



# Head's Weekly Newsletter

Issue 5, 2 October 2020



Mrs Ania Hildrey, Headteacher, [headteacher@abbotsleaschool.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@abbotsleaschool.co.uk)

Dear Students, Families, Colleagues and Friends

Welcome to today's issue of the newsletter.

I have always practised complete transparency in my leadership of Abbot's Lea School and my stance during these difficult times has been no different. This year, and possibly, beyond, our work will be underpinned by the three overarching aims:

1. Protect ourselves, and all others around us, from Covid-19 transmission as much as possible;
2. Do our best to continue our on-site school provision to as many students as possible, at all times;
3. Continue with the School Development Plan 2018-21 priorities, whilst planning the next cycle of the school development for 2021-24, as we **must** continue to improve our overall school effectiveness in the years to come (Covid or not!)

I hope you forgive me for the recent communications being mainly focused on the first two bullet points. The dominance of the reactive management of the school provision is the main culprit here, but I am at peace with needing to communicate extensively during crisis times.

On that note, it is important for the families to be fully aware that all special schools have been working to develop clear thresholds of:

**Green** – safe provision of education at our school

**Amber** – staffing levels are very low putting significant pressure on the operation at our school

**Red** – operation is unsafe and must stop.

I can confirm that, whilst the task of defining the thresholds is really hard and the boundaries often more flexible than mathematics would suggest, we are, undoubtedly, in the AMBER category as of Week 5.

We will use our Risk Assessment to guide us through the next steps, with the likely measures from Week 6 of merging some of the most affected Bubbles taking effect from next Monday and possible increase in remote learning for some groups of students (starting with the older students, and moving "down" the age range, as the human resources reduce). One thing is clear: with the increasing numbers of staff affected by Covid-19 and with the winter season upon us, the turbulence is likely to be something we all have to face together, with an acceptance of the interruption that the times ahead will cause to our school life and, correspondingly, to our students and the staff family lives, too.

I realise that this is a very worrying and dystopian message to deliver/receive and yet, I promise that my team and I will do all that we can to deliver on the three aims shared above.

Mrs A Hildrey  
Headteacher

# Noticeboard

With the Government and local changes to COVID guidance, it is understandable that people may be anxious and need some additional support with their mental health. Please find below a range of options available to people in the local area.

## Online and phone psychological support from Mersey Care



Community and Mental Health Services

Who can access?	When and how is it accessed?	What is provided?
 <p>Urgent mental health support 0151 296 7200</p> <p>Anyone 16+ self-referral or any professional</p>	<p>24/7 by phone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24/7 access to mental health support (including people in crisis)</li> <li>• 24/7 contact line for emergency services that will divert mental health activity away from A&amp;E</li> <li>• 24/7 contact line for primary care for urgent/emergency referrals for mental health assessments.</li> </ul>
 <p>Talk Liverpool 0151 228 2300 talkliverpool.nhs.uk</p> <p>Anyone 16+ self-referral or GP</p>	<p>9.00am to 5.00pm by phone on 0151 228 2300 or 8.00am to 8.00pm on 0151 473 0303 and ask for the psychological support line.</p> <p>24/7 online via talkliverpool.nhs.uk</p>	<p>Treatment for people with the following common mental health problems:</p> <p>Depression, generalised anxiety disorder, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), specific phobias (such as heights or small animals), PTSD, health anxiety (hypochondriasis), body dysmorphic disorder, mixed depression and anxiety (the term for sub-syndromal depression and anxiety, rather than both depression and anxiety).</p>
 <p>The LIFE ROOMS 0151 478 6556 liferooms.org</p> <p>Anyone 18+ self-referral or any professional</p>	<p>9.00am to 5.00pm by phone Monday to Friday</p> <p>24/7 online learning/activity resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online staying well at home learning courses</li> <li>• Pathway advisors who can support and advise with debt management, employment, housing issues, benefits and more</li> <li>• Social inclusion advice for isolated community groups.</li> </ul>
 <p>Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust Staff support 0151 330 8103</p> <p>Mersey Care staff only self-referral</p>	<p>9.00am to 8.00pm phone counselling Monday to Friday</p> <p>24/7 phone support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session model of face to face counselling</li> <li>• Brief intervention signposting and support</li> <li>• Access to 24/7 phone counselling for staff in distress (not crisis support).</li> </ul>

## Deputy Headteacher

**Mrs Emily Tobin, Deputy Headteacher**

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Dear Families

### **Reading is Magic**

This week has been our Reading is Magic week. Walking around the school has, as always, been an absolute delight. It never ceases to please me when I see the creative ways in which teachers adapt materials and ensure lessons are engaging and meaningful.

