

12 February 2021



Deer Park School

LEARN ENJOY SUCCEED

Dear Parents, Carers & Friends,

This week brings with it a notable milestone; we are, as of now, halfway through the academic year. Our children, staff and families have much to be proud of at this juncture, not least the tenacity and proactivity with which our community has faced the year's challenges, and the continued commitment to learning that has characterised education both in-person and remote. The back half of the year is primed to be an exciting one, with yet more opportunities for the broadening of horizons and the surpassing of personal goals. Schools are not defined by their premises and learning not born of material surroundings, but we of course look forward to our shiny new building and the experiences it will afford our children. On a more immediate note, today, as many of us will know, is Chinese New Year: a festival celebration for a little over two billion persons across the planet. We welcome in the year of the Ox, and bid farewell and happy memories to the outgoing year of the rat. To all our families, from Deer Park School: 祝你牛年吉祥 to one and all.

The Diversity Committee will be holding its Spring term meeting with the school in the first week after half term, on February 25th at 5:30pm. If you would like to be a part of this valuable group, please do contact the school: this meeting will be an additional chance to learn more about the Committee's work, and to contribute your voice to the discussions. The Diversity Committee is a strong link in our community, and we encourage any families who are passionate about representation, diversity and educational inclusion to join the upcoming meeting. For those who are looking to extend their understanding of the KS2 curriculum, the college adjacent to Deer Park School (the RHACC) is putting on an additional course in 'Supporting

your child with KS2 English', following the successful sign-up of many families to their KS2 mathematics course. These courses are free to Richmond residents, are held online, and the link to sign up can be found here.

Our recommended reading list this week begins with 'Just Ask'; an illustrated and open portrayal of inclusion. It is penned by Sonia Sotomayor, who takes occasional breaks from her work as a children's author to devote time to her other job as an Associate Justice on the US Supreme Court. For KS2, this week's recommendation is the opening book to the 'Redwall' series, by Brian Jacques: think a PG version of Game of Thrones, but with mice. Finally, for our adult readers, 'Consider the Lobster' is a collection of essays from the late, great David Foster Wallace; funny, insightful and painfully clever. If you would like to recommend any of your personal favourite tomes to our community, please don't hesitate to send them in; we always have time for a discussion about reading.

I hope that you are each looking forward to a week of family time, replete with restful, restorative and (most importantly) fun activities. Stay safe over the half term, enjoy the family time together, and don't forget to read.

Alex Lee



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HOW TO Stay Safe Online

Over the past year, due to Covid-19, children are spending much more time online in lessons, talking to their relatives during family zoom sessions or playing games with their friends.

The internet is a fantastic resource, but it can also bring risks. On Tuesday all the children spent the afternoon thinking about 'how to be safer on the internet' as part of Safer Internet Day 2021. Our children are extremely capable with technology and don't have the fear we may have. It seems to come second nature to them! Please use the link here to help you with any conversation you would like to have with your child/ren at home. The NSPCC also has some good materials to use. When talking about internet safety it is advisable to ask them to show you the sites and apps they are using.

