

Monkton C. E. Primary School



14 December 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Governors,

I write to you in a month where I celebrate 30 years of service at Monkton School. The time has flown by, and many memories have flooded back as I have reflected on this time in the school that I love. (I just wish I had written them all down - they would make a fabulous book!) The events of the past year have probably been the most challenging I have ever experienced during that time. However, as always, from adversity there always comes the very best of, and from people. I cannot thank our school family enough for working with us to make Monkton School the safest and happiest place it can be, in the current circumstances. Our families have been amazing, in listening and heeding every instruction, change and request made of them. It hasn't always been easy, but the trust and forbearance has been overwhelming and I thank you all for this.

I must mention the dedication and hard work of our Teachers and Teaching Assistants, along with the Premises, Lollypopping and Kitchen staff, and of course Mrs Webb. We consider ourselves a team, if any one of us is MIA - (missing in action!) then school is the poorer for it, and we all pull together to fill the gaps. Every member of our team has worked so hard and shown such trust and confidence in the measures that we have put in place to protect us all. When the pandemic first took hold, it wasn't always easy to step out of the door and make the brave step into work. Our exposure to people can top from 30, to over 100 a day. But each day the team has come in, determined to serve our school and give the children the very best school experience they can. I know that you will join me in giving them all a great big thank you!

Finally, I cannot finish the thank yous without mentioning the children. They have been, quite simply, amazing. Our new entrants came into school after such a long time out of Nursery and settled immediately. Our school population came back with a smile, delighted to be back with their friends and teachers and have continued to apply themselves to their learning. But moreover, they have been there for each other, encouraging, supporting and cheering each other on. They have followed the rules we have in place to keep themselves and others safe and have gone above and beyond to try to make up the learning they missed in the summer. Thank you, children you are just awesome and we are all very proud of you!

So, we move into the Christmas period and hopefully some quality time celebrating this special time with those we love and care for. The Track and Trace through school will be open until 23.12.20. I will add the procedures to the end of this letter. As you know we made the decision to close on Friday 18th as a Staff Development Day. This decision was made for a variety of reasons, not least because it reduces the exposure time by one day, and hopefully gives us the best chance of everyone keeping well over the holiday period. In line with Government requirements this teaching day will be made up, and children will now finish a day later in the Summer Term, on Friday 16th July.

Our fundraising this Christmas has been very productive with £121 raised from Christmas Jumper Day. We are yet to count up our Crisis at Christmas collection. But there will be a bucket on the gate in the mornings to donate if you would like to add to the collection. In these very difficult times charity and helping others is more critical than it has ever been. So please help us to provide a hot meal and clean clothes for a person in need this Christmas.

Please remember that we are finishing school on Thursday and children may be collected at the following staggered times:

Class 1 - 1:05am

Class 2 - 1:10pm

Class 3 - 1:20pm

Class 4 - 1:30pm

Please comply with strict Social Distancing rules on pick up and leave the school premises as soon as possible. If you are unable to pick up your child/ren early please telephone or email the school Office to make alternative arrangements.

Track and Trace beyond 17.12.20

Please email kwilson@monkton.kent.sch.uk from **December 18th - December 23rd** between **9am and 5pm** if you feel that your child had symptoms within a **48-hour period** of being in school

Taken from KCC Guidelines to schools:

The DfE recommend schools ensure staff, parents and carers are aware of the following information:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms **more than 48 hours** since being in school, the school **should not be** contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the **first 6 days** after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.
- School staff are not asked to remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching.

The DfE's announcement also states "Staff responsible for contact tracing may designate a limited period in the day to receive notification of positive cases and advise close contacts to self-isolate (this can be done by text or email)."

We look forward to seeing you all back in school on **Monday 4th January 2021** - *staggered start times still apply.*

May I take the opportunity to wish you and your families a very blessed Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year. Let's hope with an effective vaccine, we soon have a life that is a little more like we're used to, in 2021.

Yours sincerely,



K. A. Wilson (Mrs)
Head of School
Monkton CEP School