



Lowther

ISSUE 6: MARCH 2020

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Welcome!

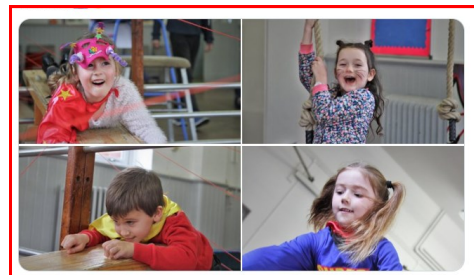
Welcome to the March edition of our newsletter. There's certainly plenty of great news to share with you regarding so many aspects of school life here at Lowther. We love enriching your children's learning and providing them with opportunities to learn in different ways.

If you haven't been on the school website or one of our social media platforms recently please do check them out. The website is mobile friendly and there's some great content on there. Some of the new additions include updated galleries, videos and our curriculum offer.

We also have two active social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter) so parents and families can keep fully connected with all things Lowther. The Twitter account is also embedded into the school website and so no logging in or signing up for an account are needed. Those of you that do follow us on Twitter I'd like to say a huge thank you for your support and interest in the school. We have a high level of engagement in our tweets and Facebook posts. We will continue to post new content on our three different online platforms. See later in this newsletter for further developments for Lowther online. We hope you like the plans.

Whilst we will continue to produce the traditional monthly newsletter we increasingly use our social media platforms and website, alongside Parent mail for delivering all the latest Lowther news.

Photographic summary of more school events



Sports Report

We start our sports update with the fantastic news that our Netball Team came out as winners of the Borough Plate Netball Tournament winning six matches en route to their success in the tournament. They won a huge shield which has been put alongside our growing trophy collection on the front desk. Great job Team Lowther.

Our Netball team also still have a chance to win their league, it all comes down to their last match against East Sheen — it's winner takes all!

Our boys football team are second in their league (only goal difference separating them from top spot)

Our girls football team are currently second in their league.

Our swimming squad performed brilliantly in the ultra competitive Borough gala. Whilst we didn't have any finalists this year the children competed superbly and gave 110%.

We are also expanding our sports provision — we have a team entered in to the Borough Hockey tournament and they've been training hard to hone their skills in advance of this.

Other notable recent successes included our Y34 boys footballers winning 6 games out of 6 and scoring 17 and only conceding twice in the Borough football festival. Finally, our Y56 boys football team came runners up in a 35 team tournament featuring schools from Richmond, Hounslow and Ealing boroughs! Fantastic skills and teamwork on show by Team Lowther!



The netball team warmed up for the Borough tournament with an impressive win against St.Osmund's. Our team have a chance to win the local league if they can beat East Sheen in their final league match.



The intangible experience that is Lowtherness. How do we describe it? What actually is it? Our school improvement priority of "Everyone understands Lowtherness" is a piece of work we're all beginning to really enjoy exploring and developing. One thing we are certain about is that our pupils are pure Lowtherness! They have such a super positive attitude to learning; they work hard and always seem to show such a genuine enjoyment and enthusiasm for school.

Our children consistently get fully involved in the life of their school. The numbers of children we always get that put themselves forward for all sorts of things is awesome – over 90 auditions for Lowtherness Live is just one example, over 100 entries in under one week for our new Reading Challenge, another. This positivity extends into all parts of school life – whether that be producing quality work, answering and asking questions in class or producing amazing homework - our children want to be a part of their school. Developing and fostering these positive dispositions and attitudes to learning is a key part of our children's success and absolutely fundamental to life at Lowther. Providing opportunities for our pupils is also a key part of that offer, whether that is opportunities to visit places they've never been, opportunities to play sport, to be on the stage, to learn to read.....our school will give the children those chances. Is this the essence of Lowtherness? I hope over the coming year to talk to parents and children more about what Lowtherness is to them.

All our term dates for the remainder of this academic year and next too are available online. This half term is 6 weeks long and we're filling it with loads of amazing learning opportunities. It's going to be fantastic!

