



# Watergate Newsletter

Summer 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was certainly a busy and celebratory end to the school year. We said goodbye to our 21 leavers on Tuesday and wished them luck on the next stage of their journey, it was a very moving occasion. Thursday was Carnival day, both at Ladywell and on the main site. Everyone dressed up in their brightest colours and there was singing and dancing throughout the day. We had a parade, visiting musicians, including a steel band, bouncy castles and lots fun activities. On Friday we had a talent show, with many classes entering. Again it was another joyful occasion, with music, laughter and lots of singing and dancing. Congratulations to Violet Class who were our winners and to Inan and Peach Class who were runners up.

This year has certainly been 'interesting' and action-packed and it would be fair to say that not much has gone to plan. However, it is important to note that there have been many positives in the school, despite the pandemic. The first and most important thing to mention is the excellent progress that your children have made since September, I am sure you will have experienced this at home as well. Throughout the school I have seen: children using their communication systems and devices to make their voice heard; wonderful independence and self-help skills and; lots of creativity and joyful interaction. Katie and the MOVE team retained the school's Centre of Excellence status, which is so well deserved. Some of the progress our pupils have made with their mobility, as a result of MOVE programmes, is absolutely incredible.

We have continued to develop and embed our new holistic child-centred curriculum, with its focus on the Golden Threads of My Communication and Interaction, My Independence and My Thinking and Problem Solving Skills. We deliver our curriculum through themes and this term it was Land Ahoy! You may have seen Molly and Paloma's naughty pirates on the website and on our Twitter feed @creativewaterg1 . To launch the topic staff developed 6 really exciting days: 'Off to Mars', 'Boats! Boats! Boats!', 'Save the Oceans', 'Pirates of the Caribbean', 'Desert Island Day' and 'Bon Voyage' and these acted as the starting point for planning for the remainder of the term. In March we received a very positive report about the content of the curriculum and staff understanding of it from our Challenge Partners consultant.

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Despite not being able to go out, we have continued to hold a strong place in the community. Many of you will have watched our film entry to Lewisham Live Dance and we entered the “I AM” festival with our clay figures which were originally meant to be exhibited at the Tate.

Another positive of the lockdowns was staff’s ability to develop creative and fun on-line learning activities and videos for those pupils who could not come into school. Everyone really thought outside the box and pushed themselves to do something new - if you are stuck for ideas during the summer it is worth having a look at <https://www.watergate.lewisham.sch.uk/student-zone>

As restrictions gradually lift, it has been wonderful to see some classes once again taking their children out to local community parks. The children have really been excited to be in, and benefitted from, beautiful outdoor environments. A group of our older pupils were able to do some really exciting outdoor learning off-site, with Ben Bullen - they loved cooking over an open fire and paddling in the stream. It was also such a relief to be able to welcome some of you back into school during our recent Parent Consultation/Transition meetings - we have missed being able to meet with you face to face so much.

The addition of Rani, our Family Support Worker, to our team has brought about a lot of positive changes for some of our families and I know many of you joined her Zoom coffee mornings and workshops. The Brent Knoll Watergate Trust gave us funding for counselling for some parents and this was so successful and appreciated we are hoping to be able to raise more money to continue this offer.

At the end of this school year we say goodbye and thank-you to some key staff members of the Watergate Community. Tessa Ring and Madeleine Bourne are retiring after many years at the school. We also say goodbye to Nigel from Aqua Class, Zoe from Blue Class, Grazina from Lime, Aaron in Orange and Alice in Violet. I know you will join me in wishing all those who are leaving the school good luck with their future ventures.

Finally, I say goodbye to you all, as I hand over to Watergate’s new headteacher Linda Matthews. Linda and the team have some exciting plans for the next school year. It has been an absolute pleasure to have been at Watergate for the past two years and a privilege to have met and worked with so many of you. Thank-you all for your support.

I wish you a safe and happy summer.

Fiona

# Superheroes spotted at local school!

Over a week in July, children who have been taking part in MOVE programmes across the year joined our Superhero Academy. Their superhero mission - to catch the burglar who had stolen Louis the dog! It was a tricky mission, but our MOVE superheroes accepted the challenge, using their MOVE skills to track down and capture the dastardly dog snatcher!

