just So Stories'
- Year 4 – choose from a wide range of brilliant books in 'Elementary'
- Year 5 – Choose from 'Elementary' or 'Tween'
- Year 6 – Choose from 'Tween' or 'Literary Classics' such as 'Moby Dick', 'The Call of the Wild'

Bright Colours and Food Banks

Staff and children alike came together on Friday to brighten the days of everyone around them and to make invaluable contributions to the food bank on Hayling Island which has very limited stock at the moment. We will continue to collect donations for the food bank each Thursday at school. If children are in school they can bring it onto the playground in the morning. For families at home, there will be a table outside reception throughout the day on Thursdays where donations can be left. Please try and make this part of your weekly routine unless you or a member of your family has symptoms and is self-isolating.



Mrs North

Mrs North is going to be stepping away from our Mill Rythe Family in April. She has secured a job within a local veterinary practice which I know she is going to love and will also enable her to spend more time with her horses, supporting her husband with the farm and hopefully exploring the world.

For me, Nikki is unique. She has a set of gifts that I haven't seen in one person before. If you spend any time in our office, you will see her ability to spin so many plates at one time whilst always wearing a smile and sharing her laughter with those in her presence. Her care for our most vulnerable children and the precision with which she meets their medical needs is so reassuring for their parents. She is never flustered and never fails to brighten the day of staff, children and parents alike. On the occasions when a serious medical situation has arisen in school, Nikki reacts perfectly instilling calmness in those around her whilst communicating with such clarity to paramedics to ensure that child concerned remains safe. She can hold her own with Mr Darby in the staffroom and is someone whose judgement I trust totally and have come to rely upon in the last couple of years at more challenging times.



Nikki - I am going to miss working with you hugely and know that this is a sentiment that will be echoed by everyone at MRJS. We may not get to give you the proper thank you assembly later this term that you deserve but when everyone is safely back in school you are coming back for this - the plans are spectacular! You are going to be missed by staff, parents and children alike. It has been a privilege to work with you and I would just like to say thank you for everything that you have done for me and our school.

When staff leave parents are normally able to come into school to speak to them themselves and share special memories or just to say thank you. If there are parents who would like to contact Mrs North before she leaves us on 10th April, please email her at n.north@millrythe-jun.hants.sch.uk

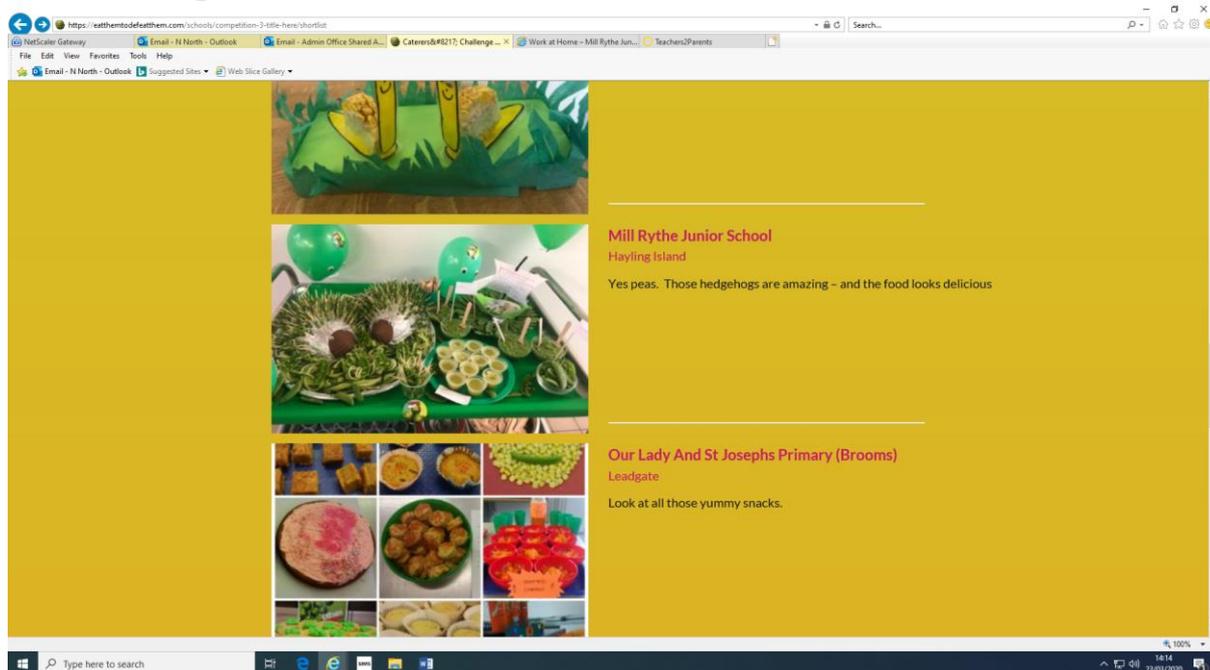
Year 6

The summer term is a time that our year 6 children always look forward to with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in SATs followed by enterprise week, special trips and then their leavers assembly and party. When school's re-open we will share with parents and children alike our plans for celebrating the achievements of this amazing group of children and

I will look forward to welcoming you all back to our school for your leavers assembly and party. We have a team of staff and parents who are already planning this 😊

Eat Them to Defeat Them

We still had two weeks to go with our war on vegetables, please visit the website for fun ideas, crafts and recipes. As a school we entered the caterers' competition, our kitchen staff have been amazing and we have made the shortlist!



Mental health and wellbeing

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Educational Psychology team have shared the following guidance with schools for parents and families to refer to in the coming days and weeks.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/media/1960/coronavirus-mental-health-and-wellbeing-resources.pdf>

The changes that we are all making to our everyday routines are significant and it is essential that we are able to support each other with our mental health and wellbeing at this time.

And finally...

Take care of yourselves and your families during the next week and please continue to keep up to date with and heed the government advice as it changes in the coming days.

David Bessant

Headteacher