

**Dear Parent/Guardian**

I hope that you enjoy reading the news from TWGGGS this half-term, and that you are all able to enjoy a relaxing, and perhaps even sunny, Bank Holiday weekend, strange as it is.

**Mrs Savva**

We are delighted to announce the safe arrival of baby Ezra on 27<sup>th</sup> April; both mother and baby are thriving, and we wish Mr and Mrs Savva, and Ezra, every happiness

**Hockey Success for Freja Holder – Miss Parkinson**

Congratulations to Freja Holder 8I who has been selected to play hockey for Kent! We hope it won't be too long before she is back out on the pitch.

**Kitti Holroyd is Flying the Flag for Community Spirit – Mrs Wybar**

Well done to Kitti Holroyd 7T and her younger sister Iris who, together with their father, created an eye catching rainbow flag which they then presented to the Tunbridge Wells fire crews and now has pride of place outside the fire station. The flag depicts three linked rainbows with the poignant message 'TOGETHER A P A R T'. A photo of Kitti and Iris with their flag can be seen in the news section of the Kent Fire & Rescue Service website [kent.fire-uk.org](http://kent.fire-uk.org)

**Year 10 Royal Society of Biology International Biology Challenge – Mrs Lewis**

At the start of March, back before school closure, all of the Year 10 pupils took part in an online competition run by the Royal Society of Biology (RSB) during their Biology lessons. This competition was entered by 23,695 students from 367 schools worldwide - a truly international competition! I received the results at the end of April and I am very pleased to report that 87 TWGGGS pupils achieved either Gold, Silver, Bronze, Highly Commended or Commended awards. I would like to particularly congratulate Françoise Michel 10S, Willow Carwardine 10I and Heather Croker 10G who achieved the highest Gold Award, with another 22 pupils achieving Silver and 28 achieving Bronze. All of these pupils will receive a Certificate from the RSB celebrating this achievement in June, or when we return to school. Congratulations to everyone who took part!

**U6th Support for L6th and Year 10 – Mrs Wybar**

A large number of U6th pupils have volunteered to act as mentors to offer help/support/informal tutoring for those in L6th and Year 10 who are currently finding some of their work challenging. This was the inspiration of Izzy Porter, and we are very grateful to her for enthusing other students, as well as to Miss Smith for organising this initiative.

**Charity Prefects' Fundraising for Nourish Foodbank – Mrs Wybar**

Hannah, Jess and Lucy, TWGGGS U6th Charity Prefects, launched a fundraising initiative after lockdown to support Nourish, a charity we work with each year at Harvest Festival. I am delighted to announce that they raise £1,090 for this excellent cause; thank you so much to all who supported them.

**CCF Activity in Lockdown - Sgt Johnson, co-author RSM Preston**

As we enter into our 8<sup>th</sup> week of lockdown, it is difficult, at times, not to feel isolated, lonely, frustrated, and deflated. Now more than ever it is paramount to maintain our mental and physical well-being; an exceedingly difficult task with the lack of contact from loved ones that we usually surround ourselves with. This parallel universe that we have been living in for two months, filled with toilet roll and self-raising flour shortages, falling oil prices and an overwhelming number of Zoom quizzes and calls, is unlike anything any of us have ever experienced. A sense of community, be it in a friendship group, a family, or an extracurricular club, makes all of this a little more bearable. The lack of purpose that many of us may be feeling is something that we have tried to target within CCF, in order to get us all up and moving, together, albeit through a screen!

Once a week during term time, a CCF fitness club is run before school, to promote the physical fitness that, in turn, makes CCF a whole lot easier and more enjoyable. To try and uphold some sense of normality, this is now being run remotely twice a week on Monday afternoon and Thursday morning. In addition to this, every other Friday morning there have been yoga and meditation Zoom calls to try and create a range of activities and include all cadets! These

calls have proven to be lots of fun, despite the abundance of technical issues! We have also put a spin on the toilet roll challenges that have been taken on by multiple schools, both primary and secondary, and created our own boot video by throwing around our very fashionable bulky brown boots! Another video from CCF that has surfaced in this time period includes a very amusing first aid video, produced by Sgt Naismith. All cadets who wished to enter were required to send the email of a family member to her, and from there a first aid scenario would be sent to them for them to recreate. One family member would be the casualty and take the cadet by surprise in their own home with injuries varying from cuts to electrical burns! The attempts, some very questionable, to administer first aid to the casualty were filmed and compiled into one video that is available for all to watch on multiple platforms. There were two winners, one senior and one junior cadet, who were Cpl Grant and LCpl Cruse; well done to them! We have just started to run a CCF quiz for all cadets on a Monday evening, which has included rounds such as guess the officer, guess the Swedish word and name that cadet. The variety of rounds has been extensive; most have been creative; all have been beyond my capability, but, nevertheless, a good laugh.

