



# **BDMAT SPRING PARENT & CARER NEWSLETTER 2021**

## Message from the BDMAT CEO



Welcome to our first newsletter for parents and carers of children in our BDMAT schools; our plan is for these newsletters to be termly. The Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust is a family of 17 schools, one of which is your child's school, spread over three local authorities (Birmingham, Warwickshire and Solihull).

Currently, our schools are all primary but as you will read later in this newsletter we are opening our first secondary school in September. The mission of our Trust is:

To provide high quality education within a Christian framework that allows all pupils to reach their full potential through experiencing a broad and balanced curriculum whilst ensuring staff have a good life / work balance and are fulfilled in their roles.

This mission is encapsulated in our three key vision statements:

- Life in its fullness, for all
- Success, for all
- Positive well-being, for all

You can find out more about the Trust and what we do on our website [www.bdmatschools.com](http://www.bdmatschools.com). Please follow us on Twitter @\_bdmata and on Facebook @bdmatschools.

Following a successful return to school on 8<sup>th</sup> March, I would like to wish you all a peaceful and relaxing Easter break.

*Christopher Mansell*

Dr Christopher Mansell  
Chief Executive Officer



## Easter and Enchantment

### A Reflection by Reverend Larry Wright

#### Have you read The Secret Garden?

Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel, remains one of the classics of children's literature. A story of a child finding hope and healing through nature and the lessons nature teaches about life. It's also a story of enchantment. Mary, the central character is drawn to a vision of something enticing, seemingly just out of reach yet visible in the distance though unobtainable. Through perseverance she enters The Secret Garden.

Gardens feature in the epic Bible stories of human progress under God. The garden of Eden symbolises the ideal relationship between humanity, creation and the creator. The garden of Gethsemane (where Jesus prayed before his arrest, torture and execution) symbolises the apparent futility of faith in the face of cruel oppression and injustice. The Easter garden symbolises the triumph of Justice, Life and Love over the forces of death and destruction.

To live and engage with the promise of 'Life in all its abundance', is to intuitively understand we will encounter all three experiences represented by these "gardens" in our lives. The best children's stories help with the pressure of developing emotionally. Working with children we often experience something of their more entrancing perspectives on the world. Maybe, there is someone in the BDMAT network with an idea for a children's novel about life in the pandemic?

When pupils and staff returned to school we were still in a period of uncertainty and anxiety. As Easter approaches the promises of life returning to 'normal' seems just around the corner, visible but not yet obtainable, just like Mary's partial vision of her secret garden. The hope engendered by even a partial vision may offer; new life, promise and abundance, a compelling force for good.

According to St John's Gospel chapter 20, another Mary encounters Jesus in a garden in a new way after his death. She doesn't recognise him at first. She has lost hope and is in despair. Jesus represented all she and hoped for in life and he's dead to her or so she thought. Yet, something happened which caused her to reimagine the boundaries between life and death. Death was not the end for Jesus or his message. The garden flourished. A strange new thing happened.

One of the more enchanting quotes from The Secret Garden regarding belief and faith may have been written with Easter in mind.

“At first people refuse to believe that a strange new thing can be done, then they begin to hope it can be done, then they see it can be done--then it is done and all the world wonders why it was not done centuries ago.”

Reverend Larry Wright

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## Christ Church, Church of England Secondary Academy – Update March 2021



This is a very exciting time for our new school as we look forward to welcoming families to our school community in September. We have been humbled by the very high level of interest in our school and places in our founding cohort.

Throughout this term, significant progress has been made towards the opening of our school. Our project and construction teams have made excellent progress on site, so that we are given the gift of a spectacular new school well in advance of opening. Our Funding Agreement has also been signed by the Secretary of State for Education confirming Ministerial approval for our opening this September.

The responses to our recent recruitment campaigns for teaching staff have been amazing. We have recruited experienced, well qualified teaching and associate staff of the highest calibre to lead our school and our subject departments.

We look forward to welcoming girls and boys of all backgrounds who are passionate about learning, willing to work hard and ready to challenge and develop themselves in a Christian community.



# BDMAT values

## Our values

Our BDMAT values were revised in consultation with stakeholders in the autumn term 2020. As a result, our revised values are:

**Hope** – we have hope that there can always be a positive outcome

**Honesty** – we are honest with all inside and outside our organisation, whilst being sensitive to how we deliver these messages

**Integrity** – we have strong principles rooted in our Christian mission that lead our actions and decisions

**Helpfulness** – we work in co-operation and partnership with all staff and stakeholders

**Respect** – we respect all those that we come across

**Dignity and compassion** – we treat all those within and outside our organisation with dignity, irrespective of the circumstances, and we show everyone compassion for the difficulties that they are experiencing

**Wisdom** – The decisions we take are wise and are based on informed discussions and evidence and aimed at ensuring we achieve the best outcomes for all without forsaking our values

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## New logos

We have worked with the chairs of our diversity forums to develop a new set of equality diversity and inclusion logos (see below) that promotes the work that we are doing with these two groups of staff and pupils. As part of our work on equality, diversity and inclusion we have developed the following three logos to reinforce with staff, pupils and parents our commitment to this agenda:



# Lateral flow tests for parents

**The government is recommending that households with primary aged children carry out a COVID-19 lateral flow test twice per week. Unfortunately, the government is not issuing these to schools to distribute to parents.**

There are different ways to get a test for members of households, childcare and support bubbles in England who do not have symptoms of coronavirus.