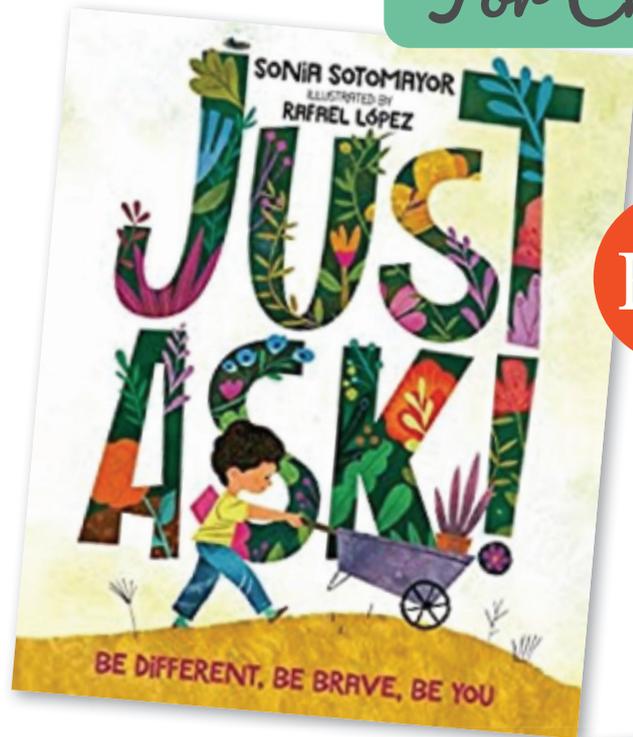
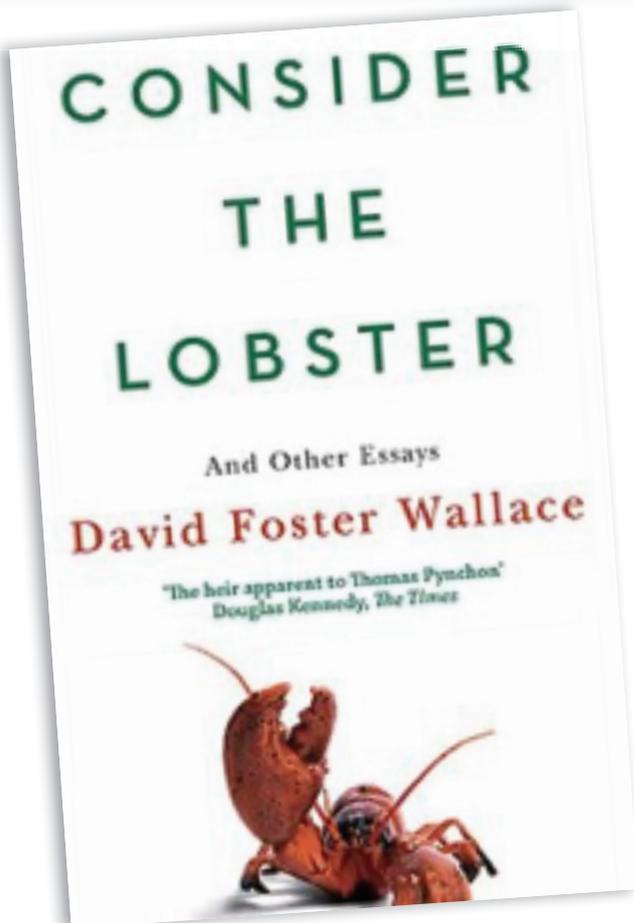
There will be a parent workshop on **Internet Safety** on **March 10th at 5.30pm** run by **Mr Cowley**, a borough advisor, please put the date in your diaries. It will be suitable for parents of all age groups.





Recommended READS

For Children



KS1

For Adults



KS2

Class Updates



Sambar Class

WOW what another fantastic two weeks. We have been so blown away with your home learning over this half term. You have all shown such **amazing resilience** and **worked hard**.

Over the last 2 weeks we have been looking at how we can look after our environment and help people remember what to do with their **rubbish**. We have explored the **numbers 6,7,8** and looked at making our numbers from natural resources. We have made and created our own **instruments** and even sang songs about how to keep our **environment clean and tidy**. We have also looked at **celebrations** from around the world and helped to plan a **fantastic class party** on Zoom. We have seen some incredible writing happening and children using all their phonic knowledge to write **super words and sentences**. Sambar, we are so **proud of you all**. We hope you have a lovely half term.

Fawn Class

Dear Grown-up Fawns,

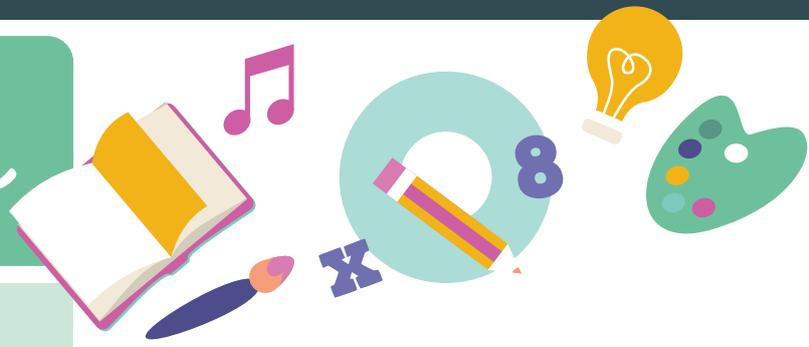
What a challenging special term this has been, during which we have had to draw on our **different skills**.

It has been an important one, I might say, whereby you have **scaffolded** your **children's learning**, to use Vygotsky's developmental terms.