The U6th cadets have also put in an incredible amount of effort into trying to maintain some sort of learning; they have been filming short lessons on the rotations that we would have been having on a Monday. This has been mainly aimed at the Year 9s in order to provide them with the basic skills that will prove valuable next year and will benefit them extensively on future camps.

Last Friday was the 75th Anniversary of VE day, so of course we had to celebrate. Many of the girls joined in with nationwide celebrations, such as the two minute silence and the Nation's Toast. CQMS Gardiner and RSM Preston, as two of Kent's Lord Lieutenant Cadets, created a short video showing some of the contingent celebrations. It includes a lovely backing track of 'We'll Meet Again' played by some of the contingent's talented musicians. It is on the TWGGS CCF website for anybody interested in watching it!

However, by far, our biggest achievement as a contingent has been our fundraising challenge that began on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May and ended on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May. We challenged ourselves collectively to run/cycle/walk the distance of the UK, from John O'Groats to Lands End, a total of 1407km! In line with our target in distance, we also set our target on our JustGiving page at £1407. With a phenomenal effort from us all, we smashed this target within just 3 days; on Saturday between 50 of us we travelled almost 600km! Therefore, we decided to up the stakes and aim for 2990km and £2990. This is an enormous challenge for us all, but is for a worthy cause, the Trussell Trust. If any of you are able and willing to donate absolute anything to this charity and support our challenge, we would be extremely grateful- <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/twggs-ccf20> (Mrs Wybar - As I send out this newsletter, TWGGS CCF has raised £3,281 for The Tressell Trust, however, they would still be thrilled to receive your support.)

Even though no one knows what will happen over the next few months, it is vital that we all keep positive and look after ourselves. This is the perfect time to slow down and appreciate the smaller things in life. Normality will return, and before we know it, we will be crammed back into the hall for assembly, with this all a distant memory! But until then, stay safe!

### **Careers Department – Mrs Vallely**

I am delighted to be able to tell you about some of the activities organized by the Careers Department both before and during the lockdown. Just before February half term we welcomed Alice Rendall, an Old Girl of the school, who spoke to Med Soc about her experiences training and working as a doctor. As an interesting aside, she told us how she had recently travelled to India, and enjoyed meeting up with her Indian Exchange partner, who had also trained as a doctor. Immediately following half term, we were delighted to see Sophie Lewis, who left TWGGS last summer, and who is very enthusiastically working as an apprentice for Google. She was able to tell us what it is like doing an apprenticeship, and to give some good tips on how to use your time while still at school, and on making very competitive applications.

National Careers Week was upon us, and we were very pleased to welcome Rachel Quinn, our new Enterprise Adviser, to join our Careers Prefects, Alice Atkins U6W and Vipanessa Bajracharya U6W, in leading a whole school assembly about careers. Rachel gave an inspiring talk, and the prefects followed on with an outline of the activities planned for the week ahead. The lunchtime speaker on the Monday was Jen Birdsall from Lancaster University, who gave some very good ideas on skills which can be developed to enhance employability. On Tuesday, we welcomed Jem Collins, a freelance journalist, Founding Director and Editor of Journo Resources, and lecturer on Journalism at the University of Kent. She gave a very useful and<sub>2</sub> informative talk about getting into Journalism, and

answered a lot of questions. We were disappointed that the speakers from Morgan Stanley were forced to postpone their presentation on Investment Banking because of the measures put in place in The City for their workers, but were delighted that Jaime Cooke was able to come over from her studio in Tunbridge Wells on the Thursday to speak about running one's own business as well as about her career in fashion, and also in sport. She was an inspiring speaker as well as being relaxed and fun. We finished the week with a lovely talk from Natasha Clay a pilot who flies Dreamliners to very exotic, far-flung places; I think we all felt we had been on holiday when we had seen her slides! Soon after that we began to feel the effects of the pandemic, with events being cancelled or postponed - the Tunbridge Wells Hospital Event, the Oxford and Cambridge Student Conferences, the National Careers Guidance Show, to name but a few.