Quite appropriately (I would like to say it was planned – but it was a coincidence!) I also attended a course, led by an Ofsted Inspector and facilitated by School Improvement Liverpool about teaching reading.

The theme that ran throughout the course was that promoting communication and language skills has to come before learning to decode and encode words. Many families I speak to find this very reassuring because it adds validity to the great things they are doing already. We are exposing our children to language every time we sing songs, play “Eye Spy”, read magazine articles together, put the subtitles on when watching television or listen to the radio. Equally, we are using language with our children as we play with them and ask them what they are doing.

Equally, and I know I have written about this before, telling stories to our children in school and at home is essential. These could be stories read from books, well-known tales recounted by heart, or imaginary stories made up!

Please do ask your children about the stories they have heard this week, the work that has followed from them and enjoy looking together at all the pictures of learning on our social media platforms.

With best wishes for the coming week

Mrs E Tobin

Deputy Headteacher

## Care and Safeguarding

**Ms Alison Twomey, Head of Care and Safeguarding**

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Miss Twomey is currently on a well-deserved annual leave (she will return on Monday!). I have decided to use her section to share with you a resource I know she too would want to promote.

### **Papyrus Bedtime Stories Chapter Two**

Stars including actors Michael Sheen, Julie Hesmondhalgh and Carrie Hope Fletcher have taken part in the celebrity Bedtime Stories campaign launched by anti-suicide charity **Papyrus**. The Warrington based organisation wants to help protect children from the nightmare of cyber bullying and harmful online content and has created a series of videos featuring high-profile faces. The actors are joined by Anton Danyluk, a former Love Island star, to complete the line-up: <https://www.papyrus-uk.org/bedtime-stories/bedtime-stories-chapter-two>



The hard-hitting films narrated by the celebrities are designed to raise awareness of the impact online bullying and dangerous content can have on children and young people.

In the short films, Michael Sheen reads 'Annabelle and The Trolls', Julie Hesmondhalgh reads about 'Rachel and the Rabbit Hole', Anton Danyluk reads 'Benji and the Keyboard Warrior', while Carrie Hope Fletcher reads 'Harry and The Haters'.

Michael Sheen said: "I'm incredibly proud to be part of the campaign, which highlights the very real dangers that young people face in our increasingly digital world.

"Bedtime Stories speaks to those with young children, or indeed young people in their lives, raising awareness of how the online environment can impact on the mental health of those using it and reminds them that Papyrus is here for them, should they need help and support."

# School Business Support

**Mrs Michelle Griffiths, Head of HR**

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We are currently recruiting for two very important posts for the school. Firstly, we are advertising for a Careers Lead. This post has been previously advertised as Job Coach but we were not successful in appointing. The candidate will lead on employer and college engagement in order to develop new opportunities for our students. Our second position is for an Occupational Therapist to work with our students and it is exciting to be bringing this previously outsourced function in house. Information about both positions are available on our website.

I would like to say thank you and goodbye to Intern Coach Michela Ferretti who left us this week to pursue a career in design. Michela worked with our Intern's last year, and the wider KS5 team this year and we wish her luck in her new career. Finally, I would like to thank the Zone 6 Team for reacting so quickly and calmly to get remote teaching and learning up and running following news of the Zone closure due to a positive Covid case this week. Thanks also to Jennie our IT Technician for organising our technology. Hope you all stay safe while in isolation and we look forward to welcoming you back.

Wishing everyone a restful weekend.

