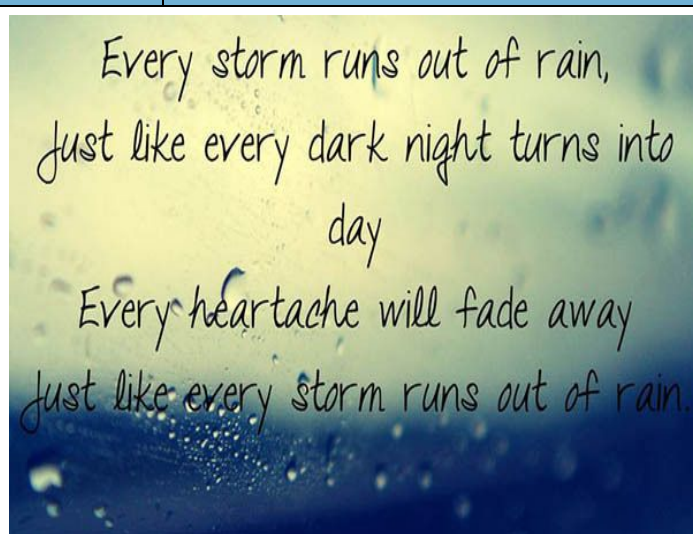


Another week complete! Christmas feels like a very distant memory and I can't believe that Monday marks the start of February. I think I blinked and missed January altogether!

The Prime Minister spoke in Parliament this week and indicated he is hopeful schools will be able to open more widely 8th March. This is obviously very worrying for us all. We absolutely want all children back in school as I know you do too. Children learn best in the classroom with their teacher and peers and we know and understand the struggles many of you are experiencing at home. However, if we want schools to open to all pupils, it is paramount that we do the right thing and stay safe.

This week we have again seen record numbers of Covid related deaths recorded. The Wirral statistics were worryingly high last week but there appears to be tiny shoots of hope in that the infection rate has fallen slightly over the last 7 days. We have to hope and pray the vaccine roll out will see the return to normal times. I experienced an enormous sense of relief this week when I heard my own parents had been vaccinated as they are both in vulnerable categories and therefore it felt incredibly reassuring to hear this news. We have to keep looking for the small glimmers of hope and pray that sooner, rather than later, Covid will be the distant memory!



Teachers will be sending you a message via SEESAW with a date and time that they will phone you for a 'Parent/Teacher Appointment'. This will be an opportunity to discuss your child's progress and attainment over the Autumn Term and to share any concerns regarding home learning or work being done in school. This will be a really useful opportunity for parents to ask questions and raise any concerns.

Staff Testing - Staff have agreed this week to take part in a National roll out of asymptomatic testing for primary school staff. As I said last week, this is reassuring but will also hopefully support us in being able to open more widely as soon as possible.



ONLINE SAFETY - Parental Controls

Internet Matters.org has produced excellent resources on setting up parental controls in a step by step format. Simply follow the links below to explore ways in which parents can set up parental controls on digital devices and popular social media apps. Each circular icon that is loaded represents a guide and can be accessed by simply clicking on the icon.

Smartphones and other devices - <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/smartphones-and-other-devices/>

Parental controls on Social media - <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/>

Broadband and mobile networks - <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/broadband-mobile/>

Gaming consoles - <https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/>

Children's Mental Health Week 2021 – 'Express Yourself'

Next week, school's across the UK are invited to take part in 'Children's Mental Health Week'. This year's theme is **Express Yourself**. For children, expressing themselves is about finding ways to share feelings, thoughts, or ideas, through creativity. This could be through art, music, writing and poetry, dance and drama, and doing activities that make them feel good.

It's important children know that being able to express themselves is not about being



the best at something or putting on a performance for others. It is about finding a way to show who they are, and how they see the world that can help them feel good about themselves.

Mrs Bennison will be setting a 'Mental Health' task on SEESAW for the children to do next week.

To help and support mental wellbeing during this difficult time, below are some resources that you might find useful. We would always recommend that you check out the resources first to ensure they are suitable for your child and you are comfortable with the content.

BBC's Newsround has a great webpage full of information and support from a child psychologist:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51896156>

Childline has created a dedicated Corona virus webpage full of tips, advice and activities:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus>

Mindheart has also produced a small booklet aimed at children under seven years old. This is designed to be coloured in as a therapeutic anxiety reducing activity: <https://www.mindheart.co/descargables>

The Children's Society – Coronavirus Covid-19 information and support – Stepping up our fight for the most vulnerable young people www.childrenssociety.org.uk/coronavirus-information-and-support

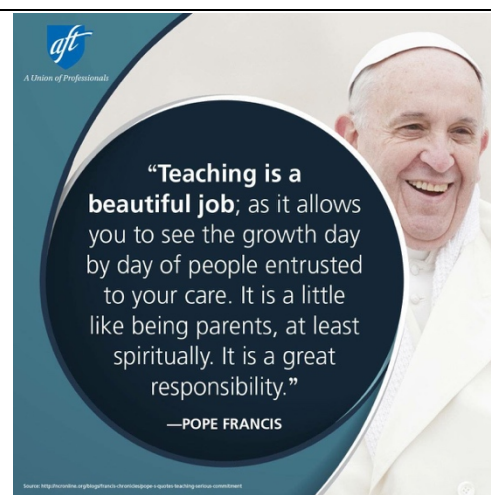


I had the pleasure last Friday of messaging some children in each class who their teachers nominated for the outstanding home learning work they are doing. I have been so pleased to see all the wonderful work. Unfortunately, I have been super busy this week with lots of meetings which has meant I haven't had as many opportunities to keep an eye on SEESAW but intend to have a good look over the weekend to see what everyone has been doing. We hope the KS2 children have been enjoying the Zoom sessions - this is something we hope to be able to do more of.

Parents, thank you again for everything you are doing to support your children at home. As someone who is balancing home schooling expectations as a parent, I know how hard the task is at the best of times and I am a trained teacher! Stick with it because for those children who are doing the daily tasks and sessions, they are the children who won't fall behind because you have supported them in accessing every opportunity available. Thank you also to all those parents who have completed the 'Remote Learning' questionnaire. This helps inform us of anything we need to change or alter.

A final thought for the week... as teachers in school we count ourselves as having the best job in the world although it's not always easy, which I'm sure many of you are discovering at home. This Sunday in the Gospel in Church, Jesus stands out as a teacher who taught with authority and power. The whole of Jesus' life was a continual teaching. His teaching is calm and wise, gentle but powerful and also understanding. He set us the most amazing example that we try our best to follow but even Jesus got frustrated at times by those he tried to teach. For those of you teaching your children at home be patient and understanding with yourselves as well as your children. No job is ever easy and difficult days are normal but please persevere.

Finally, if you're doing the job of being a teacher then it is only right that you enjoy all the perks of the job so if I tell you a Friday is 'wine' night for many a teacher..... feel free to join in this evening because you have definitely earned it!



Take care of yourselves and your wonderful children, we miss them greatly! Mrs Ralph