

Friday 22nd January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week has shown continued excellent engagement from the children with the remote learning. We have been so impressed with some of the work that has been coming in and the teachers are really pleased with how well the children are accessing all the learning, including the live lessons and navigating their way round the technology.

Some of our staff are also supporting their own children with remote learning and so we can really appreciate how difficult it is for parents. We have loved seeing the work and photos being sent in. It is great to be able to still feel connected to the children even though they haven't physically been in school. A very big well done to the children and thank you to the grown-ups as well for all you are doing supporting them at home with their learning.

The children in school have also been doing the same or very similar learning and I'd like to say well done to them as well for their enthusiasm and determination to succeed with their learning all whilst adhering to the new routines in school. We recognise it is difficult for them too and are conscious of making sure they have fun learning at school and are enjoying all the school has to offer.

The Year 5/6 children have been enjoying the new playground equipment in school. It has been lovely to see them scrambling over it and climbing on the ropes. Next week it will be Year 3/4s turn. We are so pleased with it and can't wait to have the rest of the children in to use it.

We used the money kindly donated by parents in ParentPay last term to go towards new Chrome books and also this play equipment. We are now hoping to raise money to buy reading books and a piece of equipment for the Foundation Stage play area. Over at the Holy Ghost Church they are hoping to raise money for us as part of their Lent appeal. Thank you so much to Father Philip and Jane for organising this. If anyone would like to donate to us over ParentPay we would be very grateful. We really need more reading books across the school and the Foundation Stage need a piece of play equipment that involves climbing to support the development of their gross motor skills.

I would like to say a really big thank you to members of our community who have donated £1,149 so far to enable us to buy more devices to support families at home. These devices then belong to us and so after this remote learning is finished we have the devices to use in school as well. So far I am proud to say we have lent out nearly 40 devices to support our families.

Communicating with our local MP Mr Simon Jupp.

I wrote to Mr Jupp last week raising some of my concerns about the recent government decisions which affect our school community. I am pleased to say that I have had a long conversation with him this morning and he has promised to take my concerns back to the DfE. He has also agreed to write a letter in support of applications by the school for top-funding from the DfE. I have said that I will await a response but I will keep in touch with him and once we are able to, I will invite him into school to see all the fantastic work that still goes on in school despite lack of funding and issues such as last minute guidance changes.

Staff testing

From next week all staff in school have the opportunity to take part in Covid testing. The staff carry out the test twice a week for the foreseeable future. The idea behind these Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) is to identify any asymptomatic cases.

If staff test negative it offers some reassurance but it does not release anyone from isolation early and does not mean we will not still be needing to keep all the protective measures in school.

If a staff member tests positive from a LFT we will then contact any classes affected as they will need to close and self-isolate. Unfortunately, this could mean some last minute closing of classes but will mean better detection of cases ensuring that we reduce transmission. If a staff member tests positive from a LFT they then have to go and have the traditional PCR test at a test centre. If the PCR test result comes back negative we will be able to reopen the bubble as soon as the result is back. However, if the PCR result comes back as positive the bubble will have to continue to isolate for the 10 days. We will obviously keep you informed at all points when/if that happens.

Best wishes

Mrs Taylor-Bashford