

The Willows Primary School Update – Week Ending 22nd January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

With each week that passes I am hoping we are another week nearer to the end of this lockdown and I am, no doubt like you, keeping my fingers crossed that with falling infection rates our time under these restrictions will be as short as possible.

This last week has been the first for many who have started their new home learning journey. Thank you to all those parents who have been able to 'juggle' their busy lives and care for their children at home. Every Willows child has been an absolute credit to our school and their families. We have been amazed by how much has been achieved both in school and at home. We are delighted to hear how the children are accessing their activities online and so impressed with the feedback about their willingness to approach their learning more independently. Congratulations to you all, remember do what you can and do ask for support where you need it.

Even though the weather was so horrendous on Wednesday, I am proud to say we were able to keep school open and continue to provide for home learners, through Biblical rain and snow! Not even the threat of imminent floods, one member of staff was woken at 2.00am and told to evacuate their home, or being stranded in a flood, one member of staff had to be rescued after their car was marooned in water, could hold our wonderful team back. Despite Storm Christoph, our teachers and TAs are now settled into their new routines and have risen to the challenges of teaching either in school or at home. However, I am very mindful of their work life balance too. Where possible, please can we request that work is uploaded to Tapestry and Seesaw by 5pm each day? This will allow staff to comment on the children's learning for that day. 'Late night posts' may not receive feedback until the next day.

I am sure you have heard lots of information in the news about the launch of rapid asymptomatic coronavirus (COVID-19) testing for staff who work in primary schools. The testing programme is an important addition in supporting schools to maintain the continuity of education through the pandemic. Staff with a negative LFD test result can continue to attend school or nursery and use protective measures.

Staff with a positive LFD test result will need to self-isolate in line with the stay at home guidance, they will also need to arrange a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test to confirm the result. Testing is not mandatory for staff although participation in testing is strongly encouraged. I am pleased to say that many of our staff will be taking up this opportunity. The Willows Primary School is expecting to receive their test packs imminently. After training our testing procedures will hopefully begin by the beginning of February.

The other big news this week has, of course, been the inauguration of Joe Biden, as the new President of the United States of America. I was absolutely wowed by Amanda Gorman who recited her poem at the ceremony and would like to finish with her words,

'When day comes, we step out of the shade, aflame and unafraid.

The new dawn blooms as we free it.

For there is always light,

if only we're brave enough to see it.'



We can learn so much from our young people. Amanda's words are encouragement to us all and I trust that we can all see the 'light' at the end of our tunnel and live in the hope that better times will soon be here. (I have attached the full transcript for those of you who are interested – do 'Google' Amanda and her story, she is inspirational)

Stay safe, look after yourselves and each other.

Take care,

Mrs Warren