Children start - Monday 24th February

Children finish - Friday 3rd April

Summer Term 2020 - Monday 20th April to Tuesday 21st July 2020

Children start - Monday 20th April

Bank Holiday - Friday 8th May

Children finish - Friday 22nd May

Half Term week - Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May

Children start - Monday 1st June

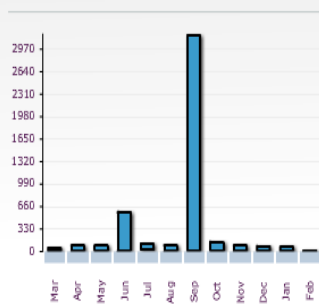
Inset Day - Friday 12th June

Inset Day - Monday 15th June

Children finish - Tuesday 21st July

At Lowther we really value (and need) the fabulous contributions our community makes to the school. Whether this be financial support, helping out with events, offering skills and advice, volunteering in class and trips or just being supportive of the school generally, Thank you all for the amazing way you support our school. It really does make us MAD (MAKES A DIFFERENCE) Detailed below are some of the details of how you can support the school financially. Over the years this has made such a positive difference to the school, allowing us to purchase additional resources and fund exciting projects. Please do help in any way you can.

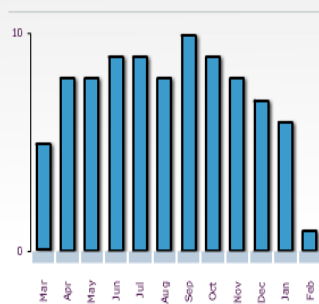
Donations received



Total donations received

£4,836.00 Last 12 months

Number of donations



Number of donations

90 Last 12 months

Some of our parents make monthly donations by direct debit to the school account (via Virgin Money giving)

Did you know?

£3 a month from every family across the school would give the school an extra £10,000 a year to support the children's learning.

If you increased that to a donation of £5 a month that would equate to over £15,000. Imagine what sort of resources we could provide for the children with those additional funds. Please do consider if this is something you'd like to do.



Stag Brewery: I spoke at the Stag Brewery development meeting recently. I made it clear that I was not commenting on whether the development should go ahead or not but on behalf of the children and their families, the community and some of the local schools, with the focus being the need for a new secondary school in this area. The key points and facts I explained included:

There's been an increase in the primary pupil population, with the permanent expansion of many primaries locally (Sheen Mount, East Sheen, Lowther, Holy Trinity etc.) alongside the opening of a new school (Thomson House)

There is a skewed distribution of secondary schools in the borough – there are 9 on the west side of the borough and only 2 (RPA and Christ's east of Richmond town centre). It is worth noting that the most recent additions (in the last 3 years) Richard Reynolds, Turing House and Richmond upon Thames school – are all on the west side.

If you are not a church go-er what are your options if you live in our area? Of the 10 local primaries in our "designated" locality, 7 are not church schools (only 3 are – and 2 of those are catholic)

Fairness of choice – in many parts of the borough families have a choice of 2 and sometimes 3 state secondary schools on the distance criteria alone. In other parts of the borough, which include Barnes and Kew, families have no choice.

Our families sometimes receive no initial allocation in March

We have a very good relationship with RPA as our most local secondary school – but in recent times there have been occasions our children haven't been able to get in there. In addition, as that school's demand grows (with its growing reputation) the catchment will become increasingly small.

I also stressed that Richmond primaries are second to none – the data and statistics prove that. By ensuring our primary intakes are maintained, alongside high quality secondary provision within the state system and an increase in dwellings, the number of children will be there to support expanded secondary provision going forward.

The development was approved and so this is good news for families in the Barnes and Kew area in particular. Do come and talk to me if you'd like to know more about this important matter.

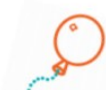
We hope you found your recent parents evening helpful. We want to work closely alongside parents and families to support your child's learning journey and development. Thank you for your support and please do continue to liaise regularly with your child's teacher.

You may have spotted the posters advertising the PTA's annual Quiz Night. It's this **FRIDAY — 6th MARCH**. Please do come along—we guarantee you'll have fun. It's always a mixture of fun quiz type rounds e.g. music, film, general knowledge as well as some games and challenges. Last year we had table tennis and model building! There's a bar and it's a great fun way to support your school. Please do try and come!



