

Diocesan Education Newsletter Special Edition

Celebrating Church Schools' work

during the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic



Our Vision :

Deeply Christian, Serving The Common Good



From The Director of Education, Jeff Williams :

Christmas Day 2019 brought countless memories of ‘secreting’ and ‘transporting’ my daughter’s Christmas presents when she was little. We reminisced on how we ‘hid’ a massive kid’s kitchen in the back of my jeep transporting it to Wales. All prompted by the story of the secret transportation across Hampshire on December 24th of a Peace Pole, in the back of now adult daughter’s car as a gift from friends! Beautiful symmetry and completion!

Photos of my bespoke Peace Pole are below. Key aspects of my sporting and cultural interests, life, family and personality are captured – all surrounded in the Celtic language of angels – Bydded Heddwch Yn Drech Ar Y Ddaear (for those not angelically linguistic - May Peace Prevail On Earth.

So, I am thrilled to celebrate and commend our ‘Standing Together’ project, captured in photos in this Special Edition Newsletter. Conceptualised when visiting my family in Boston and New York, but importantly birthed and developed by my team of creative educationalists, we are delighted to share some examples of what this has become. Our forest of Peace Poles at the Cathedrals, Priory and Abbey was due to be featured on regional TV, but couldn’t happen due to the pandemic. However, the creation and permanence of the poles across the region in our schools will speak to so many.

The irony of course is that we haven’t been able to ‘Stand Together’ physically – but metaphorically, we have been shoulder-to-shoulder during the Lockdown – and household to household standing for all that matters during these exceptional times.

We began our corporate witness and challenge to society and our communities in January when we Stood Together on Holocaust Memorial Day, especially important this year as we remembered the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

Hence our sunflower challenge, based on the historic placing of sunflowers on graves around the death camps. My sunflowers grow impressively. But I have been staggered by an image from Headteacher Michelle Marsh’s sunflower garden (see below). I didn’t know that sunflowers could produce multiple heads – can’t wait to see these amazing sunflowers in multiple bloom! These and the mathematical ideas we shared about Fibonacci Spirals are still opportunities for you as readers, teachers and family members to marvel and share.

In August I’m going with good friends to some inspiring and awesome sunflower fields in Hampshire; and with family to the UK’s and international spectacular experience at the National Trust’s Rhossili Bay, The Gower. There, I’ll be gently introducing a conversation about Sunflowers at Auschwitz, and Fibonacci spirals – but also about the joy and beauty

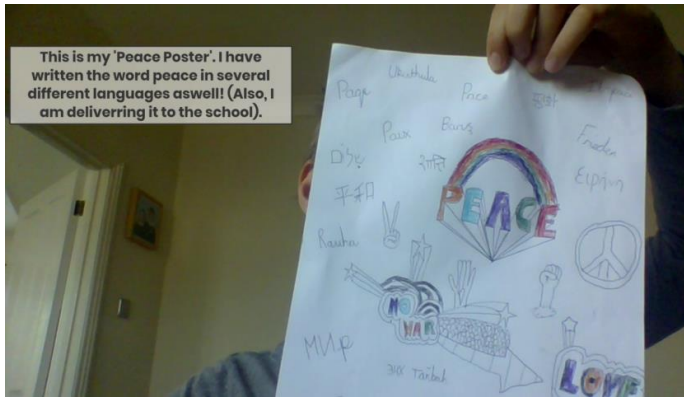
these flowers have, and will continue to bring to so many, and how they will impact on our bee population.

So – it's never too late. If you understandably couldn't create a Peace Pole this side of Lockdown – do please look at our project book and create one next term? And if the sunflower challenge didn't hit the ground this year – next year is calling.

May Peace Prevail Upon Earth and may sunflowers bring you joy – this year and in the years to come.

Jeff





Peace Poles

This year our 160 church schools and linked churches were invited to create a peace pole to highlight work that continues across the world to bring about peace and unity.

The poles symbolize a school's vision for peace, while simultaneously linking this work with that of people of all faiths and nationalities worldwide who are striving for a better, unified world. We Stand Together alongside marginalised groups and individuals, anchored in our Christian values and Biblically rooted in our commitment.

