

Welcome back January 2021

Dear parents/carers,

I hope you all had a restful and peaceful Christmas and New Year break with your family.

It's once again been a very challenging time over Christmas, so it's understandable if you and your child feel concerned and anxious at the moment. We are now in the second national lockdown since March 23rd 2020. It is being reviewed around February half-term. We will try as before to be here for you every step of the way as we try to get through this time together. Remember, if you have any concerns about helping your child learn or you need any other support from the school, please let us know by calling 0207 254 7353 (9 till 4pm only) or email on admin@olsj.hackney.sch.uk or via Class Dojo.

We are all adapting to new ways of working, so well done on supporting your child's wellbeing and learning during this time.

Lockdowns are really sad and we all miss the children very much, but we must follow the government's guidance to keep everyone in our community safe particularly during this latest upsurge in contagion. We were hit hard during the very last week of term and some of us worked on track and trace with the DFE and PHE up until the 23rd of December. The good news is that almost all children and staff are now well with some adults still recovering.

I have seen the figures yesterday from Public Health England for this area and like most of London we have seen a really significant upsurge. So, we carry on with providing care for '*critical workers*' children (new title), vulnerable pupils and those with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 3.00pm. We will also be providing free school meal packs to those families eligible for them. We also have to ensure Safeguarding for children who are vulnerable or at risk of harm. I have been in every day this week arranging things and teachers and staff are all now working at full capacity. We also have significantly reduced staffing as some are self-isolating, others are recovering from Covid and some are clinically vulnerable.

During the first lockdown, March 23rd we initially, like most schools had very low uptake, 6 children on the first day March 23rd. By the end we were much busier. This time we are at full capacity and already have allocated nearly 40 places. So we are most certainly '**not closed**'.

Anyone applying now will be put on a waiting list or we will help to find a place elsewhere in Hackney.

Remote Learning will start today and build on the last lockdown. This weeks work is now @ 9.00am all on our website under Home Learning. It will be a mix of Class Dojo, Google Meets, Google Classroom, videos and links to online platforms like the new BBC Bitesize. Every child now has a Google Classroom log in, passwords being sent out today. Work will be different for all ages and will evolve from today onwards. Online learning is challenging for very young children and they should not be spending too long glued to the screen for all sorts of reasons, particularly safeguarding. We will be encouraging pupils to make folders of

projects they have done so they can share these with us when they come back. I have just finished a leadership team meeting and we all agreed we want to make sure that online learning includes as a key priority children's well being and overall mental health for the future.

Being remote doesn't mean we still can't have some fun together! Your children will have lots of activities they can get stuck into over the coming term – so keep a close eye on our school website www.olsjschool.net and look under Lockdown Education Resources and Parents Info Resources. These are being updated every day. The school Newsletter will be on our website every Friday and you will receive regular texts and emails.

We love seeing the children's creative learning at home – please keep sending their work in via post or email as we would like to showcase it in due course. Our artist in residence Lily will be coming in and will be doing more work to showcase pupils' talents. We hope to have online music with Ms Dyer and yesterday we arranged for Dave our woodwind tutor to also do some online learning. It will build as the term progresses. We will continue doing our utmost to keep your child learning and our school community connected.

Let's get through January and February first and see what the future holds then !

Warm regards and stay safe and healthy,

Sean Flood
(Headteacher)