



BERKHAMPSTEAD SCHOOL

NEWS FROM THE HEAD

Dear Parents,

After a couple of weeks of convalescing I am now back at the helm in time for half term. I have been in regular contact with Mrs Agg, Mrs Bareham, Mrs Holland and Mrs Roddy Watts and they have been brilliant. In fact, I have been really impressed with all that I have seen over the last six weeks – staff, pupils and parents alike should be proud of all they have achieved during this difficult time.

This week, following a very informative Wellbeing Week, we have had Safer Internet Day and considered the benefits and pitfalls of being online. Although the children learn and know so much, there is always time given to considering this in more detail. This year, the focus was on trust - whether we can trust what we see and read online or whether we should be cautious and check it first. The UK Safer Internet Centre website is a great resource for this, along with www.net-aware.org.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Do please take an interest in what your children are using and encourage them to ask questions about what they see online; it is so important these days.

The 'Beast from the East' seems to have hit us this week; I am sure that the snow flurries have brought some light relief to your household – and some extra heating bills too, maybe! The good news is that it is warming up for the weekend and next week.

I believe that we will hear more about the return to school next week too, with the Prime Minister scheduled to announce the 'road map' to a return to normality. There are many reasons for optimism: the vaccine and lock-down seems to be having a very positive effect on case numbers and this can only get better as more people are vaccinated. I - like you, I suspect - am disappointed that we could not return to normal school straight after half term, but we can focus on 8th March, just two weeks later.

Over half term, the academic staff - with the help of our estates team - will be delivering another resource pack for learning at home. This will contain resources needed for the second half of term; the children can bring their pack into school if they return on 8th March - fingers crossed! The deliveries will be sent out on the Thursday or Friday of half term (18th and 19th February).

There has been much talk in the news this week about schools extending the Summer Term to allow for some 'catch up' time for the children. This has been on our agenda too but for the moment we are focussing on getting the children safely back in school and back in the routine. As I have said in my previous letter, home schooling has a disproportionate impact on the younger children who are less able to engage in remote learning. Having said that, I think that Mrs Roddy Watts and her team have done wonders and I am sure that the children will return with confidence; much of our focus will be on socialisation, collaboration and relationships with their peers as this is what they have missed out on most. Please be assured that our focus will be on ensuring that the lockdown has as little impact as possible on the children's academic and pastoral progress.

In the meantime, please do have a relaxing and restful half term - you ALL deserve it. The post-Christmas half term is always a challenge, but this has been unprecedented and very well done for persevering.

Richard

Richard Cross
Headmaster

FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY
SPRING TERM





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News from around the school

MUSIC NEWS

All the Prep classes have enjoyed mini concerts in their Live Music lessons this week. Performers in every class have played from home, via a video recording or live in school in KWC and we have watched demonstrations of instruments, compositions and many beautiful pieces. There was a fantastic response to the variety of performances - everything from Piano to Harmonica, Recorder to Double Bass; lots of encouraging smiling faces and enthusiastic applause. I am so impressed that so many children took this opportunity, and there will be another later in the term for more to share their skills and talents.

World Book Day

On Thursday 4th March, the children - whether at home or at Key Worker Club - can celebrate World Book Day by dressing up as their favourite book characters. Please send your pictures to Mrs de Burgh-Thomas at prmarketing@berkhampsteadschool.co.uk





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