

### Message from Debi Bailey, CEO

Dear students, parents and carers



While I am so sorry to find we are back in another national lockdown, I cherish the opportunity to engage with you on a weekly basis. I received a lot of positive feedback during our last lockdown to my weekly messages and I am looking forward to sharing reflections and updates over the next few weeks.

I am unsure if I feel better or worse this time around. I do feel more hopeful as we have a vaccine on the horizon but it is a particularly challenging time at the moment as the days are short, cold and dark.

As well as the weekly poems and reflections, I also intend to share tips with you to help with learning and wellbeing.

In this first weekly update, I want to thank you for the fantastic support you have shown to our schools. You continue to work with us so we can manage the numbers of pupils in school and I have been delighted with the numbers of pupils engaging with learning at home. I know this is not easy and please know that everything you do to support and engage is greatly appreciated. If you are struggling to access learning at home or you have any issues, please do contact school - we are here to help.

### Wellbeing Tip of the Week

This might seem something small but I cannot recommend enough getting outside for a walk – in line with the national lockdown rules, of course!

As many of you know, I have a cockapoo called Ned (he loves spending time in our schools

reading with the children) and he has given me a reason to get my coat on - no matter what the weather - and get outside. There have been many times when I really haven't felt like it but I feel so much better after some fresh air..... give it a go!



You can check the current government rules on exercise here if you need a reminder: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home#exercising>

You might also find the Young Minds website useful. It provides advice on how to support mental health in young people: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>

### Poem of the Week

I was lucky enough to be given a poetry book as a gift for Christmas and I can't wait to share some of the 'Poems to Save the World With' selected by Chris Ridell.

The poem I have chosen this week is '**Battle Call**' by **Rachel Rooney**, which you can read on the next page. I really do think that if we continue to work together, we can be the difference we want to see.

**Please take care of yourselves and each other.**

**'Battle Cry' – Rachel Rooney**

I want to find the voice to speak the words.  
I want to shape the air and let them sing.  
I want to know the weightlessness of birds.  
I want to feel that lift beneath the wing.

I want to keep those promises I made.  
I want to meet the girl that I once knew.  
I want to prove to her I'm not afraid.  
I want to scale the summit for the view.

I want to learn the secrets of the sun.  
I want to brave the hailstones as they fall.  
I want to do all this. And when I'm done  
I want the world to hear my battle call.

