

# Weekly Word

**22nd July 2021**

To all Parents/Carers,

Well, in the blink of an eye, there goes another year at Markeaton!

This time last year we hoped that September 2020 would represent some kind of normality in school. No more bubbles, no more staggered start times/lunchtimes/breaktimes and no more remote learning among other things.

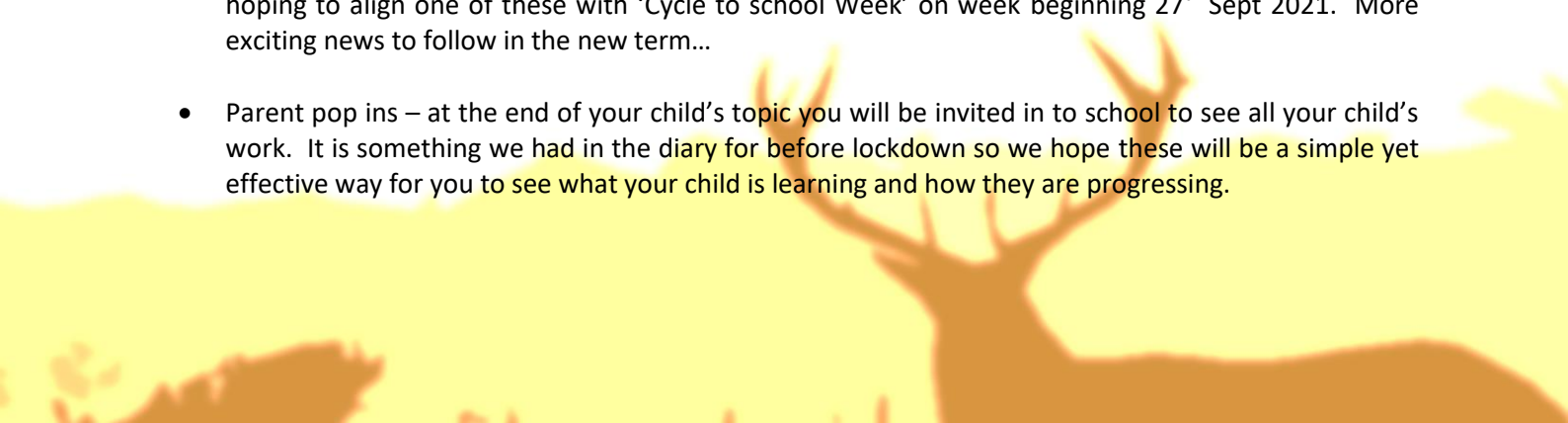
Although none of this happened in the onset there was a sense that 'normality' was closer than it had ever been. Fast forward ten months and here we are, still in bubbles, another lockdown behind us and again hoping that the Autumn Term will bring us what we all need – our school and community back to how it was. Although I do not know the full impact of Covid-19 on the wider community I do hope that you and your loved ones have stayed safe throughout.

This year has been tough for the Markeaton community and now is as good a time as any to say thank you for all your support through what has been a very challenging experience. As you know, since school reopened on March 8<sup>th</sup>, we have been immersing the children in our 'Recovery Curriculum'. A curriculum designed to help children get back on track whilst also recognising the significant impact school being closed has had. Our focus on mental wellbeing and outdoor learning has helped to remedy some of this and we are delighted to say that our provision and level of support for both of these has grown exponentially (please also see attached flyers from our wellbeing partners Bridge the Gap). We have a Designated Senior Mental Health Lead in school (including Markeaton being one of the few schools in the area to achieve the Silver Award), we have staff who are well skilled at identifying and supporting emerging mental health needs and we have a curriculum which encourages children to talk about their feelings in a safe environment.

Next year the curriculum will start to feel a lot more like it used to but these two elements will continue to play a pivotal role; including an even bigger push on use of the outdoors and an increase in Forest School sessions.

Although it is very difficult to predict what will happen next, we do have some very exciting ideas for September, those being:

- An increase in inter-house competitions. At the moment we only really have Sports Day and a general accumulation of house points over the course of the year. In addition to this we are thinking about having curriculum based competitions e.g. Spelling Bees, Times table Recall etc and other opportunities for children to win points for their team.
- More cycle based events. I had a really interesting chat with world record holder [Leigh Timmis](#) yesterday (he has done an assembly for us before) and he has asked if Markeaton would like to be involved in a number of cycle initiatives over the course of the year. We basically said yes! We are hoping to align one of these with 'Cycle to school Week' on week beginning 27<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021. More exciting news to follow in the new term...
- Parent pop ins – at the end of your child's topic you will be invited in to school to see all your child's work. It is something we had in the diary for before lockdown so we hope these will be a simple yet effective way for you to see what your child is learning and how they are progressing.



This is also a chance for us to say farewell to some members of staff who will be leaving us this term. We wish Ruth Holland, Sam Beddington, Veronica Jones, Sue Wyke and Nikki Elson all the best for the future and we would like to say a huge thank you for all their hard work and commitment during their time with us. A special mention must go to Sam Beddington and Ruth Holland; both of whom have been with us for over 35 years combined. They will be sorely missed and have left their own personal legacies in school. We hope that we see them very soon again in the future. Which, in turn, means we are able to welcome Sophie Payne to the team. She will be teaching in Y2 from September after she joined us from another school and we can't wait for her to start 😊

And finally, a warm thank you to all the parents/carers (grandparents and brothers/sisters) who have volunteered to help in school next week (Mon, Tues and Wed) with general housekeeping and DIY jobs. We have nearly 25 volunteers to call upon which is amazing!! If those who have come forward could arrive from 7:00am each day, Mr Shelton our site manager will be here to meet you and go through the tasks for the day (don't worry – we don't expect everyone to arrive this early). It's not too late to sign up if you are keen!

### **Y6 leavers**

On Monday the Y6 children, whose bubble was sadly closed last week, will be coming back to school for their farewell Funday!

I think that is everything for now. I hope you have a lovely restful holiday and I look forward to seeing you on the gate on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September at normal time.

Take care and best wishes,

**Mr I. Johnson**

