



Dear parents: the joys of January, never the most pleasant time of year anyway. This year please be aware that we have many staff self-isolating, caring for relatives and loved ones and above all grieving. I know seven people who have died this month from Covid and people are going in to ICU in Hackney as I type. The sickening vaccine disputes and nationalist outpourings probably means a delay in vaccination for many of us now. So please do follow guidance even as it changes daily. Very local pubs recently raided and large fines given out for discos, raves and weddings etc in Hackney also ... please God schools at least will reopen on March 8th but who knows? I was given a lovely haggis for Burns Night (sheep's lungs being the main ingredient and oats and offal) tastes great however but no Scottish fire water this year to celebrate the life of Russia's favourite foreign poet (true). Also this week was Holocaust Memorial Day, always a very moving event. Amazing picture on BBC website of 93 year old survivor getting the vaccine above his tattooed number. Infection rates are going down in Hackney but still very high especially among 20-30 year olds. Lateral flow tests arrived in school this week so all staff will now test at least twice a week which is a big step forward. Plus the first snowdrop is out and Monday is February all good reasons for hope.

School news ...

.... Well attended online meeting Thursday 4.00pm with Sarah Woodhouse and Beth (from the WAMHS project) virtual presentation - Supporting Children's Motivation - during Remote Learning. I did say at the start that this is the topic most asked for by parents of children whatever age. There are only ideas and research I have read and the best I can share with you is 1. do your best 2. don't stress and be too hard on yourself or your children 3. breathe deeply 4. what works for one child might not work for another 5. remote learning does not really work for young children they need to be in school with their friends and teachers 6. be kind as much as possible 7. count your blessings, offer up some prayers and smile ... makes you feel better every time. The Thais have over 50 words and descriptors for smiles and they are some of the happiest people on the planet ... *Yim dee* means 'A good smile' which makes for *Jai yen* ... A good and kind heart. on the same subject OLSJ Spread Kindness Challenge Week. Winners and artwork on our website today lovely ideas and well worth a look..will make you smile



Coates Lane Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs. S White
22nd January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Today I write to you as a mother first. This week has been tough. Week 3 of the Lockdown and as a parent I have felt the strain this week. My own two children have been set an immense amount of work from their school and I literally haven't been able to keep up with it. Between juggling my own job, my children's school work and generally surviving a pandemic, I really felt the strain this week.

Times are tough at the moment...our mental health is taking a battering. The dark, cold and rainy/snowy weather hasn't helped so we need to support each other and get through this together.

You are probably wondering where I am going with this...

Well, my main reason for writing is to say WELL DONE! You are surviving a pandemic! Whatever your personal circumstances, we think you are doing a great job! If your child has had lots of microwave meals, stayed up too late, played too much on the xbox and not finished all their school work....THAT'S OK! We know our pupils are safe, loved and cared for and that is the most important thing at the moment. We know that we've got high expectations here and we've set a lot of work each week. All we ask is that you do your best. If your best is a quick 30 minutes of reading or times tables here and there...that's ok! If you want to do all the work we set...that's ok too. Please do not let school work put any extra pressure on you when you are trying to hold down jobs, earn a living and keep your children safe. Everyone's circumstances are very different and we appreciate that.

Finally, we may be 'closed' to lots of pupils but we are still here emotionally for all of our families. If you need support...a chat...a virtual cuppa, a cry...we are here!

Take care, stay safe and remember we think you are all doing amazing!

Kind regards

Mrs White

Headteacher



Woodridge Primary School

HOME LEARNING UPDATE AND TEACHER TRAINING

25th January 2021

Dear Parents,

I know it is an exceptionally difficult time for all of you and for your children at the moment. Home Learning, on the scale we have currently, is still relatively new to all children, parents and teachers and we have developed and will continue to develop our remote offer over time.

The children have now received only 13 weeks of school (this too, restricted by Covid) in the last 11 months and this is set to continue for some time to come. Inevitably, there will be some gaps in learning for all children.

Teachers are still setting work in line with the National Curriculum, bearing in mind the amount of learning lost and that the progress of each child is difficult to assess remotely. We know this is frustrating for all parents. Many of the staff are parents too and we share your frustration. No, really, we do.

Thank you for all the supportive and helpful messages that you have been sending to the staff via the learning platforms and to the office email. This sort of constructive and considered feedback is always welcome and it helps us to improve our offer as we go along.

Parents now have the facility to message teachers directly via our online platforms, to watch teachers teaching their pre-recorded lessons and to comment in real time on live sessions. I hope you have found this unprecedented access to teachers helpful.

However, a number of parents have taken advantage of this new access to send highly critical messages of advice to teachers about how to do their jobs and questioning their training, skills and competence. Can I encourage all those particular parents, who now consider themselves to be educational experts, to sign up for teacher training at their earliest convenience, since there are never enough teachers and I suspect many will be leaving the profession after this year. There are now a number of different access routes into teaching and I have included the UCAS link below which explains all the options. I will also update you if we have any teaching vacancies at Woodridge over the next few weeks, which if such messages continue, I am thoroughly expecting.

[https://wwwucas.com/postgraduate/teacher-training/train-teach-england/routes-teaching-england/?filter=Study+mode!Part-time\\$Study+mode!Full-time](https://wwwucas.com/postgraduate/teacher-training/train-teach-england/routes-teaching-england/?filter=Study+mode!Part-time$Study+mode!Full-time)

Yours sincerely,

Colin Dowland
Colin Dowland - Headteacher

Pics of the week ...

.... two contrasting newsletters from heads in other schools made the news this week ... one made me think one made me smile..... free food and school meal vouchers ready to go out and of course the very first snowdrop of the year in our school this morning.



and finally ... sorry to our parent who supports Green Bay Packers in the NFL as Brady at 43 comes good again in a thriller this week ... this week post Trump I'm reading a new biography of Mussolini — Paolo di Canio's favourite politician anyway halfway through the season and West Ham 4th, just signed Lingard relegation battle now looms ... snow last weekend this weekend cold, wet and miserable roll on Spring.