*Our thanks to parents for your continued forbearance, and for your understanding as we wrestle with the many and various challenges of running the school during this period of lockdown. We are as anxious as all of you must be to get the children back into their classes once again. It cannot come too soon.*

*In the meantime, we do hope you are all keeping safe and healthy.*

**A Message from Section Leaders**

Thank you to all the parents who took the time to complete our Online Learning Survey. When we can’t meet in person it is more important than ever that we as a school reach out to parents to find out how our teaching is being received by the children. The results have been truly heartening. 99% of parents in Years 3-8 and 94% in the Early Years say that their children can access the curriculum, that they are more engaged (86% Years 3-8 / 78% Pre-Prep) than last lockdown and that the online curriculum allows their child to make academic progress (86% Years 3-8 / 94% Pre-Prep). The addition of interactive lessons in PE and Music across the school, plus Visual Arts in the Prep section, have been well received, with 80% of respondents saying they strongly agreed that their child was enjoying these lessons.

We are mindful of the impact home schooling has on the whole family and we were particularly pleased that 90% of parents in the school from Lower Juniors upwards are content with the amount of support they are required to provide their child during the day to ensure tasks are completed. This was complemented by the 94% of Pre-Prep parents who strongly agreed that the mix of online learning, worksheets and topic-based activity keeps their child stimulated during the week.

We have read all your comments and take on board your concerns about screen time, the need for outside activities and your individual feedback. As our online learning provision continues to evolve, thank you for your support and patience.

There is light at the end of the tunnel.

**Notes from the Garden**

“Last month I spoke about using your nose as well as your eyes when looking for signs of Spring. This month I’m looking at wildlife you can be spotting in your garden or local area. I expect many of you got involved in the Great British Birdwatch over the weekend, but even if you didn’t you can still enjoy looking for different species. If you have woodland near you then you may hear the sound of drumming against the trees. This is the Great Spotted Woodpecker telling everybody that this is his territory as he doesn’t have a song. Some creative woodpeckers even find something metal to drum against as it makes a louder sound. Now is also the time to watch one of our favourite birds, the robin. You’ll notice that they are starting to pair up rather than continue to fight over territory. You may see one feeding the other; this is the male feeding the female and is a delight to watch.

Having spare time on your hands now gives you a great opportunity to clean out any bird boxes ready for the spring and make sure bird feeders are well stocked. We are expecting very cold temperatures next week so be sure to do so as birds can waste precious energy going to feeders and will suffer if they are empty. It is also a good idea to make sure there is a source of water; floating a ball on the surface of a pond or birdbath can keep it from freezing over.

If you have foxes then they will most likely have mated by now and the females will be looking for somewhere to give birth; maybe under your shed or in a slightly disused area of your garden, especially if you live in a more urban area. It doesn’t pay to be too tidy when trying to attract wildlife into your garden. The young cubs emerge late April and, like me, you may be lucky enough to have foxes playing on your lawn by early May.”

To watch Mrs Buckler’s film, [click here.](https://vimeo.com/user5714765/review/508429736/a5e6954350)

**High Five 4 OSCAR Foundation**

21 children (majority from Year 2) will be walking 120 km between them to help raise funds for the [OSCAR High Five 4 OSCAR](https://www.hallgrove.co.uk/docs/Newsletter_Attachments/SPR_2021/image002.jpg) campaign during half term.

The campaign is for all ages, individuals, families, classes, boarding houses, whole schools or communities to get together to keep mind & body fit and active, whilst raising funds for boys and girls living in the Indian slums.

Please visit the [fund raising page](https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/displayCharityCampaignPage.action?campaignId=15959&charityId=1015920) to show your support.

**Music**

**Virtual Informal Concerts**

This week Years 7 & 8 have been flooding the music department inbox with their performances and we are very much looking forward to sharing their concert with you in due course. Next week Year 5 will have the opportunity to send in their performances for their concert. An email with information regarding uploading the video, will be sent to all Year 5 parents on Monday morning next week.

**Sport**

The House race to New York continues to be a closely contested. The boys, girls and staff are racking up the Kilometres in a bid to be the first across the Atlantic. The Kestrels have moved into the lead closely pursued by the Falcons. Hawks and Eagles are in hot pursuit. All four houses are behind the staff team who have are out in front now. Do make sure you use half term to get out on your bikes or go for long runs or walks and do your bit for your house. The competition will be updated on the Wednesday of half term and again on Monday when we return to school. Good luck to all.

**The return of Dan the Skipping Man – Wednesday 3rd March**

Following his enormously popular workshops last term, Dan the Skipping Man will be returning to Hall Grove, albeit virtually, to run a series of skipping workshops for children across the school and build on the skills acquired first time around. Further details to follow – watch this space!

**The Week Junior – 5th February**

Please [click here](https://en.calameo.com/read/00618809552e8c07d59b5) for the latest edition. Highlights include tributes for Sir Tom, foreign travel & protecting animals from space!

**This week's** [**Wellington College Virtual Fireside Talk**](https://www.hallgrove.co.uk/docs/Newsletter_Attachments/SPR_2021/Fireside_Talks_Poster_Lent_2021_at_Wellington_College.pdf)

* Monday 8th February - 5pm: [*MS Teams: Fireside Talk with Raymond Antrobus*](https://u9153159.ct.sendgrid.net/ls/click?upn=JrbkozLSaRzLjjEdiQhyRXNXJAe0FV6sO-2B-2FZ8d7N6R25IdB2IAByVWkqZugDgZjyiIVzZXHdBrEs16YfoPriIKzj3isftXK-2BRbre4My8An41MV2GE-2Fv0waiqv8n2kxVewWeR8UlGRg3Uk2yFumtmjDgnvV6gf06WU4RB5vRbbKpxMydLHH7bBJXiaZ61u3ch3XgrEM2uIqt4HvWChClEiOGGEk781X-2F-2BjOmPn2gnLnaR8GV4cLa4aeU3aybkgaJ6LQsL691O4-2B0PIOzK8yP9mdnRFTYrA5XeQG-2FysUBki3YPK0y3zHCu0GBriYQll-2Fe1FW2iHKjCc2C2ignkJRssoQ-3D-3DfnZY_LosTVay1jAHjK-2Bnh-2FjJKLiwAQGPajj-2B7BT1KVYGjSp9l3YY0lAZjJ1u88BZbzgcVkMBxsO9MlNNV7FYo9Wj-2FSy2QltOJ4CfOw6l24KP3x2O8vFjhafmdGge0-2Fvebg0w1vwf65O52KGQrBMCvTQ6osuggN5J8e9D2OM4346uTqYiDyPL42GKNn-2FxeusQwIHSSvM91bKgO6Ktz8CkG3AoELjktC2HyFU0yfojKugMjrS8-3D)

\*\*\*\*\*

The following documents can be found on the school website, under the parent information tab:

* Senior Schools Open Mornings Information
* February Half Term Camps for Keyworkers