**To           :              Headteachers**

**CC           :              Chairs of Governors, Foundation Governors, ex-officio clergy**

**From     :               Jeff Williams**

**Date      :               15th April 2020**

Dear colleagues

I hope that you were able to enjoy the lovely weather on Easter Day, and while a very different experience, that there were some special moments for you.

You may well have seen the poem that is circulating on Social Media, written by Kitty O’Meara an Irish-American retired teacher. I share it here as it helps I think, bring positivity and hope into a situation where many feel desperate and fearful.  This is not diminishing the seriousness of what we are facing, but helps lift our eyes to a new and changed time that we hope will reflect the lessons we have learned while separated and constrained in so many ways, but liberated and refreshed in others.

*And people stayed home*

*And read books and listened*

*And rested and exercised*

*And made art and played*

*And learned a new way of being*

*And were still*

*And listened more deeply*

*Someone meditated*

*Someone prayed*

*Someone danced*

*Some met their own shadow*

*And people started thinking differently……*

*And people healed*

*And in the absence of people who*

*Lived in ignorant ways*

*Dangerous, mindless and heartless….*

*The earth began to heal*

*And when the danger ended*

*And people found themselves*

*They grieved for the dead*

*And they made choices*

*And dreamed visions*

*And created a new way to live*

*And heal the earth fully*

*Just as they had been healed.*

**Good News Stories**

Kitty O’Meara’s poem and what I shared in last week’s email really does help us to encourage one another to share the fantastic things that schools are doing:

My week began really well by viewing a video created by the Reception Class parents at **St Matthew’s Primary in Liss**. It is poignant, meaningful and has moments that will make you smile, with an eclectic mix of music! : [https://youtu.be/TljvmQVvBc8](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1jNy4g-0007aB-4h&i=57e1b682&c=SHTEDNXRRu3SnzQBZVMVq5Lyx6klWxw98jhh-IFo33xgKRQJ6MvD0XeFeVNmzMzqZTFCLqxe0FGRyfs5lfGd1bQnz9HnKdgX5sYE6GXkalDiv2dqyer_-ibBJbVVzxhJPvYBc9IlFhh3qtP39m6spUM6CU7E2dlgkFnkdtxGDXUhciIA8lTo3nmk1PnkWdBdxJmKgctOXfkVYgLRWzAzde6I9T4fBsrJwSqdAZY9_Hc)

Thank you to teacher Mrs Quehan from **St James’ Primary in West End** for the beautiful song she composed and performed for the children. You can view and listen to it at: [https://youtu.be/sUmjDSNRI5E](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1jMSW4-0001x1-5J&i=57e1b682&c=PAmJDb7Ek9niq3IdM3OXLeYTIYu1TyfSZD1hQXXFNquVpkD9dH2gBaY3N1alFk8EDUGt8_6ls1A-IgA-MFfO4LVzcTaGpvk1x8rSW8wo_CIckw-HdzwhZ5Ax65-Nso3xLKQ9zek7C0YsLkEi840_4QqovXwHwxAnfbTrl-7rnKFnQk6xvlQqiSw69_KU2VhXJIgT-5kUA9eIN-tTT4iR5EwqTiQ8R7g7UyfO32ph60w)

**Good Friday Video**

Many of you saw the Good Friday video that Sue made, during which she suggested children might like to hide home-made crosses in the garden and around their homes for people to find. If you have any photos, do share them with us.

Headteacher Teresa Fox took a beautiful photograph of the sunset across the seafront in Yarmouth. The cross reflected in the sea was quite moving as it was seen on Good Friday evening. You can view it at : <https://www.facebook.com/112675637064838/posts/112681610397574/>

If you didn’t see it on Friday, Sue’s reflection is available at :  <https://www.youtube.com/user/PortsmouthDiocese>

**Free Book on talking to children about Coronavirus**

**Gruffalo illustrator Axel Scheffler** has joined up with Nosy Crow publications to produce a digital book for primary school age children, free for anyone to read on screen or print out, about the coronavirus and the measures taken to

control it.

Published by Nosy Crow, and written by staff within the company, the book has had expert input: Professor Graham Medley of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine acted as a consultant, and the company also had advice from two head teachers and a child psychologist. The book answers key questions in simple language appropriate for 5 to 9 year olds. You can find it at : <https://nosycrow.com/>

**Painted pebbles as virtual foundation stones**

You may be aware that a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre is being planned for central Westminster – do look at the artist’s impression in the attached Foundation Stones at Home leaflet.

I’d like to really encourage families and schools to participate, especially as we had such a fantastic response to Holocaust Memorial Day this year. **Painting pebbles at school or at home during the lockdown** can be fun and a direct expression of Standing Together. Could I ask you to please encourage families, communities and children to engage – and if you/they could send us photos of the pebbles so we might share widely our commitment to this important building and what it represents and will achieve.

As well as the attached leaflet explaining what to do, further details can be found at : [https://www.big-ideas.org/current-projects/foundation-stones/](https://url6.mailanyone.net/v1/?m=1jM6nM-0006DS-5O&i=57e1b682&c=D7ZOdRyzIbSc7Ac6cNyPZ0jcWdUXMNq7B7aXsENvENd0sqAkHBCTEv6mV53hPdeFcui1iAS0i1ob-5ESgWD3ZesIFl2i2vzDk2i4Qv52mVUoRtyfNY5jJVxxygInwveG-aqWTX5dOe9BHBbpwMHfyxj-uz2uRVbyoJrBLzTqbHlNDHCC_BrixdLNNxSFHEVJ9SmImGCxCfybD2YjnE7e5YE5kio7dLrDoFEirTp9jn1tY8zavlD_tcdOoctu9-VjVPIfAxGieGZAM4rK4x4v7w)

**And finally**

In addition to the weekly picture challenge, I am grateful to Sue for now producing weekly Lyric challenges for children. These are excellent interactive activities – do take a look. Over the weeks ahead, the challenges will cover songs from films, pop stars and more.

With thanks and best wishes for all you are doing and being.

***Jeff***

Jeff Williams

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