The poles were due to form what we had planned as 'Peace Pole Forests' - displayed at the 2020 leavers services at Winchester and Portsmouth Cathedrals, Christchurch Priory and Romsey Abbey, as well as at local churches. However, those services could not take place due to the restrictions for safe public worship. Instead our communities can enjoy a filmed celebration on You Tube which includes videos and images of a selection of our poles. Enjoy these at :

Winchester Video : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLExBr-v_PM&feature=youtu.be

Portsmouth Video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GumsxSaeRto>

We celebrate a sample of what our schools are doing here, with the accompanying stories of their creation and meaning.





Children at Lockerley CofE Primary School all took part in designing a school peace pole, including the children who are unable to attend school due to shielding. Every child created a small design which they felt represented peace, and these were all added to create one shared piece of art. The peace pole is destined to be a feature of the prayer area in the new school garden.





A legacy at Long Sutton

Year 6 teacher Jacqui Austin of Long Sutton Church of England Primary School explains the impact of the peace pole on pupils:

“Having attended the initial workshops, the children were thrilled with the idea of creating a legacy within the school, via their Peace Pole.

The various elements on the pole came after much thought and deliberation, but a couple of things came out of their conversation very strongly. Firstly, as a year group that has had so much taken away from them this year, they wanted to show how strong they were at having 'survived' the truncation of their education, and secondly, that even with that, they still worked as a team to create this legacy. Their tree is a sign of this strength and how they've grown through their time in the school - it is also the school logo. The cross, surrounded by roses, is a sign that when Jesus left this world, his message was one of peace.

The PEACE in yellow and black is a recognition that the Peace Pole movement started in Japan, and as movies of Japan show large neon signs flashing in their cities, they wanted to give a nod to that. The hand is a rainbow - a sign of the hand of friendship given to all, and that each of us, like every finger, is different. The dove is the universal sign of peace, and has the words 'May Peace Prevail on Earth' in Japanese, written through it. The CND symbol is a universally known sign for peace, as are the Peace fingers. The black night with stars, bordered with rainbows are showing us that even in the dark times of Covid-19, there are tiny pieces of hope, like the stars that shine in the night sky. The sun, with black clouds reminds us that even behind the blackest clouds, the sun is still shining. Finally, the floral word of peace is a hope that peace will continue to grow throughout the world and blossom, like the flowers. This is their shared message and legacy, and their hope is that everyone will remember them and how they felt about the unprecedented time that has been the end of their primary education”.



This peace pole has been inspired by the ideas from Year 6 children at St Johns Church of England Primary School, Rowlands Castle.

It is entitled: Ways to Peace.

Year 6 pupils, Bryony Hodgkinson and Lola Clancy with the peace pole from their school, St Luke's Church of England Primary School in Sway.





Christian values celebrated on peace poles at Appleshaw

The children at Appleshaw CofE Primary School are rightly proud of their beautiful peace poles. The school has 11 year 6 pupils who all returned to school after lockdown. They thoroughly enjoyed the peace poles project and are really pleased with how their poles turned out. There are three peace poles to represent each of our three school values: Fellowship, Love and Justice. Each small group set to work on their designs and worked together to paint them. The children wrote the following paragraphs about their poles:

Justice :Our Peace Pole represents 'Justice' which we have written on three of the sides in Arabic, German and English. It also has 'may peace prevail on Earth' written in German on the front side. These languages have been chosen as there is much conflict in the Middle East and Germany was unjust in World War 2 but now is our ally. We have chosen this theme because in the world wars the allies fought for justice and fought to help other countries. To link our pole to the world wars, we have put a field of poppies around the bottom and spitfires chasing a zepelin in the sky. Another symbol of justice we have used

are charity symbols as they show justice to people who may not be as fortunate or well treated as us.

Fellowship : In school we use the values to help us grow into amazing people. We painted 'Fellowship' in Greek (Koinonia) as we have been learning about the ancient Greeks since we returned to school. We painted a galaxy on the bottom to add some nature (this was because we all are very eco-friendly and love nature). We decorated the top with the Greek flag inside a peace logo and other fellowship logos. On another side we painted fellowship in German (gemeinschaft) because that was one of the languages on another peace pole. Symbols of fellowship reside inside jigsaw pieces. We chose jigsaw pieces as it symbolizes unity. Different symbols and logos join together to mean one thing. which is much like people joining together to try to accomplish one thing. Some other symbols we used are peace symbols as peace needs to be shown around the world. We used were unity knots to symbolize unity and togetherness. There is also a symbol of Christianity with the cross and the followers of Christ, as well as other religious logos.

