

Headteacher: **Monica Forty**

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31 October 2018

Armistice Day

Dear Parents/ Carers

As many parents and carers will know, 11 November 2018 marks the **100th anniversary of the end of World War 1**. World War 1 was characterised by many things but none more than the tragic loss of so many young lives on battle fields around the world.



Some parents and carers may know that one of the young men that lost their life was a former pupil at Ben Jonson. His name was Alfred George Drake VC. He was born in Stepney in December 1893 to Robert and Mary Ann Drake. He and his family lived in several streets near school including Skidmore Street and Copley Street.

During the First World War, Alfred was a corporal in the Rifle Brigade in the British Army. On the 23 November 1915, near La Brique in Belgium there was very heavy bombing and Alfred's officer, Lieutenant Henry Tryon, was seriously wounded. Alfred stayed with Henry to look after him but was killed as a result. Alfred had lost his own life but saved the life of Henry. Alfred was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest award for bravery.

Each year at Ben Jonson we remember the sacrifice that Alfred and countless others have made and we also remember all those who have lost their lives in the many conflicts around the world.

As this year marks a special anniversary, we have been developing children's awareness of this time in history in a number of ways. Each child has created an individual piece of art work which will be put together to spell out the words 'THANK YOU'. This art work will be displayed in the school hall and unveiled as part of a special assembly on November 9.



On that day children will also write a short message of thanks for those that made the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. This will also be incorporated into the final display.

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In conjunction with other local organisations we are raising money to buy a silhouette of a World War 1 soldier to add to the mirror sculpture that was developed by children and staff in response to Alfred's story.



To support this we are asking children to wear something red on November 9. This could be a simple poppy, a red scarf or something made at home to remind us all of the loss of so many people. We are also asking parents to donate £1 which will go towards the sculpture and towards The British Legion, who continue to support servicemen and women across the country.

We look forward to sharing a special day with your children on 9 November and remembering young men and women who, like Alfred, gave their lives to help others in times of need.

Yours sincerely

Charlie Gorman

Deputy Headteacher