**Mr Andrew Cocklin, Head of Finance and Operations**

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Another busy and productive week as we look to improve the facilities for students. We had a really positive meeting with our Forest School supplier to review their initial plan on Tuesday. My thanks to all the staff who attended for their input and some really thoughtful suggestions. As a result, we now have our next draft plan back, and I believe it will be a fantastic area for all our students and staff once installed. Next week we have Southpaw on site to assess six rooms for us prior to them being fitted out, to create sensory rooms for our students and also continue the improvement of quiet rooms throughout the school.

This has been made possible by the very generous support from The Steve Morgan Foundation, who are fully supportive of our ambition to give all of our students the best facilities possible that we can. We are also working with Southpaw to produce a video of the whole process, from start to finish, so that we can capture and share the journey with everyone.

Next week, we also have a meeting with our outdoor play provider to review their initial plan for a new outdoor play space for all our students. Again, this meeting will be fully supported by a wide range of school staff and my thanks to them for making the time to support what also should be a fantastic project.

So - exciting times ahead.

## Key Stage News and Updates

### Early Years and Key Stage 1 Miss O'Neill



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Across school this week, we had so much fun engaging in our 'Reading is magic festival' activities.

We had a different theme for each day and have explored stories about ourselves, stories on being creative and proud of our talents, stories on the world and where animals live and we had a special message all the way from America! We saw how their library looked in school and we listened to a lovely story. Thank you to Miss Sloan for organising.

#### **Ireland**

In Ireland class, we have been having fun reading our stories, learning numbers and letter sounds in our songs and being kind friends.

We had another dance class on Tuesday, which was lots of fun and we loved expressing ourselves through the music. Baby shark is a firm favourite!

Have a great weekend everyone.

#### **Wales**

Wales Class have had an exciting week taking part in an amazing event, Reading is Magic! We looked at different books each day such as 'We are all welcome,' and the 'The Dot and Julian is a Mermaid.' completing some lovely activities based on these books. We created some lovely artwork using different mark making tools, we looked at different habitats and the animals who live there, we explored the seven continents, discussed famous landmarks and we planted seeds to create beanstalks. We also had a video link with a librarian in California, who told us all about her job and showed us around her amazing library. She also read her favourite book, 'The secret life of squirrels.' We have had so much fun this week and are looking forward to next week!

Have a nice weekend,

Wales Class

# Key Stage News and Updates

## Key Stage 2

Key Stage Leader: Miss Sell

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### Italy

Well done Italy class on another fantastic week!

We have really enjoyed taking part in the 'Reading is Magic' festival this week. We started the week reading the story 'The Dot' by Peter H Reynolds, which we found very inspiring and is about having the confidence to believe in yourself and encouraging and nurturing others. We enjoyed being artists and creating our own dot pictures. We have also enjoyed reading the book 'Here We Are Notes for living on Planet Earth' by Oliver Jeffers. The book is truly amazing and a must read for all ages. The class have had lots of discussions around the story, thinking about how we are all different, sorting objects into things we need to survive and things we want/like, thinking about our favourite places on Earth and even talking about the different planets in our Solar System. Keep up the hard work Italy Class!

### Portugal

This week in Class Portugal, we have been learning about our world! We received letters from people in countries such as Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, Hungary and Brazil! We looked at their cultures and we even tried a few ourselves! We listened to some Hungarian folk music and made our own restaurant with foods from all over the world! We tried Swedish meatballs, Greek pitta bread with hummus, Croissants and lots more. The children were great at trying new foods and even found some new ones that they liked and wanted to have at home!

We also enjoyed our judo lesson this week, we are getting really good at it and are trying our best!

We are looking forward to another week of learning next week!

Have a great weekend! 😊

### France

We have had another lovely week in class France. For our theme this week, we have been looking at 'Elmer the Patchwork Elephant'. In English, the pupils have worked hard matching jigsaw pieces to sequence the story then used these to write their own recounts. In Art, we have continued this theme by creating our very own Elmer Patchwork masks and designing our own beautiful colourful elephants. For Maths, we have focused on simple addition and completed Elmer colour by number. Keep up the hard work class France!

### Canada

Canada class have had a great week! In English, we looked at the book 'The Lion Inside'. We discussed how there is always a scared and a brave side inside of everyone regardless of size, shape and power. In Science, we focused on body parts and we engaged with different activities. One of them was to determine which body part belongs to the top or bottom part of our body. In Music, we used our voices and sang all together 'Three Little Birds'. We had a great time singing together with our friends. Have a great weekend, Canada class and very well done to you!

