



Weekly Bulletin

Term 2 Week1 : Friday 8th January 2021

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What a week and start to the new year!

Well done all!

Well done to everyone who has managed to successfully navigate through this week. Well done to everyone who has done their best to balance work demands with the additional pressures of home learning. Well done to everyone who thought they might have a minute of peace this week and ended up with children at home! Of course, well done and THANK YOU to all key workers, especially NHS and Care home staff for all they continue to do for us all. Thanks to each and every person who is following national restrictions to benefit society.

With regards to home learning, with two girls at home myself, I like all of the staff team understand the challenges that this brings. I said to a couple of parents yesterday all people can do is their very best. I know there are difficulties in sharing devices between family members, understanding some of the work set, balancing independence with support to name just a few of the many. We will all get through this! I am aware that my parentmail was strongly worded but I have to be clear with everyone about the national guidance and expectation.

This week:

On Monday Evening Schools were given just over 12 hours notice regarding National lockdown. The lockdown announcement came just 36 hours after Prime minister Boris Johnson urged all primary pupils to attend school this week.

I was left shocked and beyond disappointed that on Wednesday afternoon Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary, in his speech to the House of Parliament encouraged parents to complain to Headteachers then Ofsted, if they were not happy with their school's 'online/home learning' offer, less than 48 hours after lockdown was announced.

I believe our communication, our consistent, sincere and genuine care for our children and community, as well as our professional focus on teaching and learning and providing the children with the best we can, stands up to any scrutiny. Some elements of the media will do all they can to criticise our profession and these words from Mr Williamson will not help.

I know that throughout this whole pandemic, since March 2020, the Carlton team, like so many other school teams, have been first class in their response. **I am proud of our staff team and proud of our school.** At every point of this crisis response we have opened our doors to those families who have needed us. 12 of our staff team (in total and at various points) have themselves been Covid positive in the last 10 months as a result of serving our school community - with all staff returning at the very earliest point they could safely do so

to return to work. Staff have their own families and loved ones to consider, and without fail they have continued to show great bravery, enthusiasm and passion for working with our young people, despite their potential worries, anxieties and concerns.

Yet we hear that 'schools are closed' – quite frankly ours isn't! We hear about staff not wanting schools to be open – this is absolutely made up. We have always wanted our children to be safe, happy and learning in school and can't wait for the time we can safely have everyone back in the building. We will be working really hard to make sure we offer the best deal we can for children remotely.

I would encourage Gavin Williamson to come into our school and meet the staff team (socially distanced of course) and see how we care for the children of key workers and 'vulnerable' children. How we are providing Free School Meals for those who need it. How we are trying to help those families improve their own technology at home to support home learning. I also would welcome him to see how lack of technology and high quality internet connection in school (as well as at home) hampers home learning provision.

I am delighted in the manner in which my delicated staff team have continued to go about their professional duties this week. I remain a proud headteacher of Carlton Primary School. You have our commitment that we continue to do our very best, each and every day for our school, our community and most importantly for our children.

Please of course talk to us about any concerns you have and we will prioritise our demands and do all we can to reflect and improve where we can. Please also let us know if we are doing well! Positivity and kindness, especially in challenging times is so important.

Finally, A huge thank you to you all for your continued support and understanding. Although we won't please everyone all of the time, it means a lot to the staff team and I, to know so many of you support us and our efforts.

Have a safe and happy weekend wherever possible.

Kind regards

Jon Watson

Headteacher

Carlton Primary School