

## Willows Weekly Update – Week Ending 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021

新年快乐

Xīnnián kuàilè

Happy Chinese New Year to you all, but especially our families from the Chinese community.

2021 is the year of the Ox. In Chinese culture, the Ox is a valued animal because of its role in agriculture and its positive characteristics; such as being hardworking, honest, intelligent and reliable. The Ox makes valuable contributions to the community but in the background and never demands praise.

There are so many people in our community who display these characteristics too and I would like to acknowledge and thank them as we come to the end of this incredibly challenging half term:

- **Children** – our pupils have shown resilience, commitment and wonderful hardworking attitudes towards their learning at home and at school. We are all so very proud of every single one of you. Well done everybody!
- **Parents** – our families have demonstrated unending fortitude and stoicism, especially those taking on the role of implementing home learning. We are in awe of your multi-tasking, organisation, creativity and patience. Thank you for all your support!
- **School Staff** – our Willows and RSP teams have proven to be the most outstanding group of individuals coming together with the common goal of caring for and educating our children. I am eternally grateful for every adult's contribution; their flexibility, their readiness to 'step up', to do 'above and beyond' and to go 'the extra mile' to keep everyone safe as well as their willingness to take on and learn new skills and their innovative ideas to make learning fun and meaningful. I feel privileged to work with you all!
- **Governors** – our dedicated board, who give of their time freely and voluntarily, are a critical source of wisdom and support. They always ensure that our values are upheld and that the precious ethos of our community and family school is maintained. I am so fortunate that they are there for the school, literally at all times of day or night!

As we start our half term holiday I would encourage you to have a break from normal routines and enjoy some 'down time' as a family. Let's hope that the weather will be kind to us so that we are able to get out and make the most of our local environment. I appreciate that during a global pandemic much of this must seem challenging if not impossible, however here are a few links to give you some ideas (some are repeated and some may be localised to Yorkshire!!):

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/february-half-term-for-all-the-family>

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2021/feb/06/10-fun-ways-to-entertain-kids-half-term-cooking-crafting>

<https://mummyfever.co.uk/february-half-term-lockdown-activities/>

<https://www.kidly.co.uk/ideas/fab-lockdown-half-term-ideas-for-kids/3492>

<https://wakefield.mumbler.co.uk/10-ideas-to-make-february-half-term-different-during-lockdown/>

<https://northleeds.mumbler.co.uk/half-term-lockdown-ideas-fun-things-to-do-ideas-for-different-activities-this-half-term-in-lockdown/>

Although next week is a holiday, the Willows is still responsible for 'Track and Trace' for any individual who has been on the school premises. Therefore any child, parent or other adult who has been into school and



subsequently tests positive for Covid 19 up to or on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021, please let Mrs Warren know by emailing in to [admin@willowstimperley.com](mailto:admin@willowstimperley.com) Thank you.

It is with a heavy heart that I acknowledge we will not be able to welcome all the children back after half term, as we had originally hoped. Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 will see a further announcement from the Prime Minister as to the plans and expectations of school from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Please be assured I promise you we do NOT have any prior knowledge of what might happen – as up until this point we never have had!! We are all keeping our fingers (and toes) crossed that he will say we can open school fully on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Bearing this in mind we will continue to do all we can to support all the children both at home and at school. It was wonderful to see so many children connecting with their friends on Wednesday as we facilitated a special whole year group Zoom call. The smiles on their faces were heartening to see and who could imagine that there were so many ways of playing games with 45 children in over 30 locations on line!! We had interpretations of 'Rock, Paper, Scissors' or should I say 'Knife, Fork, Spoon' as well as 'Head and Tails', Treasure Hunts and many others. Due to the success of these calls we are going to make our Friday Zoom call a regular whole year group call. (Friday times and codes will stay the same).

I also know that sometimes things can appear to get 'too much' for children and their families. Please remember that we are here at the end of an email, phone line or zoom call to offer whatever help we can. Please find a 'Mental Wellbeing ebook' attached, which you may find helpful. There are also many agencies that can provide much need information and assistance, here are a few:

### **Supporting Parents Helpfinder (Young Minds)**

Times are tough for many people right now. Parents find themselves pulled in many different direction and children may be struggling being in the house for so much longer than usual.

A mixture of concern about Covid, work from home and children at home, along with a possible financial impact make for a stressful household. Young Minds have created a useful 'Supporting Parents Helpfinder'. By answering six questions, parents can find out how to support their child's mental health during the pandemic (and beyond). Find the help finder here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/supporting-parents-helpfinder/>

### **When emotions explode (Young Minds)**

Young Minds have also created a useful poster highlighting ways to give support to children when they have angry feelings or outbursts and may help families start a conversation and talk about each other's feelings. Download the poster here: <https://youngminds.org.uk/media/4291/when-emotions-explode-poster.pdf>

### **Screen Savers: Looking after your eyes, body and mind when using screens**

We are spending more time online than ever before, possibly sitting and working with poor posture as we use makeshift desks and chairs. There is a tendency to take fewer breaks and less exercise and this is affecting our physical well-being. Beacon House the specialist, therapeutic service for young people, families and adults has produced a series of six posters outlining ways to keep safe and alert when working at home, whether children or adults. Download the posters here: <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Screen-Savers-1.pdf> Further Beacon House resources can be found on their website here: <https://beaconhouse.org.uk/resources/>

The next week has lots to offer to take our minds off the current situation, I do hope you have fun on Chinese New Year Valentine's Day and Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday). Look after yourselves and each other. Take care,

Mrs Warren