## **USA**

We looked at the book 'The Worrysaurus,' and predicted what was going to happen in the story. Poppy from class read the book and as we went through the story we found out some of our predictions were correct. In the story, we heard that The Worrysaurus had a happy box filled with items to keep him positive and we made our own happy boxes and drew on them what makes us feel happy. We had lots of fun and practised our fine motor skills making worry dolls to help us remember to ask for help when we are worried.

We also read the story Dot, and made our own dot artwork using crayon and paint and chose what animal to colour with dots. We had a messy afternoon making slime and loved putting our hands in the mixture and adding different coloured beads so we could feel the different textures.

Well done USA!

## **Spain**

Spain Class started the week sharing their news from the weekend with their classmates, including pictures sent in from home. We have had a lot of messy play in our outdoor area including shaving foam, sand and jelly bath the students have enjoyed the sensory feeling of the different things. Monday afternoon we had a fun afternoon of role-play playing cops and robbers chasing the staff and sending them to jail. On Tuesday we made salt dough and created our own models of the earth and in the afternoon, we had a fun PE lesson on the yard using the scooters and trikes. We have also made some great portraits this week and chains of friends and found out how to be a good friend and how to behave with our friends, we all made delicious chocolate Krispie cakes to take home.

Have a great weekend

Spain Class Team

# Key Stage News and Updates

## Key Stage 3

Key Stage Leader: Mr Richard Hodgson

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### Brazil

This week in Brazil class we have participated in the Reading is Magic Festival. Students have looked at the impact climate change and deforestation, have on our planet and have written 'Letters to the earth' regarding this. Students have started to read 'A Kind of Spark' by author Elle McNicoll, which is about a young girl with ASD and how she faces many challenges within school; students then wrote a character description based on characters within this book, it was great to see how enthusiastic and engaged students were with this activity. Overall, it has been a busy and fun week in Brazil class, and all students should be proud of the effort they have put in and the work they have produced, we look forward to another great week next week.

### Peru

This week in class Peru we have been taking part in 'Reading is magic festival' looking at different themes and stories all united under the umbrella of the Children's Laureate Charter. We have had class and group discussions, participated in thinking outside the box activities and completed lots of projects around reading. We enjoyed a walk around the school grounds looking for signs of autumn, and created some beautiful seasonal collages with items we had collected. We also finished off our topic lesson based round 'all in my head' and our canvases are so colourful. Excellent week Peru keep up the great work have a lovely weekend.

### Mozambique

Mozambique class have immersed themselves into the reading is magic festival this week and have been really creative. We have created stories about ourselves, and our own experiences, we have thought about the impact humans have on the planet and then wrote letters to Earth. We have listened to songs inspired by books, and had a go at writing some tongue twisters. On Thursday, we continued lessons in yoga and learnt some new poses. Mozambique have been using the breathing techniques in class to help keep us calm. We also celebrated Mohamed's birthday this week, happy birthday Mohamed!

### Botswana

This week in Botswana class, we have been enjoying listening to lots of influential people who are a part of the reading is magic festival and creating some fantastic work. We have enjoyed learning all about a neuro divergent author, reading her book and discussing our own thoughts and feelings. We have also created some beautiful save our planet posters which we are going to display in our class. We took a trip to our school library and chose some of our favourite books, from Minecraft to Marvel and even some books about animals and astronomy. The enthusiasm for reading this week from Botswana class has been amazing.

We hope you all have a lovely relaxing weekend.

### Madagascar

Madagascar class have enjoyed taking part in the reading is magic festival this week! Lots of discussions and activities including letter writing about climate change and reading a fantastic new book called 'A Kind of Spark,' which we all enjoyed.

### **Kenya**

In Kenya class this week, we have enjoyed doing lots' of activities related to the Reading is Magic Festival following a different theme every day throughout the week. We explored our creativity through reading a story called 'Inside my Imagination,' and came up with creative ideas for using everyday objects. We also looked at how we can help in saving the environment. We wrote an informal letter, to the earth explaining, what the current environmental issues are and to promote positive actions against the climate change. We also went out to explore the school woodland to collect some natural materials to make an autumn collage.