We currently are not meeting our attendance target. The minimum we expect for all children, all classes and therefore the school, is 96%. The language we use for school attendance has changed from a "target" of 96% to a minimum expectation of 96% We want this to help support a positive change in attendance patterns. Overall, only 4 out of 7 individual classes have good enough attendance across the school. It is worth noting that this would be a limiting judgement with any Ofsted inspection. Please support the school with ensuring your child meets the minimum expectation. Well done to Year 5 who have the best attendance in the school.

Class	Attendance %(school year to date)	
Rec	94.2% - below minimum expectation	7th place
y1	96.2% - above minimum expectation	2nd place
y2	95.9% - below minimum expectation	5th place
y3	96.1% - above minimum expectation	3rd place
y4	95.1% - above minimum expectation	6th place
y5	96.6% - above minimum expectation	1st place (out of 7 year groups)
y6	96.0% - above minimum expectation	4th place
TOTAL SCHOOL ATTENDANCE = 95.76%		



Volunteer. Because childhood can't wait.

If you have **parenting experience**, a few hours spare each week and want to make a difference to a local family, join our network of trained volunteers, helping families with young children through challenging times. **Free volunteer course runs in East Sheen on Thursdays**

9.30am-2.30pm from 30 April to
18 June 2020 (not 28 May).



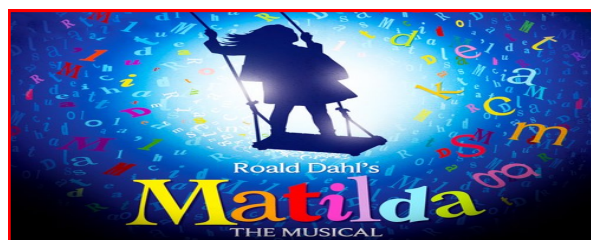
To find out more, contact
Angie Ahmed
info@homestart-rkh.org.uk
020 8487 8500
homestart-rkh.org.uk

**HOME
START**
Richmond, Kingston
and Hounslow

Charity No:
1108975

It's show time! Year 4 are currently working hard on their version of the musical Matilda. It's going to be a fantastic show. The tickets will be available soon but in the meantime please put these dates in your diary!

Tuesday 24th March - 17:30 start
Wednesday 25th March - 18:30 start



We have three exciting residential trips planned for our students this year.

- Year 4 head off for a PGL trip on April 1st
- New for this year is Year 5 residential trip: they are going camping on 4th May
- Year 6 are going to the Isle of Wight for an end of Lowther celebration on the 22nd June,

We plan these trips really carefully to give the children an unforgettable experience with their classmates.

School leaders and governors are committed to ensuring communication with parents is up to date, interesting and easily accessible. As you know we set up a school Twitter account several years ago. We now have over 800 followers and have tweeted nearly 2,000 messages. In 2018 we then launched our own school Facebook page — this now has 130 friends. Our posts to social media regular attract lots of engagement and positive feedback. Funnily enough, our staff dance video was one of our most popular recent posts, attracting over 2,500 views! We are now planning to set up a school Instagram account to aid further our communication with families. We believe Instagram will prove to be an important communication tool for the school as well as a way of spreading further more the fantastic things we do here at Lowther. Mr Bracken and I will be the moderators for the account. We are also working with a group of parents to ensure the content is what parents value and like. We will moderate our profile daily. The aim of the site is to share all the latest news and events that are happening at Lowther and to share all the positive and fabulous aspects of school life at Lowther. We hope you like it. The page will be going live very soon. To find the page you can search for Lowther School via Instagram or Google. We will also Tweet and parentmail a link once the account is live.



Please also share this news with your friends and other members of the wider school community.

As with all social media we will manage this carefully. If you would prefer your child to not be on any of our posts please do let Mr Bracken, the school office team or myself know.

Unfortunately school toilets aren't always the most pleasant of places and whilst we've tried to improve our facilities over the years it's not been easy to deliver the facilities for the children that we'd like to. We are therefore delighted to announce that we have successfully bid for some money from the Local Authority to make some improvements to the toilet facilities for the pupils at Lowther. This money is for the school year 2020/2021 so it means that we're going full steam ahead into the planning phase for improving this important part of the school. We'd be really interested to hear from parents about their views on this so please do come and let us know if you have any ideas on how things could be better.

