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Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

It's certainly been an interesting week!

You have already had several updates from me this week regarding the current situation that we find ourselves in and so I won't repeat what you already know. If you have missed any of the updates, you can find them all on the school website under the **COVID News** section.

I would like to take the opportunity to make some personal observations if you'll indulge me.

As I have already said, there is a great deal of anxiety in the school and that is primarily down to the perception that despite the government telling us all that things are as bad (or worse) than the first lockdown, this is not consistent with what we are seeing. We have significantly more children in school than the first lockdown and I know full well that many of you have your own pressures and so I appreciate everything you've been doing to keep our children and our school community safe. The impact of this pandemic is something that has hit particularly close to home recently as I lost a family member to COVID just before Christmas.

What has not been helpful, and this is something I've alluded to on a few occasions, has been the lack of decisive leadership from the Department for Education.

I'm not usually one for getting 'political' in my newsletters but I was particularly galled to hear Gavin Williamson speak in the Commons Chamber on Wednesday that if parents were unhappy with the remote learning offer then they should speak to the class teacher or headteacher and then to Ofsted – effectively bypassing the school's complaints policy. I have to wonder what motivation someone would have to encourage this.

Please share...

Schools and teachers were given just over 12 hours notice. Gavin Williamson is asking parents to complain to Ofsted if the learning isn't good enough. Instead, may I suggest, as a parent if you are happy with what your child/ren's school is providing for remote learning, you could always let Ofsted know that instead.

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Twitter: @Ofstednews

I did enjoy seeing this social media post (*above*) which a couple of parents have also emailed to me (also feel free to send a tweet to @GavinWilliamson) and, frankly, I'm sure that our parents have more trust and faith in our staff than they do the DfE!

...and breathe.

### Remote Learning Agreement

Prior to the commencement of remote learning next week, I would like to draw your attention to our Remote Learning Agreement which I ask all parents to read. By participating in 'live sessions' you are agreeing to be bound by this so please do ensure you have read this prior to Monday. This agreement can be found at the end of this newsletter and also on the **COVID News** section of our website.



### School Workbooks

A reminder that if you weren't able to collect the provided workbooks, you can this on Monday afternoon between 2pm and 3.30pm. These workbooks are an 'extra' that you can use at home, we may be using these a little in school and are also an insurance in case a teacher and/or class needs to be self-isolating or is unwell.

### Bridge Bees BASC and Dinner Monies

Just a quick note to reassure all parents that any payments you have made for this term will be carried forward into the next term. School dinners will continue to follow the dinner menu and I ask all parents of children attending the school to book dinners and BASC sessions as normal on Parent Mail.

### Free School Meal Voucher Scheme

We have been told by the DfE that this will be returning and, as soon as I have any information, I will share this with you.

### Parental Consultations

As you know, we had planned to hold parental consultations in a couple of weeks' time and we are still hopeful that this can go ahead although we will have to make a few changes as to how this is run. We hope to have this organised ready to let you know the details next week.

### A Reflection

I would like to end my newsletter with a tribute to Jill Thomas who some of you will know.

Although I had only known Jill for a few years, she was been a fixture of the school community for almost 20 years as a school governor and we were all saddened to hear of her death just before Christmas. I'm sure that all parents will join me in sending our deepest condolences to her family. I have spoken to many people about Jill and the phrase I've heard most was that she had a *'heart of gold'*.

What I'll remember of her is the fact that she lived a life of service – to the school and to her community. I recall that she was particularly pleased when we adopted 'service' as one of our Christian Values and I will miss her presence at our Governing Board meetings.

At the Teaching & Learning meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Catherine Hellman proposed a vote of thanks to Jill as it was her last meeting before retiring from the Governing Board. She said that her enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment would be greatly missed and that she was an example to us all.

During this challenging time, please do keep in touch.

Good luck to us all on Monday morning!

With best wishes,



James Tibbles

# Remote Learning Acceptable Use Policy

1. I understand that:
  - these expectations are in place to help keep me safe when I am learning at home using Microsoft Teams
  - I should read and talk about these rules with my parents/carers.
  - remote learning will only take place using Microsoft Teams and during usual school times.
  - My use of Microsoft Teams is monitored to help keep me safe.
  
2. Only members of Bridge & Patrixbourne CEP School community can access Microsoft Teams.
  - I will only use my school provided email accounts or login to access remote learning.
  - I will use privacy settings as agreed with my school.
  - I will not share my login/password with others
  - I will not share any access links to remote learning sessions with others.
  
3. When taking part in remote learning I will behave as I would in the classroom. This includes:
  - Using appropriate language.
  - Not taking or recording images/content without agreement from the teacher and/or those featured.
  
4. When taking part in live sessions I will:
  - Mute my microphone when my teacher asks me to.
  - wear appropriate clothing and be in a suitable location.
  - ensure backgrounds of videos are neutral and personal information/content is not visible.
  - Use appropriate alternative backgrounds.
  - Attend the session in full. If for any reason I cannot attend a session in full, I will let my teacher know.
  - attend lessons in a shared/communal space or room with an open door and/or where possible when I can be supervised by a parent/carer or another appropriate adult.
  
5. If I am concerned about anything that takes place during remote learning, I will report concerns to the member of staff running the session, or tell a parent/carer.
  
6. I understand that inappropriate online behaviour or concerns about my safety during remote learning will be taken seriously. This could include informing parents/carers or contacting police if a criminal offence has been committed