Love : Our Peace Pole represents 'Love.' We have written the word love in English, Arabic and German. Red has been used for a lot of the decorations as it is the colour associated with love including a red rose. We have painted a rainbow to show how God loves the Earth. There is also a dove which is a symbol of peace.

Lots of different hearts have been included. The hot air balloon represents the feeling of freedom and happiness that love brings.



Experiences of peace at Bitterne

Before adding their designs to their peace pole, children at Bitterne CofE Primary studied peace poles from around the globe. They carefully considered the purpose of peace poles, examined the origins of peace poles and studied the impactful placements of similar poles around the world. The children then referred to their own experiences of peace, considering key language, actions and symbols that resonated with them personally. They chose to create a silhouette of a peace symbol or impactful words, which were then applied to the pole. The simplicity of the pole against its leafy background make its impact all the greater.

The warmest peace pole can be found St Luke's!



The idea for the peace pole at St Luke's Church of England Primary School in Bournemouth came from the symbol of the rainbow that has been a feature of the national lockdown.



'For us it represents hope, solidarity and peaceful acceptance that we will get through this together,' said acting headteacher Jemma Murray. 'We have all reflected on the peace pole and what it means to us during our own Year 6 leavers' services we have held each day this week.'

The peace pole was gifted to the school by children at Moordown St John's School, a nearby church school also in the Winchester Diocese, and St Luke's gifted Moordown a peace pole in return.

A plaque on the pole displays a special 'Standing Together' prayer. The pole will be placed in the new school library for children to enjoy and reflect on the message for years to come.

Architects of the future at Abbots Ann



Pupils at Abbots Ann Church had a wonderful time creating peace poles. The children shared lots of ideas about themes, colours and designs and went on to create small prototypes. Fence posts purchased, the children worked with their teacher to sand them, put a primer and undercoat on them and finally painted them using acrylics. They were thrilled with the results.



Peace Pole history at Alverstoke

Year 6 pupils at Alverstoke Church of England Junior School have been learning about the purpose and history of peace poles as part of the wider Standing Together project.

Each child spent time thinking about the concept of peace and what it means to them. They then produced their own designs which were collated and arranged, making sure that elements of all children's ideas were represented on the school's final pole. This was to ensure that the pole could act as a permanent reminder of the year 6 leavers of 2019.20.

The children's peace pole will be placed in the school's spirituality garden and used as a way to celebrate and commemorate the school community, the wider community and to acknowledge global issues, reminding children and staff to think, speak and act in the spirit of peace and unity.

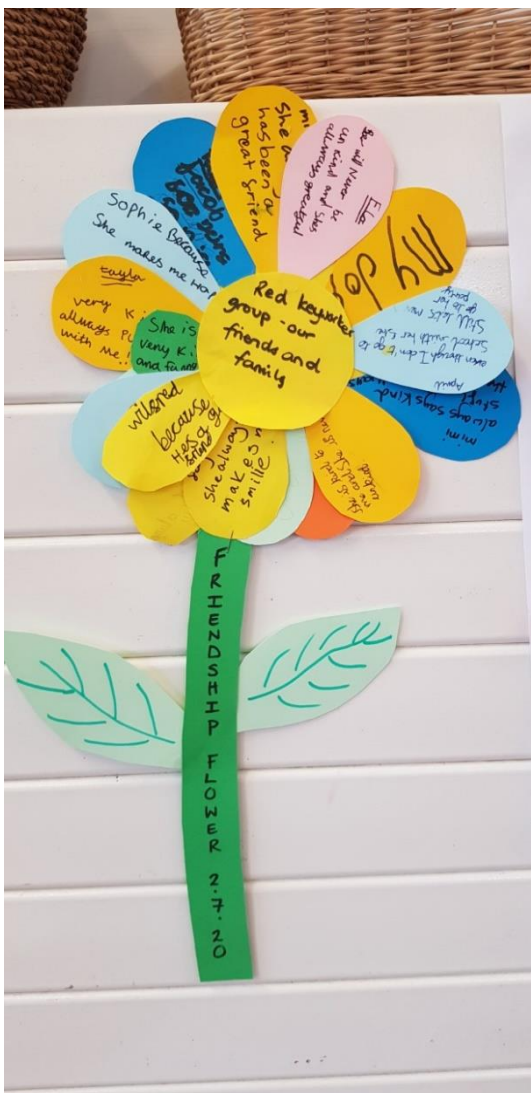


Prayer Space Activities

During the covid-19 lockdown, children at Alverstoke have been continuing to enjoy and take part in daily worship and prayer space activities from within their small 'bubble groups'. They have focused on prayer and have thoughtfully engaged with activities that bring focus the beauty in the world, others, themselves and the beyond.'



into



Sunflowers used as inspiration

This picture shows children from Oakfield Church of England Primary School on the Isle of Wight. The school currently has two year 6 'bubbles' of 15 pupils. The project connected the two together, working collaboratively on a piece of artwork that would be installed permanently on the school grounds.