An exciting and important project for next year!

As part of our drive to continually improve we work alongside a school improvement partner employed by us through Achieving for Children (the local authority) She works with Mr.Bracken, myself and other senior leaders on a range of different aspects of school life. During the most recent visit we looked closely at the Reading provision here at Lowther. Here are some of the key findings:

- All leaders share the same aspirations of what they want Lowther pupils to have achieved as readers by the time they leave the school for example,
- Develop the mechanics of reading so they can decode with confidence, develop good comprehension skills, - access a range of genre and the wider curriculum, -develop an enjoyment of reading and become life-long readers.
- Interventions are in place to help those children not acquiring the necessary phonic knowledge.
- Pupils talked about enjoying reading.
- Pupils used phonics as a first strategy when tackling unfamiliar words.
- Most pupils said they were supported in their reading at home.

Recommendations

- Develop pupils' vocabulary and oracy skills (SIP suggested a local school that is developing 'dialogic talk')
- Put in place phonologically decodable texts, so that pupils are applying their phonic knowledge in books where they are making errors no more than one word in every twenty words.

Community Day is always one of our favourite days. This year it's on Monday 30th March (please note this is a new date)

We'll be starting the day with a fun warm up and then we'll be doing our annual fun run. As usual the theme will be crazy hairstyles and funky socks. The children always look the part and it's such a fun part of the day!

The teachers then have a whole series of fun activities for the children to explore during the remainder of the day. Parents and family are welcome to join us for some or all of the day. We'd particularly love to see you for the warm up and the run at the start of the day. Full details coming soon.



Book day is on Friday 6th March. We're looking forward to it. The plans are as follows

Dress up as a book character—please note this is NOT a multi day but children should ONLY come as BOOK characters or in normal uniform.

We're having an assembly where we'll do some fun book related activities. Each teacher will go to a different year group and teach a book related activity. Teachers will also plan a day of activities for their own class that centre around books

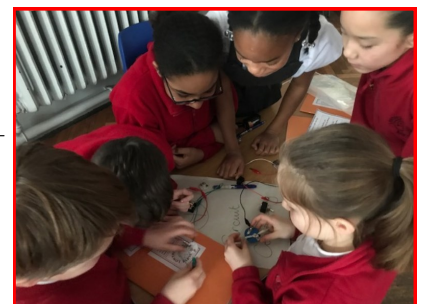


It should be a fun day full of the joys of books!

Science **Week** at Lowther is just around the corner and will take place from **9th-13th March**.

This years theme is "**Our diverse planet**", which follows the official British Science Week suggestion. Full details and ideas can be found here: <https://www.britishtscienceweek.org/> The theme has been chosen to "*celebrate the amazing diversity we see across the world. From biodiversity to cultural and societal diversity, from the diversity of knowledge to STEM careers and subjects*".

As in previous years, we will be holding a Science Expo on the Friday (13th March) which will showcase all of the exciting investigating that has taken place across the school throughout the week. Year groups will each demonstrate an investigation, and parents will be invited to visit between 2.30-3.15pm. Full details to follow..



We are delighted to announce our school is taking part in an exciting new project to improve mental health for children and young people. We have been selected as one of around 150 schools in south west London involved in the programme, receiving extra resources to support our pupils with their mental health and emotional resilience. This is linked to a national initiative following the Government's Green Paper on children and young people's mental health. South West London has been successful in bidding for over £6m of funding to put these new services in place.

Mrs Bere (our SENCO) been working with the other schools involved, as well as GPs and mental health professionals, to oversee the delivery of the project. Training has begun for school-based support workers who will offer both one-to-one support and group work sessions for our pupils and parents and, where needed, signpost or refer to specialist children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The sessions will give children and young people practical skills for managing a range of feelings and offer parents an opportunity to practise the conversations that encourage better mental health and wellbeing. The team of support workers working in our school will shortly begin / has begun visiting schools and meeting teachers and pupils as part of their training.

You can find out more about the wider project across south west London at www.swlondon.nhs.uk
I'm sure you'll agree this is a great project to be part of.