### **Seychelles**

This week in Seychelles class, we have had another week of fun! In English we had some great discussions about diversity, our environment and started to talk about Black Lives Matter, everyone took part in our discussions and listened to their friend's thoughts, feelings and ideas on these subjects. In P.E this week, we played Basketball and had so much fun learning new skills! This week has also been the start of the Reading is Magic Festival! We have explored this, using lots' of different methods and technics.

### **Fiji**

A fantastic start to the week for Fiji Class. We have focused on the 'Reading is Magic' festival this week. Students have had the opportunity to watch live interviews, talks and podcasts with a range of authors and completed an activity, which complements the talk. On Tuesday, we tuned in and listened to Anna Wilson's 'The Magic of Nature'. We discussed the seasons and spent the afternoon in our school woodland area. We collected a range of leaves, twigs, sticks and other interesting things, which we then turned, into a collage. Students will add these to their 'Lockdown Memory Box' and bring them home at the end of the term. On Wednesday, we spent time completing our memory boxes and added the final touches to them! Unfortunately, our week has been cut short, but we can continue with some of the final planned activities when we return to school. Wishing all of Fiji class to say well and we will hopefully, see everyone online next week.

### **Cape Verde**

This week in Cape Verde, we have been enjoying the 'Reading is Magic' festival with lots of different activities related to reading. We have made the most of the mild autumn weather and enjoyed lots of walks around the grounds to observe the seasonal changes and collected leaves that we then used to make prints in our art lesson. We found it really interesting seeing the patterns and working out what leaves worked best. Hope you all have a lovely weekend and we look forward to another fun week of learning next week.

# Key Stage News and Updates

## Key Stage 4

Key Stage Leader: Mr Lyons

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### Australia

It has been a really good week of learning for Class Australia. A particular highlight has been taking part in the reading is magic festival where we have had the chance to meet children's authors doing interviews on line. We have also explored different issues in books such as the environment and own voice stories. As a Class Team we have also been particularly impressed with Class Australia's efforts in PE in both circuit training or taking part in Zumba. As a class, we have been really giving it our best effort in these activities. Well done Class Australia!

### Papua New Guinea

We have been busy with lots of amazing literacy activities this week in PNG, including taking part in 'Reading is Magic' every morning with the rest of KS4, which we all really enjoyed. In English itself, we continued with our gothic theme, but moved on to looking at the work of Edgar Allan Poe, another famous gothic writer. As an introduction, we began to look at the author's life and biography. We cannot wait to read some of his spooky work...

Continuing with this theme, in art we created some fantastic sketch pieces in a gothic style and took inspiration from Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe themselves. The finished products really were creative and unique!

Finally, in PE this week, students had a choice of circuits or Zumba. It was lovely to see students' enthusiasm around keeping fit, healthy, and taking part no matter their ability. Keep it up PNG!

### New Zealand

This week we have been engaging well with the Reading is Magic Festival, listening live to authors share their tips and ideas. We made our own historical cartoon characters based on the work of Adam Murphy and his series of books called Corpse Talk.

We have some great cartoonists in class. On Tuesday, we wrote letters to the Earth, adding our thoughts to the growing concerns about climate change. There are some very persuasive and emotional pieces of work.

In Maths, we enjoyed some tasks set by Liverpool's Maths Party. We found out about Fibonacci the Italian mathematician and investigated number sequences and patterns. We used his ideas to produce some great artwork too. In Science, we experimented with different juices to make the perfect 'Mocktail' (the answer is getting the ratios right!)

Have a great weekend every one see you all on Monday 🍷

### Samoa

This week in Samoa we have been taking part in the reading is magic festival, learning how to draw comic characters and to write 'our stories,' creating a fictional version of ourselves based on our experiences. In Maths, we have continued using numbots. In RE we looked at Hinduism and in History we recreated the start of WW1 with whiteboards and a felt tip based 'arms race!'

We are sad that we cannot all be in class for the next two weeks but we look forward to seeing you all on zoom for online classes.