The school decided to use a new medium children had not used before - papier-mâché clay.

Children thought about the idea of standing together, and felt these words needed to be in a prominent position on their pole. They looked at pictures of sunflowers standing together in a field and felt that creating faces would be a way of showing everyone standing together.

The children explored peace poles and how the faces could be constructed with their exaggerated features and colours. For their own faces, pupils first drew a design and spent some time thinking about colours and what would stand out. To support size and shape, each child was given a laminated face template upon which to 'build' their face. The faces were then baked in the oven to dry them out ready for painting.

Teacher Sam Scovell said: 'The children were pleased with the effects and pleased that the pole would be positioned in our reception area for September. A little bit of them remaining at their primary school standing together.'



The finished peace pole from Romsey Abbey Church of England Primary School. Pupils chose to paint the lips to represent children making the right choices and ensuring that they always speak kind words.

A beautiful creation topped with a cross from the children at St Matthew's Church of England Primary School in Blackmoor.



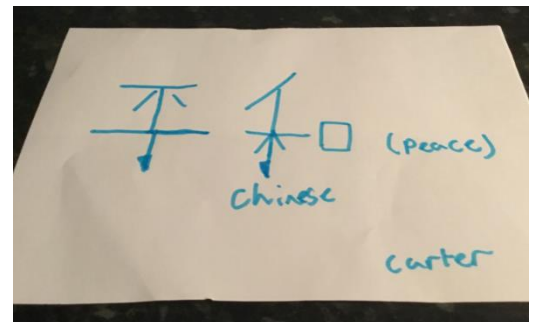
The careful and considered peace pole planning procedure at St John the Baptist School, Waltham Chase captured on camera.....