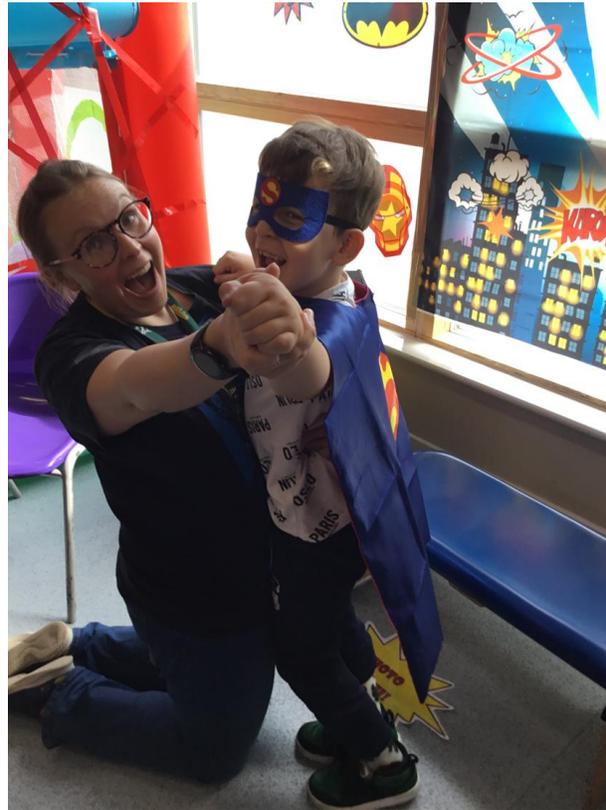
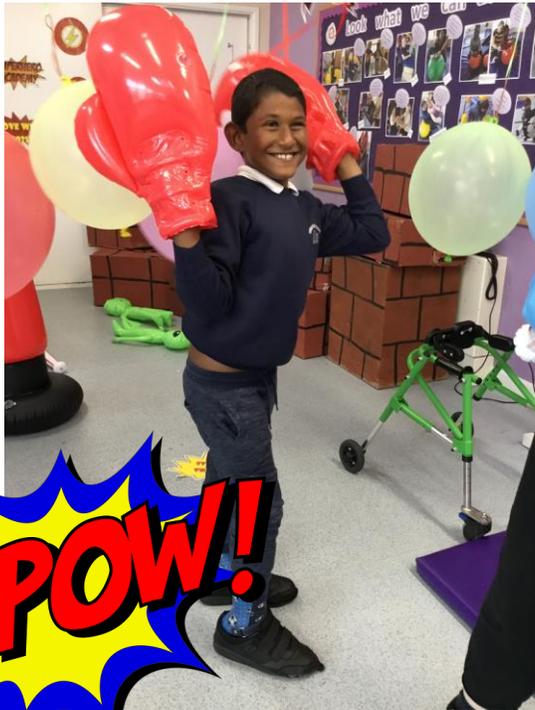
In a ceremony after the burglar catching, children received their well deserved MOVE award certificates.

We join Katie in thanking every member of staff across the school who support MOVE - not just across the Superhero week, but every single day. A big thank you also goes to Jack (aka 'the burglar') who spent most of Friday being chased around the playground with water guns - he was soaked!





More of our fearless  
Watergate Superheroes!



# Samba Le Le

At Watergate every movement matters - every tap of the foot, every nod of the head, every sway, every spin, every shimmy and every shake. Dance is a celebration of who we are and what we can do and we love it! Our music specialist teacher, Paloma, recorded a special version of the Brazilian folk song Samba Le Le and on one day in May we all came together to dance, play and sing along to it. Our wonderful HLTA Marlina helped us with our moves and Molly filmed us and put together a video.

The video was part of Trinity Laban's Lewisham Live Dance Festival. It was premiered and shared with families across Lewisham this month and we hope it brought you joy seeing our children enjoying moving and playing to the music. Well done everyone!



# Boats, Boats, Boats!

As part of our Land Ahoy! topic each class were asked to make shoebox sized boats to form part of an art installation. This installation was inspired by the amazing work of artist Hew Locke. Hew Locke is a British artist based in Brixton.

We put together our boats, together with individual clay models to represent each member of our school community.

Our installation has been available for pupils to go and visit all term and has also featured as part of the I AM Festival - an annual celebration empowering D/deaf, disabled and neurodiverse young people to explore their creativity.

This festival would usually take place at Tate Modern but was moved online due to the pandemic. Hopefully we can get our work into Tate Modern before long!



# Totem Pole Art Challenge

This term's Art Challenge for classes has been to create a class totem pole.

Everyone has risen to the challenge fantastically and made some hugely impressive, creative and colourful totem poles.

The totems are decorated in lots of different ways, reflecting the interests of the children and it's wonderful to spend time looking at them and discovering all the little details and decorations. We hope you like them!



# Watergate's Got Talent (but you already knew that!)



What better way to finish off the school year than to celebrate the fabulous talents of our brilliant pupils (and staff!).

Peach Class wowed the judges and bagged first place, with Inan and Kesiena also from Peach Class singing solos. Moses from Orange Class impressed the judges with his singing and dancing from the climbing frame whilst a great time was had by everyone taking part and watching from the audience.

A special mention to everyone who signed up and took part, helping to make the Talent Show a huge success and ensuring everyone had a great time!





## Goodbye Year 6

It is always a bitter sweet time of year when we say a very fond farewell to our Year 6 pupils. This time around was no exception, although we were thrilled to be able to invite families into school for a very special leavers' festival.

The sun shone as Year 6, their families and staff who have had the privilege of working with them over the years came together to enjoy an afternoon of memories, fun activities, a bouncy castle, emotional speeches, ice cream and photo cup cakes!

It has been an absolute pleasure to have shared the past six years with our leavers and their families, we are very proud of all they have achieved and we wish them all the very best as they move on to new schools and the next chapter of their adventures.

