



*"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."*

### Dear friends,

Well it's been a very strange few weeks for everyone involved with Parkfield. We have done our best to keep you in the loop but recognise that this has not always been easy as information from the government has emerged on an almost hour by hour basis. We are certainly not pointing the finger at those making the decisions – this is not an easy time for anyone.

We are going to try and keep our community connected across the coming weeks and months – I don't really know what this means, but sharing our journeys, heartaches and worries would seem like a good place to start. We also want to try and help you with 'home education', we know you love your children, but having them at home all the time may be a challenge. So, we will try to help.

### Just for fun...

*Have you discovered your quarantine nickname? Add together 'how you feel right now' together with the last thing you ate. At the time of writing Mr G was 'Relaxed Crumpet', say no more!*

Our intention will be to bring together lots of ideas, things to think about, activities to try, great websites, books worth a try, great podcasts etc. We will also try and share some of the brilliant things you will be doing with your children. So get your thinking caps on and help us share the love!

### More poetry please

In time, we will hopefully post things from children, parents or staff. For issue 1, I thought I would share a poem that I love. I can only apologise if I have shared it previously, however it seems so apt.

*I wish that I could show you when you  
are lonely or in darkness  
the astonishing light of your own  
being.*

Hafiz(written in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century)

Historically, I have written this into the leavers books of Year 11 students as they move on to the next part of their journey. I wasn't able to do this for students this

year, but here it is, do read it to them if you get a moment.

### Recipe of the week

Each week, I will try and share a simple recipe that you can make with your children. I know that many of you are wonderful cooks and don't need this – try them anyway. My first recipe has its origins in wartime, so this seems apt.

#### Rock Cakes (makes 8)

Rock cakes were promoted by the Ministry of Food during the Second World War as they require fewer eggs and less sugar than ordinary cakes, an important savings in a time of strict rationing.

#### Ingredients

- 200g self-raising flour
- 75g margarine or butter
- 75g sugar
- 75g dried fruit / glace cherries
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon or mixed spice
- Optional – 2 teaspoons coconut and demerara sugar

#### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees.
2. Weigh out the flour and put in a mixing bowl.
3. Add the butter, cut up into small pieces.
4. Rub the butter into the flour with your fingertips until it resembles dry breadcrumbs.
5. Stir in the sugar, mixed spice, dried fruit or cherries.
6. Break the egg into a measuring jug and beat with a fork
7. Add to the flour mixture and mix well with a palette knife.
8. Squeeze the mixture into a dough and divide into 8 equal sized pieces. Roll into a ball and flatten slightly
9. Roll each one in coconut and/or brown sugar.
10. Place them on a greased or lined baking tray.
11. Bake for 12-15 minutes until light golden colour.

### The power of a podcast!

I don't know about you but I love a good podcast, particularly when I am walking the dog. So I have a recommendation for you to check out. 'Revisionist



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History' ([revisionisthistory.com](http://revisionisthistory.com)), is a brilliant podcast produced by Malcolm Gladwell (he wrote some great books too, including Blink, Outliers, and many more).

Gladwell describes the podcast as a 'journey through the overlooked and the misunderstood. Every episode re-examines something from the past—an event, a person, an idea, even a song—and asks whether we got it right the first time'.

My personal favourite is episode 3 from season 1 **'The big man can't shoot'**. This is a brilliant investigation of why smart people do stupid stuff. This was so good that I even turned it into an assembly for the secondary school students.

## Try this – Practice Gratitude

Researchers in Positive Psychology have found that gratitude and happiness are always strongly linked. A possible theory is that gratitude moves people to experience more positive emotions, to thoroughly enjoy the good experiences, better their health, face adversity, and develop and maintain relationships of strength, which in turn makes you happier.

Three common ways to **express gratitude** are:

1. Think about great things that have happened in the past.
2. Be grateful for something right now.
3. Be grateful for what's to come.

In these difficult times it would be easy for us to all become very down. Why not set up a gratitude board at home, every day write down something in each of the three ways, so for me right now:

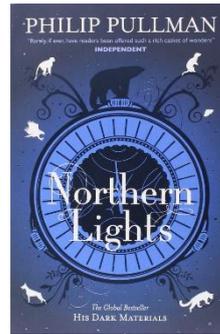
1. I'm so grateful for the wonderful photograph I have of me and my brothers with a monkey at Beaumaris castle in the 1970's.
2. I'm grateful for all the brilliant colleagues I work with at Parkfield.
3. I'm excited about the start of a new term in September.

*"I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought, and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder"*

G.K. Chesterton

## A good read - for children

I am a huge fan of Phillip Pullman and loved the trilogy of books called 'His Dark Materials'. The series starts with the Northern Lights.

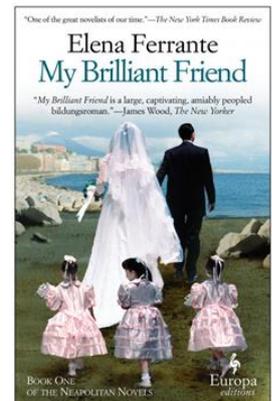


It's a wonderful story that tracks the adventures of Lyra Belacqua, it has parallel universes, 'gobblers', gyptians, witches, talking fighting polar bears, an alethiometer and of course Pantalaimon, Lyra's dæmon. It's brilliantly written, and great for adults too.

## A good read - for adults

It's never easy to recommend books to adults – it's all so personal. Nevertheless, I will tell you about a book I read not long ago and loved. Like the Pullman it is a series of books that are known as the 'Neopolitan Novels'. Written by Elena Ferrante, the four book series starts with 'My Brilliant Friend'.

The book charts the extraordinary friendship of Elena and Lila in 1950's Naples. Both girls are incredibly intelligent but the poverty that surrounds them will take them on different but intertwined paths. These books have everything, intrigue, romance, and the mafia. They are superb! Enjoy



## Thanks

I wanted to say a huge thank you to all of you who expressed such kindness on the Parkfield Facebook page – we were very touched. I also wanted to say a huge thank you to all the staff – you have been amazing.

## And finally..

I have written this first newsletter myself, however I am hoping that others will contribute in the coming weeks. Please feel free to send in your thoughts and ideas. Take care and be safe. **Mr G**