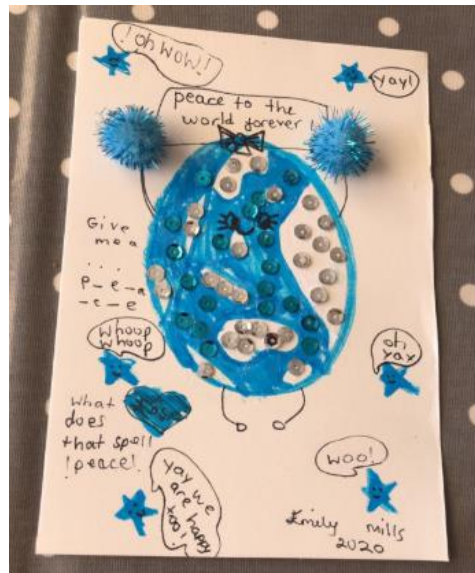


Blue
Symbol of peace:
Dove

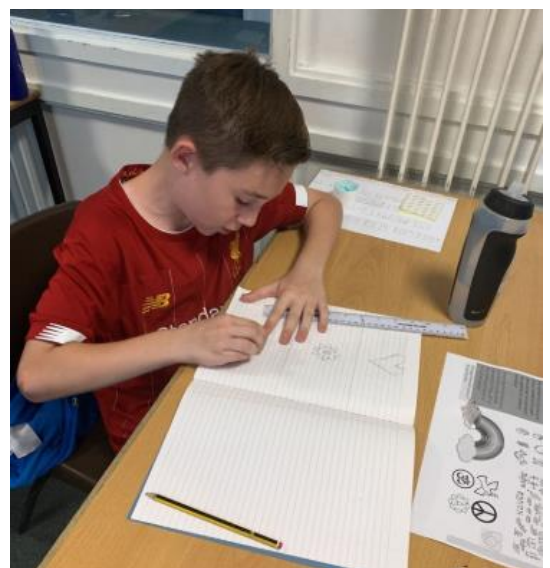
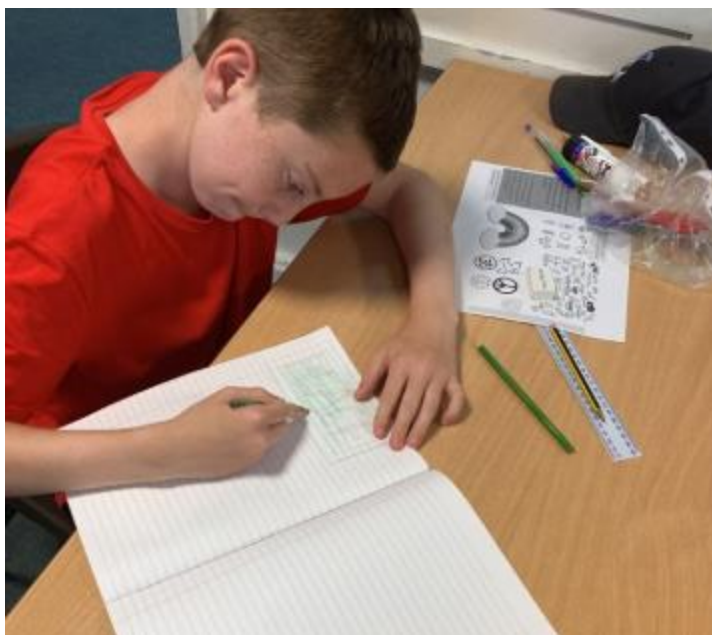
Red
Peace in a different
language:
Japanese

Yellow
What Peace means to me:
Love everywhere!





Me doing my last peace poles artwork.



Individual tiles grace peace pole

Each Year 6 pupil at St Katharine's Church of England Primary School in Hengistbury Head, whether at home or school, completed their own tile for their peace pole.



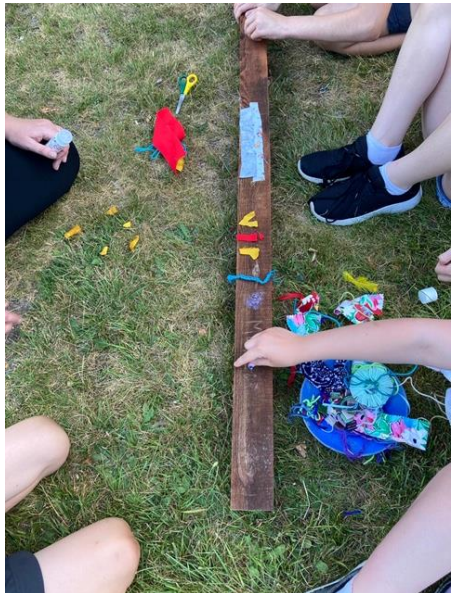


Peace poles created by Year six pupils and children from Key Stage One at Hurstbourne Tarrant Church of England Primary School



Bransgore Primary

Year 6 pupils create their Peace Poles as they say goodbye to staff and children



St Bede Primary

Peace is one of our core values at St Bede. Our motto is 'Growing Together' and our aim is to grow together with love and peace; by doing this we hope that we can all play a part in making the world a better place. So the idea of creating peace poles for our school was especially appealing. Mrs Duck, Head teacher has shared with us the following idea. 'Peace. It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work, it means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.'



Before working on the design for our peace pole, we thought about what peace means to each of us and why we value it. We looked at images which are used to represent peace, while listening to music which helped us feel peaceful. Bella said that her design included 'a rainbow over water because they feel calming and hopeful. These feelings in turn make me feel at peace.' Suzu said 'we need peace to bring balance in our lives, especially at the moment when you look at what is happening in the world.' Jenson said 'When people stop looking for peace bad things happen, like wars, if people kept trying to find peace, maybe they wouldn't.'



Making our peace poles, helped us think about the importance of peace in our lives. They will be a lasting legacy to the importance of peace in our lives now and in the future. The thoughts of Year 6, have been celebrated as they move on to secondary school and the peace poles which they decorated are being put in the middle of our peace garden at school.



Peace poles were not the only diocesan education team project that church school pupils have been taking part in over the lockdown.....