However, we have been able to continue with many of our activities digitally: Mrs Elinson, independent Careers Adviser, has been continuing with the final Year 11 careers interviews using Zoom, which has been working well; The Morrisby Online testing is being offered, as usual, to all Year 10 pupils, and to any Year 11s and Lower Sixth who did not take part while they were in Year 10, but may wish to do so this year; Reminders about applying for Student Finance have been sent to U6th.

Each year, we usually run a PSHE session where Upper Sixth pupils share information and experiences with their post-18 Options ie UCAS applications, applications to apprenticeships, or gap years, with the Lower Sixth. This year, with the help of Izzy Porter U6G, one of this year's Sixth Form Prefects, and Bibi Thomas, last year's Deputy Head Girl, I have sent out lists of pupils and ex-pupils who have given their consent to be contacted to answer any questions from Sixth Formers. From the feedback I have received, this has been a worthwhile venture, and I would encourage any Sixth Former who has not yet made use of their expertise, to do so. In addition, Miss Smith, Director of Achievement, Sixth Form, has been very much in touch with Sixth Formers, and keeping everyone updated about the UCAS application process, finance education, useful webinars and so on.

I am delighted to tell you that this morning I heard that we have successfully completed the Commitment Stage of The Quality in Careers Standard awarded by Investor in Careers, and so we are now able to continue to work towards the Organisation, Delivery and Evaluation Stages.

Simon Harris, of the Careers and Enterprise Company, wrote this to me as we started lockdown, *"It is, of course, essential that young people are not only able to look forward again to a world no longer threatened by the Covid virus, but also able to see their place within it. Who knows what future will emerge as people realise that it is possible to do things differently and governments may very well need to continue spending on infrastructure (we hope, largely green) to help the economy to recover. There has never been a better time to highlight the roles and jobs that people have and their impact on society..... What new jobs might emerge in medical research and technology? It is not all about challenging the current, but stimulating the future"*. There is much food for thought there, and we bear that in mind as we seek to help your children look to the future.

### **Library News – Ms Sanderson**

The week leading up to the school closure was one of the busiest weeks we have seen in the library with pupils borrowing armfuls of books to read during lockdown, however if you find you are running out of things to read, don't forget to have a look at the online reading resources which can be found on the TWGGS website, or check out the library resources list in the library folder on Google drive! This list has just been updated to include free online access to a wonderful range of magazines including BBC History Today and Science Focus. If you are looking for stories to comfort, inspire and entertain you and your families then I can recommend the beautifully compiled online collection *The Book of Hopes*. Containing stories, poetry, essays and pictures created by renowned authors such as Michael Morpurgo and Lauren Child, this book is dedicated to the doctors, nurses, carers, porters, cleaners and everyone currently working in hospitals. It can be read online via the Literacy Trust website [literacytrust.org.uk](http://literacytrust.org.uk)

If any pupils want to have a go at writing their own short story, poem or letter, then there is still time to participate in the Nicola Morgan Antiviral Creative Writing Competition. Please ensure all entries are emailed to me at [library@twggs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:library@twggs.kent.sch.uk) by the end of Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May. Details of the competition and prizes can be found on Nicola's website [nicolamorgan.com](http://nicolamorgan.com).

At this time of year in the library, our Carnegie Medal Shadowing book group would usually be in full swing, with weekly lunchtime meetings involving book chat and <sup>3</sup>biscuits. This year we are doing things differently, and the

book group is venturing online! We shall still be reading the eight exciting books shortlisted for the prestigious Carnegie Medal however this year our chat will be in a Google Classroom. If your child is interested in joining in, please email me at [library@twggs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:library@twggs.kent.sch.uk) for more details. I understand that some pupils may not be able to get hold of the Carnegie books but may still like to chat about what they have read recently and ask their peers for recommendations of what to read next. There will be a 'general book chat' stream within the book group Google Classroom so that everyone can join in, regardless of whether or not they have read the Carnegie books.

Talking of book groups, unfortunately our eagerly anticipated South East Schools Themed Book Award gala had to be cancelled in March, however I can announce that the two winning titles chosen by pupils from the 19 participating schools were *Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman in the teen category and *The Book Thief* by Marcus Zusak in the young adult category. Thank you to all pupils who came along to the meetings and voted for their favourites! The SESTBA book group will return in October with ten new books to read.

