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25.2.21

Dear Parent/Carer,

At last we have something to really look forward to, I cannot tell you how much everyone in school is looking forward to having the whole of our family back together on Monday 8th March. I would like to say a huge thank you to all of you who have been supporting your children so brilliantly with their home learning – I know that in many cases it has not been easy, but I have been so impressed with how well our children have engaged and much of that is down to your hard work.

I am sure that some of our children may be feeling very nervous about the return to school and I just wanted to write a few words to reassure them and maybe you! The teachers and teaching assistants are already planning three weeks of a fun and creative curriculum designed to be as practical and enjoyable as possible – although to be honest that is how I would describe our curriculum on a normal week! There will be an abundance of art, physical activities, investigations and lessons that the teachers know that their class really enjoys. Every phase is building in dedicated time to devote to social and emotional development; ensuring that friendships can be re-established, team working skills can be revitalised and that children are given space and time enjoy being back at school. I have even heard talk of 'Welcome back' parties!

We will still be teaching English and maths, carrying on from where the online and key worker learning left off. Teachers will be using these three weeks up to the Easter holidays to find out which individuals need further support either academically or emotionally. This will enable them to put carefully tailored teaching and interventions in place for the summer term – and beyond. Any gaps will be filled in a well-planned and careful way which will allow individuals to make the progress required in a steady and sustainable manner which still allows for a full and vibrant curriculum.

A final word about teaching up until Easter is that we want to give all of you home schooling parents a break. Although we would like you to keep on with the reading at home we are not intending to send any homework out until after the Easter holidays.

I will send you a letter detailing all of the practicalities next week. It is really important to remember that although the future is so much brighter we aren't quite out of the woods yet. Our Covid risk assessment will be amended next week but essentially we will still be operating in the same way as we were before Christmas. The children will be in bubbles that will have staggered start and finish times, playtimes and lunchtimes. All adults will wear face masks in communal areas and when moving around school, Allison and Aleks will continue to do their continual cleaning during the school day – such an important part of keeping us safe that they cannot be thanked enough for, as many windows as possible will be open and hand sanitising will be as important as ever.

It is hugely important that we don't get complacent and that we all observe the social distancing rules – we are still in lock-down until March 29th and I think that is going to be difficult to remember in the light of more optimistic news, better weather and a full return to school. I have every faith that our fabulous Fishergate community will rise to the challenge as it would be the worst thing ever to have to revert to school closure again.

Look out for a letter with all of the finer details in at the beginning of next week.

Take care of each other,

Clarke