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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Special Award winning Author Visit- Banji Alexander

We are delighted that this half term we will be welcoming to our school Banji Alexander, an award winning author, who recently burst onto the scene having published his debut book *Lockdown Looms; Reggie's Birthday Party* during the second lockdown. Alexander's arrival into the world of children's literature promises to be one full of adventure, laughter, and linguistic prowess. As a former teacher in Merton, Alexander knows his audience well and was inspired by the children in his class to write a story about the pandemic through a child's eyes. The COVID-19 pandemic has given children a window into a world they have never seen before and therefore he wrote the book to help children know that there was a light at the end of the tunnel regardless of how challenging things were and be able to cope with the difficulties many children were faced with regarding their wellbeing and mental health.

Since publishing his book, Alexander has become an overnight celebrity receiving lots of media attention about his books, even from famous politicians such as Sadiq Khan. His book is currently being adapted into a musical which means very soon we'll be able to see this performed live on stage with songs. Please click below to see some of the many reviews and press clippings already written about him:

<https://banjialexander.com/banji-in-the-media>

Last Friday, children received a pre-visit assembly about the author Banji Alexander asking children the type of difficulties we faced during the pandemic from wearing masks, working remotely, home schooling, social distancing by 2-metres, chaotic supermarket scenes, food shortages and most importantly not being able to see family and friends.

We are excited to have him visit in person on **30th June**, where he will deliver a whole school assembly and workshops to each year group from Y1-Y6. We know that our children are brilliant reading ambassadors and therefore have invited Banji to celebrate and raise the profile of reading in our school by having valuable conversations and discussing characters' feelings within the book.

There is no cost for this visit, however we do ask that each child purchase a signed copy of his book for £10 placing this into a small envelope marked with your child's full name and class no later than Wednesday 29th June to avoid any disappointment on the day.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Aransiola
Associate Headteacher

"Love proves itself by deeds so how am I to show my love?" St Thérèse of Lisieux

