



15 January 2021

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Mr Blackmore's Friday Briefing

Dear Parents/ Carers,

It has been quite a week at school. With one COVID case in the office during the first part of the week and then the closure of Little Herons today (Friday 15 Jan), it has been busy to say the least! Thank you for your patience with our reduced office capacity; from Monday we are back to being fully operational.

With today's closure of the nursery, I would like to thank children, staff and parents for their support in closing the provision. It's not something we would ever want to do but it was done with care and consideration by all.

Remote Learning

We have had lots of messages of support for our remote learning – we hope that you are feeling supported with the offer. It is by no means ideal; we want to be in school with all the children but this time will soon come again! You are all doing so well!

As I discussed in the previous briefing, striking the balance is hard. There are requirements on the school, from central government, about the number of hours that have to be offered (3 hours for KS1 children and 4 for KS2). Whilst our structure allows for this to be fulfilled, especially for the younger children, this requires a lot of adult time and facilitation – we understand this. Please do message your child's class teacher if you need support.

Technology

We have been blown away with the offers of support with hardware for the community. We have had a grandparent donate money for a new Chromebook and donations of used hardware both from members of the school community as well as the wider, West Monkton and Monkton Heathfield community. In addition to this, one generous parent has bought six tablets and three Chromebooks for the school to lend out (see picture below). This is a phenomenal gesture and one that has been made anonymously. The school team is now preparing all the devices in readiness to go out to families over the coming days; a heartfelt thanks to everyone who has so kindly helped.



If you are struggling with adequate technology or the sharing of devices is proving an issue, please let us know so that we can help.

Critical Worker Places

It's still important I ask all eligible critical workers to carefully consider whether the children attend school. Numbers have risen slightly each day since the government closed schools. With a couple of recent cases in school, we want to ensure that numbers are as low as possible. Anything you can do to help would be much appreciated.

Best wishes

James Blackmore - Headteacher