### **Mental Health Awareness – Miss Parkinson**

Lockdown is proving extremely challenging for everyone, and particularly in terms of ensuring that we are all staying healthy mentally. At TWGGS we are regularly posting information for all pupils on the Google Drive Key Stage Wellbeing Classroom areas, with helpful hints on: how to stay healthy; manage workload; mental health and signposts to other resources. Over the next few weeks the TWGGS Pastoral Support Team will continue to post support information daily in the Wellbeing Classrooms areas on Google Drive. These posts will offer reminders to pupils of the things they can do to look after their own mental health, and also crucially signpost the support that is available to pupils and parents if they need it.

Many parents and children receive support for emotional wellbeing via their GPs and schools. As these services may not appear to be as visible during this pandemic The Kent Transformation Board, together with the NHS, is keen to spread the word that they are still "Here For You" and are still providing all kinds of emotional support and mental health services at this time, with some adjustments due to government guidance. The Young People's Mental Health #HereForYou social media campaign has been developed to make sure families know we are still providing all kinds of emotional support and mental health services. The campaign is coordinated by the Kent Transformation Board and is designed to let parents and young people in Kent know what services and support is available and how to access it. The key message for parents and young people is that services are still "Here For You".

This week (18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> May) is Mental Health Awareness Week as hosted by The Mental Health Foundation. General wellbeing support and practical advice can be found on their website [mentalhealth.org.uk](http://mentalhealth.org.uk) as well as lots of information specifically designed to help to look after your mental health during the pandemic. As the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week is Kindness, The Mental Health Foundation is asking people to reflect on an act of kindness, towards themselves or others, and share their stories and pictures on social media during the week (with permission) using #kindnessmatters and #mentalhealthawarenessweek. They are also encouraging people to think about how we can build a kinder society which supports mental health and to share their ideas using the hashtags.

Our own monthly *TWGGS News* publication is also keen to hear what pupils are doing to promote kindness in support of Mental Health Awareness Week and would love to share their tips, stories and pictures in the next edition. Please email Bethany Taylor with any contributions [14taylorb@twggs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:14taylorb@twggs.kent.sch.uk)

Across Kent, there has been an increase in distress in young people, specifically 10-16 year olds who are feeling socially isolated and may be struggling. We have been asked by Kent County Council to remind you of the support available, and to make you aware of some services which have been established in recent weeks. If families or children are not sure what support is needed, then they can call the Single Point of Access (SPA) on 0300 123 4496 to talk through what information, advice and support might be appropriate. This is also the number to call if a child needs urgent mental health support. For people of all ages needing immediate mental health support, just text the word "Kent" or "Medway" to 85258. This is a new 24/7 text service provided by SHOUT and the Crisis Text Line as part of the Kent and Medway Release the Pressure campaign.

Other services that young people can access directly are:

- **Kooth** is a mental health and wellbeing online platform for young people aged 10 to 16 across the whole of Kent. The service is free and can be accessed at [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com). It's a place to get advice,

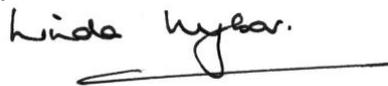
information and support 24/7. Young people can chat to a friendly qualified counsellor Monday to Friday between 12 noon and 10pm and Saturday and Sunday between 6pm and 10pm.

- Accessing [www.moodspark.org.uk](http://www.moodspark.org.uk) or [www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk](http://www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk) to learn about mental health and find tips and resources to keep emotionally healthy.
- Texting **ChatHealth** for support around physical and mental health on 07520 618850. The number is monitored Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.
- Self-referring to the **Children and Young People's Counselling Service** at [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/forms/school-health-service-referral-form](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/forms/school-health-service-referral-form)
- Accessing the **Big White Wall** if aged 16+ for anonymous support through <https://www.bigwhitewall.com>
- Parents and teachers can also access useful resources and service information at [www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk](http://www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk) #KentTogether
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Please do encourage your child to get in touch with us if they have any worries or concerns. We are here for them - [pastoralsupport@twggs.kent.sch.uk](mailto:pastoralsupport@twggs.kent.sch.uk)

We are thinking of you all at this very challenging time.

With very warmest wishes to you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda Wybar." The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Mrs L Wybar, Headteacher