You have helped them make **connections** through your **purposeful enquiries**. You have led them to reflect while **encouraging** their **critical thinking**. Your videos have made me **laugh out loud** so many times that my family's curiosity has been aroused! I truly thank you for that! **Enjoy a restful and well-deserved break!**



Class Updates



Roe Class

Roe, you have been **absolute super stars** this half term. Your **enthusiasm, hard work** and **resilience** has blown me away!

A highlight of the last two weeks has been our **Geography** lesson about the **highest peaks in each part the UK**. Your **maps** and models showed so much hard work and enthusiasm for learning.

Have a lovely half term and I can't wait to see your smiley faces again.

Brocket Class

Brocket you have all **worked so hard**, listened well, shared your ideas and produced work of such a **high standard**.

How much fun have we had with learning about the **highest peaks, taste testing**, discovering more about **Nana and CJ** and creating **fantastic light boxes**.

Thank you to all the adults at home for your incredible support.

Brocket, have a **wonderful half term** break and thank you all for being so amazing!



Class Updates



Muntjac Class

I have been so **impressed** with the **progress** the children are making across the curriculum this term thanks to the support at home. **Enjoy these wonderful photos** of our different projects! Well done and have a **great half term Muntjacs!**



Leon's excellent descriptions in French.



Alex G-C's art work



Mabel's fossil

Amber's fossil investigation



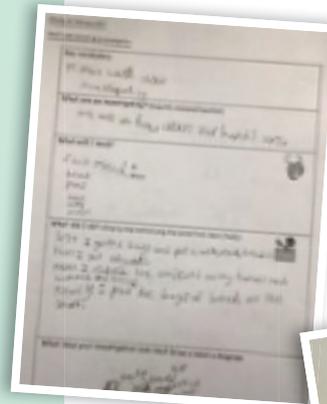
Marsh Class

Another fantastic two weeks from Marsh class. They have been **focussed** and have proudly shown off their learning this week as we come to the end of our **Spring 1 topics.**

They have become **dragon** experts, being able to identify features, using ambitious adjectives and have used their **map skills** to identify where in the United Kingdom some dragons may live.

Everyone's **creativity** during their Art lessons has been **amazing** and great to see on dojo.

The **highlight of this week** was our visit from **Sharks4Kids** where **Michelle** and the **founder** of the organisation **Jillian Morris** taught Marsh class about the fascinating species of **sharks.** **Have a great half term!**



Class Updates



Sika Class

Well, what a half term this has been! As you all know, I am so incredibly proud of the **enthusiasm and resilience** that the children have shown throughout this half term in adapting to online learning. They never cease to amaze me with all the wonderful work they are producing and their **outstanding contributions** to lessons. The progress I have seen in all this half term has been nothing short of inspiring.

We have had a big **focus** on our **writing** these past few weeks and I have been absolutely blown away by the creativity and execution of some complex ideas. We have fine-tuned our use of expanded **noun phrases** and **fronted adverbials**, whilst mastering the new skill of using **prepositional phrases** and familiarising ourselves with simile and metaphor. Using all these skills, we have also dramatically improved our use of **direct speech**, focusing on a wide range of reporting clauses and adverbs to add even more detail to our work. The results have been breathtaking!

We have also continued to work extremely hard with **Maths**, mastering area and beginning to revisit fractions. There has been a noticeable improvement in the children's ability to explain their mathematical thinking and they are really beginning to master the **technical vocabulary**, both in Maths, and across the curriculum. **Well done Year 4!**

Elk Class

As we race towards the end of Spring 1, it is time to reflect on **how well Elk Class have adapted to home learning**. One of the highlights has been the **music lessons**. In sharp contrast to the miserable weather, it has brought joy to the families to hear their children **singing such a beautiful Adele song**. The **creative and colourful collage** has brightened up the LGfL folder as I am sure it has done on your walls and fridge doors.

Yet at the same time, the **academic study** has been **ceaseless**. They have startled prospective Year 6 candidates with their knowledge and understanding in **maths**.

Miss Coward's new approach to writing lessons has meant access for all yet wonderful **creative ideas** and confident use of a variety of poetic devices.

Many materials have been mixed and observed; **Mrs Bracegirdle has been delighted** with the independent **science investigations** the children have conducted.