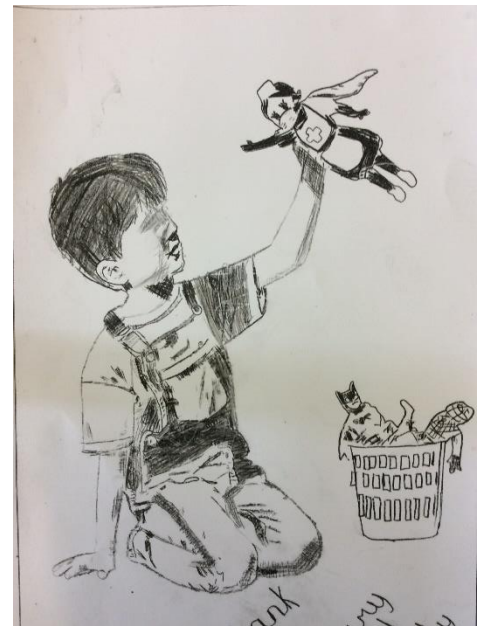


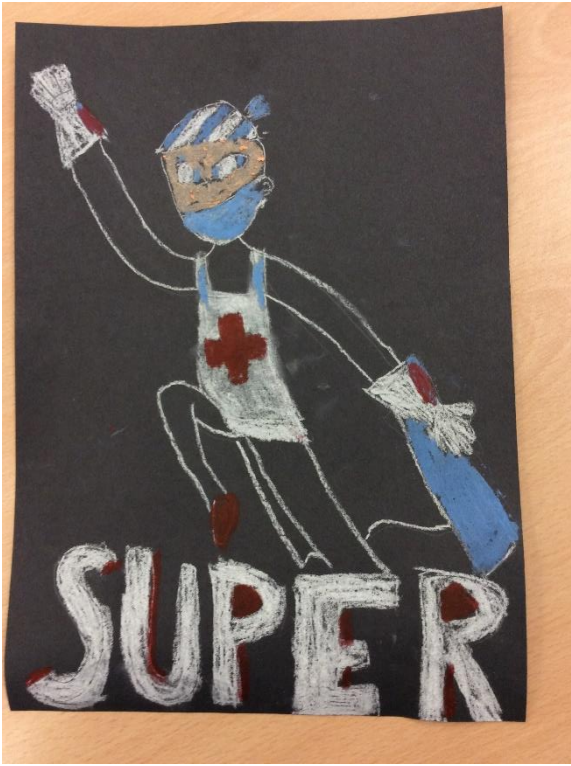
Banksy inspired pictures

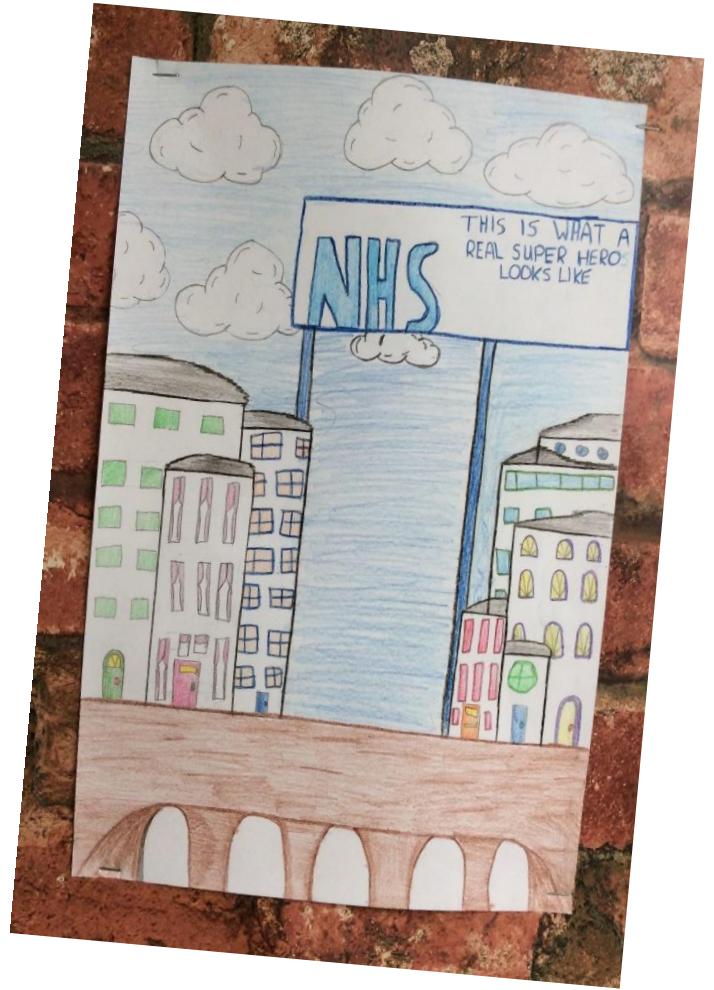
This inspiring picture, created by the illusive Banksy and entitled 'Game Changer' appeared in a corridor at Southampton University Hospital during lockdown. Banksy left a note for workers saying: *Thanks for all you're doing. I hope this brightens the place up a bit, even if it's only black and white.* Hospital staff made time in their busy lives to pause, reflect and appreciate this piece of art. It will eventually be put on public display, then sold at auction to raise money for the NHS.

