

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> January

Dear Parents/Carers and Children

Most importantly I do hope you and your families are safe and well. Unlike the first 'lockdown' the virus seems more prevalent in the community and we are all seeing positive results within our families and extended friendship groups. It is vital we follow the rules to curb the spread and keep everyone safe. As frustrating as it is, staying at home really is the safest and most sensible option.

Life without school can be many things; frustrating, lonely, and in some cases overwhelming. This is the same for everyone, children, staff and families. I have spoken to a number of families this week who are finding it quite tough at home, not just with the learning but generally. It really feels quite different this time around; especially with the terrible weather and also that many people are continuing to work. Please do what you can and do not hesitate to control the amount of work you are trying to complete. It is ok to take a day off, especially if you need a walk or day at the park; however you do not need to catch up the work. If you miss a day please start on the next day. Lots of the feedback I have received is that there is too much work; please, please just do what you can.

This week we have tested 'Google Meet' and some classes enjoyed more success than others. Like all new initiatives there will be teething problems but we are hoping to do the 'meets' once a week, not for a lesson but a catch up. I have been involved in a number already and it was fabulous to see so many children. We will try and stagger them to ensure siblings are not on at the same time (device and Wi-Fi issues at home) and I know not everyone can join for various reasons, hence why it is only once a week. It is vital children do not feel left out due to issues at home.

We are here to help with many things and have helped with technology, stationery (exercise books are in reception) and well-being. Please get in touch with us, emails and the answer machine are checked regularly, we really can and want to help at this very testing and stressful time.

Unfortunately our 'critical worker' places are now all taken and because of the numbers we lack the flexibility of lockdown one. Current numbers on site are very high and difficult to manage; apologies but if we are to operate safely we have to cap places and be strict with the guidance.

Thank you as ever for your continued support in all we do.

Stay safe

Mark Mountcastle