

June 2020

Great Gaddesden Church of England (VA) Primary School

While the school has been closed, we have had to find new ways of learning and developing our online community. Our Year 5 and 6 teacher has shared a poem, which reflects the spirit of the children at this time.

It's called Lockdown Learning and starts "It might be lockdown, but that doesn't mean we can't keep learning and fulfilling our dreams"

The children have all been working on their weekly Home Learning packs, which have included BBC online learning, activities from the new Oak Academy, art projects, baking and outdoor activities. The children and parents have been communicating with their teachers and the newly styled Home Learning Newsletter keeps us all up-to-date with our school community.

These are challenging times and the children have found themselves in an extraordinary situation, separated from friends, family and teachers. Throughout this unusual time, we have all been aware of the need to support each other and the wider community. We have written letters to those who may be lonely and written to NHS workers to show our appreciation of thanks.

Our school website shows examples of how the children are making the best of the situation. As Mrs Wickens said in the first Home Learning Newsletter, all forms of activities are learning opportunities, whether they take place at home or in school.

Early Years have done some fabulous home learning based on the story of Oliver's vegetables; weighing their own vegetables, cutting them for printing, selling them in their newly created vegetable shops and making funny faces. Y3/4 have been making volcanoes and our first Newsletter shares a video of a homemade volcano erupting!

The Newsletters have provided a diary of the weeks in lockdown and a record of the beautiful weather we have had.

The children have made some wonderful artwork based on the world around them. We have photos of the children growing vegetables, families taking their daily walks in the countryside and enjoying activities in their gardens. Abigail made a camp in her garden, which she shared with us.

Although we have missed our traditional May Day dancing celebrations at school, the children's home learning was centred round this topic and included researching May Day traditions, writing reports and posters. One of our children made her own Maypole and was able to do her own Maypole dance.

VE Day was marked in many ways throughout our school community. Through their home learning, the children produced diary entries and researched historical aspects. Pupils had fun carrying out baking activities, which include Aaron making a bread pudding, Jack and Olivia created some beautiful bunting and Fallon and her family having a party in the garden. Please look at our school website (under Newsletter section) to see the wonderful range of our children's activities.

When our pupils return to school, they will notice a few differences:- for example, a new water wall for our Early Years pupils, newly trimmed hedges, a new pots and pans area for the mud kitchen, new wood chip in the bark area and a new Forest School cupboard!

When it is safe for all members in our school community, we will be welcoming our pupils back to school. We are planning to start with key year groups as identified by the Government (Reception, Year 1 and Year 6).

During this difficult time, we keep all our families and friends in our thoughts and prayers.