## **Members of households, childcare or support bubbles**

From 1 March 2021, if you're a member of a household, childcare bubble or support bubble of a pupil you can get a twice-weekly test:

- through your employer if they offer testing to employees
- at a local test site
- by collecting a home test kit from a test site
- by ordering a home test kit online

## **Collect test kits**

You can collect 2 packs of home test kits at a local collection point. Each pack contains 7 tests. Anyone 18 or over can collect.

Most collection points are open from 1.30pm to 7pm. You can check online if the location is open or busy before you go. You do not need to make an appointment.

[Find your nearest home test kit collection point.](#)

## **Order home test kits online**

If you cannot get tested at your workplace, or are unable to go to a test site or collect test kits, you can order a home test kit online.

Do not order online if you can get a test through other methods; this frees up home delivery for those who need it most.

[Order rapid lateral flow home test kits](#)

What twice-weekly testing involves

You will be asked to:

- take a test twice a week (every 3 or 4 days apart)
- report every result to NHS Test and Trace on the same day you take the test

Report your test result online or by calling 119.

If anyone tests positive or gets coronavirus symptoms, they should tell the school and:

- self-isolate immediately
- get a PCR test to confirm the result
- follow the stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection

**A negative result means the test did not find signs of coronavirus. But this does not guarantee you do not have coronavirus,** so you should keep following all coronavirus advice including:

- regular handwashing
- social distancing
- wearing a face covering where recommended

Thank you for following this guidance and in doing so protecting our pupils, families and staff.

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## More school news!

### Nonsuch Primary School

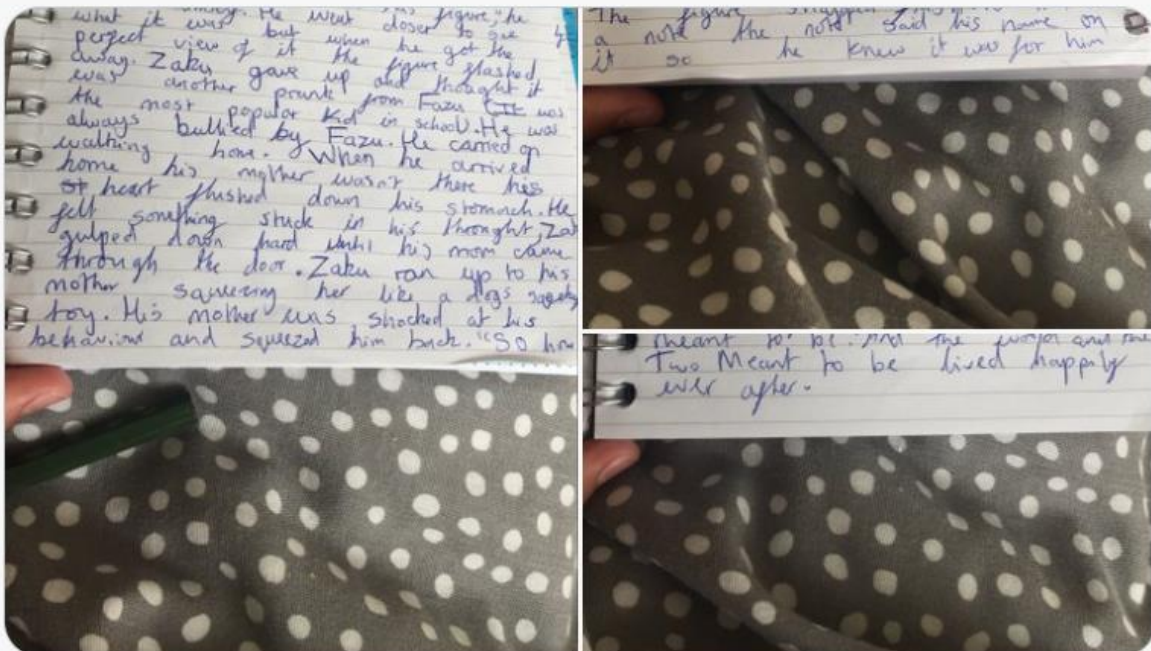
During Year 5's Well-being Wednesday, we asked the children to sketch something they really enjoy! We have very talented children.



