



# St Lawrence C of E (Aided) Junior School

15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I want to start by thanking all of you who have been so generous in your contact with the school and thanking us for hitting the ground running with the little time we have had to prepare. Staff have all worked so hard in ensuring that remote learning is working (albeit sometimes with temperamental connections!), and often doing the roles that are different to their normal ones. But we are glad that your children are getting to see their peers and their teacher daily too. I would like to especially thank Swans class for their gifts of flowers and wine for staff. It was very much appreciated. It was also great to note that in response to Gavin Williamson's comments to parents about reporting schools to Ofsted if remote learning wasn't happening, Ofsted had to employ more staff to handle the ten thousand plus emails they received praising schools for how they had handled the quick return to lockdown!

We have now completed almost two weeks of remote learning and as I have said in my last letter we have 80+ pupils in school as critical workers. Many schools have similar numbers and I am not sure how this will contribute to keeping the covid infection rate down. I do have a worry that with so many pupils in school, should there be a case or two we would end up having to close all or part of the school to pupils. This would have a dreadful impact on our critical worker parents. I will continue to urge you to revisit your own situation and ensure that you are only sending your children in when absolutely necessary. The DfE changed their tack last week to stress that if you can keep your children safely at home that you were strongly encouraged to do so.

With regard to remote learning staff have asked me to point out a few gentle reminders. Firstly, please make sure that your child is joining in with the live lessons and the work that is being provided. If you have a problem accessing the work please let the school know and we will try to help out if possible. If you require an immediate answer to a question, place the question on the stream rather than in any classwork section or connected to a piece of returned work. If it is a private comment then ask the teacher to contact you, rather than put private information where others can see it. Please make sure that you don't complete your child's work for them. It can be tempting when they are finding something a bit difficult to plough in and do it for them. Allow them to try and if they struggle let the teacher know. And finally, if the teacher asks the children to 'turn in' work, please ensure that they do so. There is a 'turn in' button on the documents within Google Classroom that can be clicked.

On a more positive note, I have been spending most of this week, at lunchtime, with the Year 3 children. In a bid to lose some holiday weight I have been playing football with them, much to the dismay of my wife when I come home with scuffed trainers that were new and a present at Christmas! Whilst endeavouring to show off (and completing), successfully, a trick that I haven't managed for some 30 years, one child remarked "Well that was unexpected!" to which came the very calm reply from another "Well, always expect the unexpected from Mr Tucker". Finally, some recognition of my fading ability, albeit from 7-year olds!

On Wednesday at the Education Select Committee meeting the Secretary of State mentioned that primary schools would be receiving Lateral Flow Tests from Monday. Like you, we have no further information about these and how they will be rolled out. It is likely that, for primary children, these tests will be given for you, their parents, to administer. I hope to receive more information in the coming days and will pass this on to you.

With best wishes

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