Church schools across our dioceses were challenged to create their own Banksy-inspired artwork to celebrate the human flourishing, selflessness, service and acts of respect that the world has witnessed in recent times.

Here are some fantastic contributions from the children of St Mary's Church of England Primary School near Basingstoke.





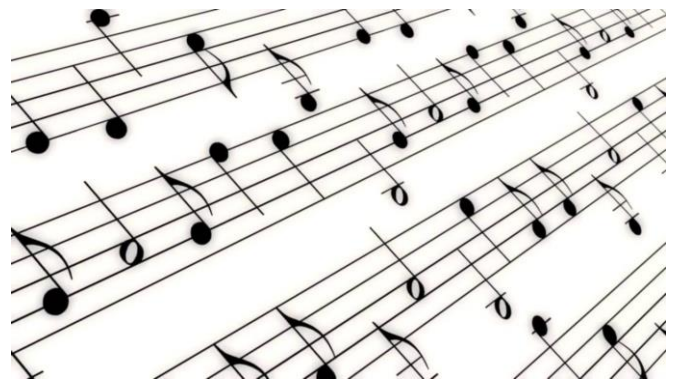


Expressing emotions through song

The song below was composed by Year 6 pupils at Preston Candover Church of England Primary School. The children worked with musicians in video meetings via Google to write their own piece of music around their lockdown thoughts and memories.

Headteacher Simrit Otway said: 'The children were so articulate in their individual reflections and we were quite moved by their responses. The outcomes are in these collaborative lyrics about their experiences during the last few months.'

*The world was at rest,
I learned to play chess
We stood up and clapped for the NHS...
I sat in my room
I learned to use zoom
Heard the birds sing, saw the flowers
bloom...
And while everything was quiet and calm
We learned that we must keep each other
from harm...
We will remember how brave the world
has been,
We'll be with friends again, no matter how far,
We will remember the things the world has seen,
We will remember how powerful we really are...*



*I stuck to the rules
I really missed school
Made a chocolate swiss roll and a gooseberry fool
I went for a hike
New tricks on my bike,
Less pollution pumped out into the sky...
And while everything was quiet and calm
We learned that we must keep each other from harm...
We will remember how brave the world has been,
We'll be with friends again, no matter how far,
We will remember the things the world has seen,
We know how powerful we really are...
We won't take this life for granted.
We won't take this life for granted anymore...*

.Sunflowers to brighten the dark

Children at St Francis Church of England Primary School in Chandlers Ford joined in the Diocesan Sunflower Challenge. Earlier this year, children across the diocesan schools joined together to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The sunflower was used as a symbol of hope following the atrocities.

Year 6 teacher Katie Thorpe said:

'We wanted to plant sunflowers to brighten up our school and homes and make people smile in such a dark time. Watching our sunflowers grow reminds us of our journey in St Francis - from a seed in Year R to a blossomed flower in Year 6. We are looking forward to our next school and will look back at St Francis with fond memories.'



And finally – Ewe Matter, again!

Back in 2017 as part of the Diocesan 'Ewe Matter' project, St John's Church in Hythe presented a life sized sheep to Waterside Primary School for the Year 6's to design and decorate. They created 'Penny-Joy' who came to the Leavers' Service at St John's along with Hythe School's sheep, and they have both since stood proudly in their respective schools.

This year due to the very different times we are experiencing, Waterside decided to revamp 'Penny-Joy' and update her and the current Year 6's have transformed her into "Lock'lan'.

Headteacher Emma Moakes said 'The children completed it to recall this time and to celebrate the community spirit and sense of hope. All but one Year 6 came back to see out their time at Waterside and to revisit friendships before moving on to 'pastures' new!'