For Wellbeing Wednesday this week, Reception class spent time away from screens and coloured in pictures from their [#talkforwriting](#) book, discussing elements of their story, Goldilocks and the Three bears. After that, they tried two types of porridge. One milk, the other water.



Inspired by the WBD assembly by David Walliams, some Year 6's at home have been writing their own stories! Here is the story of a young boy named Zaku, who lives in a world full of superheroes, but is bullied because he has no powers of his own! [#WorldBookDay2021](#) [@davidwalliams](#)



Our year 4/6 bubble have really enjoyed 'upcycling' water bottles to create bird feeders for our 'Wellbeing Wednesday' task! We're all looking forward to seeing the birds that visit us for lunch! 🐦🦜 #upcycling



As ever, Year 4 had a fantastic ukulele lesson with Miss Bashford! Everyone's confidence is growing with chord changes and they sounded great with the backing track 👍 Miss Tea was very impressed when she heard them before the 'live lesson' 🎵🎸 @sfe\_tweets @sfe\_ms #Ukulele



Year 5 enjoying their remote Music Lessons 🎧 🎵



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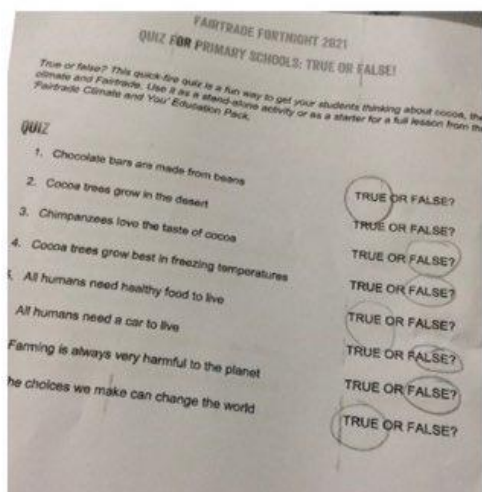
### Woodside CE Primary School

Children at Woodside, both those attending as Key Worker Children and those working from home, made some wonderful hearts in February to decorate our very own "Heart Barn". The hearts were made of lots of different materials including wool, beads, paper and clay - and each one had a special message or prayer for the key workers that have helped us all through the last twelve months.



## Quinton CE Primary School

At Quinton Church Primary School we have been celebrating a number of different National Days including Martin Luther King Day, Internet Safety Day, Fair Trade Fortnight and World Book Day.



We also introduced Well-Being Wednesday afternoon, which gave us the opportunity to down the screens after so much time has been spent on remote learning and technology. During this time we carried out an activity which gave us the opportunity to recharge, get creative and gain balance for our mental health and well-being for all.



## St George's Edgbaston CE Primary School

### Half Term Hot Food Kitchen

We were honoured to host a 'Half Term Hot Food Kitchen' during the half term break. This was organised with the help of the Midland Langar Seva Society (MLSS) - a national society, with a Sikh ethos - 'serving humanity', that strives to help those in need around the UK.

We were truly overwhelmed with the vast amount of donations we received from near and afar. This wealth of generous donation enabled us to not only provide local families and individuals with a hot meal daily, but also a meal parcel to take away; allowing them to make an additional meal from home. The turnout was phenomenal and we were lucky enough to serve over 1200 hot meals to children, their families and local individuals throughout the week.

The event also received some media coverage featuring on 'Midlands Today' and TNT News (a local news website). You can read and hear more about this event here: <https://tntnews.co.uk/st-georges-school-food-bank-february-2021/>

It really was a humbling experience for all those involved and the sense of community was well and truly 'alive'.



*The experience of doing something for the community was a great feeling. The way in which people came together to serve others is a really special thing. Andy Davis (Teacher at St Georges)*

*As pastoral manager I thoroughly enjoyed bringing both staff and the community together by school providing a food kitchen during half term. It allowed us to deepen the relationships with our families and extend the St Georges family, whilst identifying those in need for future support. The generosity of those that donated was incredible and it was great to work with Midland Langar Society; their strapline 'serving humanity' is simply what we did. My daughter and family members who donated and volunteered also enjoyed the experience of giving back"- Sarb Masih*



*It was truly appreciated by my family and families in the area.  
School parent*

*It was an experience I will never forget! Our community of volunteers were amazing, to come together and help those that needed it, and to see their appreciation was overwhelming. I really felt that we made a difference albeit for a short while and that people we genuinely grateful. But this also highlighted the growing problem of poverty and that we as human beings need to do our utmost to help those less fortunate, mixed emotions of being proud of those who stepped up to help others and also sadness for a need for these sort of events that need to take place.*

*Diane (Office Manager at St George's)*