## **Tasmania**

This week in Tasmania Class, we have been doing lots' of Life skills activities. We planned, prepared and made our own sandwiches before enjoying them in class. We also enjoyed our KS5 "Mocktails" experiments. We mixed together lots of different flavour juices to learn about Ratios. We had some great concoctions such as 1:1:1 lemonade, orange juice and Irn Bru! Thank you for your hard work this week Tasmania class.

## Key Stage News and Updates

### Key Stage 5

Key Stage Leader: Mr Ryan Mason

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The students have thoroughly enjoyed being back on site this week, and have all done tremendously well in re-engaging in their academic studies and participating in activities based around setting themselves targets towards their future goals and aspirations. They have had an intentional focus this week on completing their first term's My Plan, their first draft of their Career and Aspiration Plan and their first draft of their CV, which they understand is a working document that is continuously being updated as time goes on.

It has been fantastic to see how much thought each student is giving to their future plans, and engaging in conversations related to how they can achieve their next steps. We have had an amazingly positive start to this academic year and are looking forward with anticipation at seeing the future successes of each of our students!

Have a great weekend!

#### **Christmas Island**

This week, KS5 have been following the 'Reading is Magic' festival, thinking of our own books that we would like to write. Our pupil of the week this week in Christmas Island is Anthony, for his amazing book idea. This week he designed the front cover, described his main character as well as writing the blurb for his book.

#### **Malawi**

This week Malawi students and staff have enjoyed being back on site and in class again after spending time at home learning remotely.

To start the week off the students continued researching colleges and internships, looking more in depth at their options for the future. The students are narrowing down their career plans and are hoping to gain some work experience, which we will begin organising in the coming weeks.

The class has continued academic lessons, in English writing letters to our Prime Minister and in Maths looking at positive and negative numbers.

We also have a couple students who we are super proud of preparing for their theory-driving test and starting driving lessons! Well done!

Fantastic week everyone, well done to all Malawi students!

Have a lovely weekend,

Malawi class team

Happy Birthday!



TO

Jamie and Charlie on 2 October

We wish you all a **Wonderful Birthday** and have fun!



# Students of the Week

Early Years and Key Stage One		
Ireland	Troy	for having a fantastic week in school, following instructions with an adult
Wales	Loyal	for excellent exploring of our world
Nurture		
Spain	JayJay	for never giving up on himself and trying to be more positive
Cape Verde	Karim	for making positive choices!
Tasmania	Alex	for being here everyday and working hard on his case files
Key Stage Two		
Italy	Lewis	for working really hard all week and for trying hard to follow our Golden Rules. Keep it up Lewis – We are very proud of you!
Portugal	Sidiki	for trying lots of new food in our 'Portugal Restaurant' lesson
France	Oliver	for excellent work in English for our Elmer story sequencing
Canada	Faye	for being here every day!
USA	Ben	for always listening, doing all the class activities and always trying his best
Key Stage Three		
Brazil	Jacob	for having an enthusiastic attitude towards his work this week
Peru	Ellis	for being a kind friend and helping others
Mozambique	Maddie	for great effort in yoga and settling back in to school after being off
Botswana	Bupe	for doing some fantastic writing this week during our reading is magic festival and creating a beautiful 'save our planet' poster
Madagascar	Kyle	for fantastic writing this week
Kenya	Oscar	for working hard all week and always kind to his class mates
Seychelles	Levi	for always helping others
Fiji	Kassia	As reported last week Kassia was placed in the top 10 at the Royal Windsor and we have recently found out her final placing was in fact 3rd Place! What an absolutely fantastic achievement! All of Fiji class are extremely proud of Kassia and have continued to congratulate her this week. Well done Kassia
Key Stage Four		
Australia	Spencer	for his dedication to his work and his attention to detail. He has also been a fantastic example of encouragement to others
Papua New Guinea	Al	for an amazing picture of Mary Shelley
New Zealand	Nathan	for great maths work; solving number sequences and problems and never giving up
Samoa	Euan	for excellent character writing in English.
Key Stage Five		
Malawi	Adam	for engaging in productive conversations about his future and having an all-round positive attitude this week!
Christmas Island	Anthony	for his amazing book idea. This week he designed the front cover, described his main character as well as writing the blurb for his book

# Week 5 Photos





