

HIGHFIELD UPDATE Thursday 4th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

On Tuesday I met with the resources sub-committee of the governing body. I updated them on all the things we were doing in school to keep safe, reduce the potential transmission of the virus and deliver high quality learning to all our children. I also shared our most recent remote learning data with them.

Attendance at our 'live' online English and maths lessons in years 1 – 6 was even better than last week's amazing 92% attendance. This week Highfield children have attended 94% of all our live lessons. I'm also pleased to see how many Reception parents have been watching the teachers' superb recorded lessons and enabling the children to take part in the activities on their Tapestry online journals. This is a credit to the staff, the children and you the parents and it shows how together we can achieve great things.

The governors are very clear that Highfield continues to follow the government guidance for schools in lockdown. Parents should keep their children at home if they can. The governors are keen for us to keep our numbers in school every day as low as possible during this national lockdown period. This is because we want to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus within the school and its community. The governors are also fully committed to the wellbeing of our staff who are in school every day and should not be taking additional children into their classrooms until the lockdown is lifted. Yesterday we had 117 children in the building which is 26% of the school. In the March 2020 lockdown we had no more than 30 children in the building every day. The governors and I are very sympathetic to the pressure at home to balance home schooling, work and other commitments but we cannot accept any more children into school before the lockdown is lifted. Some of our staff are speaking regularly to parents and children who may benefit from a conversation with their teacher and the offer of words of encouragement, motivation and advice. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if this kind of phone call with your child might help you.

This week as I was finding a couple of things a struggle I was inspired once again by Captain Sir Tom Moore. Sir Tom sadly died on Tuesday following his battle with COVID but his legacy and determination will live on for many years to come. On April 6th 2020 at the start of the pandemic and with his 100th birthday approaching, he began a sponsored walk of 100 lengths of his garden. He initially wanted to raise £1000 for the NHS but his story and the image of him with his walking frame touched the nation and he ended up raising more than £32 million. I have a feeling that head teachers will be sharing the story of Captain Sir Tom Moore with children in assemblies for many years to come.

Please remember that next Friday 12th February will be a training day and school still be closed. School will also be closed in the half term holiday as will school club. We will open again on February 22nd for our current children of critical workers and, of course, we want to be open again to all our children as soon as the lockdown is lifted.

Our staff with COVID continue their road to recovery and will all hopefully be back at school after the half term holiday. Once again I thank everyone who is following the government guidance and keeping the social distancing rules and keeping their children at home. Please continue following the guidance, especially during the half term holidays. Breaking the rules outside school does raise the risk of transmission in school and it is important to remember that our staff who are on the front line every day are not yet vaccinated.

My message to everyone this week is to think of Captain Sir Tom when you are having a wobble and just keep going. Remember it isn't easy, you didn't choose to home school your children but you are doing a fabulous job and you are helping keep us all safe from the virus.

We can do this!

Best wishes

Julie Colley