



**OUR SCHOOL VALUES: RESPECT - UNDERSTANDING – PEACE – HONESTY – RESPONSIBILITY - TEAMWORK**

30<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents

### **Tough time ... We will get through!**

I don't underestimate the challenge of home learning. You have just completed week 4 and really have done an outstanding job! Lockdown and remote learning in these muddy, winter months, after a restricted Christmas and months of change and worry is taking its toll on us all. As a parent myself, I can really imagine how hard it must be and the pressures you are all under, whether it's trying to balance your own work, worry about job security/ finances, managing reluctant learners or more than one child with completely different work! There is no doubt that remote learning at this age puts a lot of pressure on everyone involved.

One phrase I keep hearing is '*I am not a teacher*' and I wanted to assure you that even the most experienced and talented teacher (and we are fortunate to have a team of those) struggle with remote learning. Children react and learn very differently in a class of thirty to how they are at home, whether the person teaching them is a teacher or a parent. Of course teachers have a strong knowledge of the curriculum and the methods used to teach new concepts. Whilst we can't teach in the usual way, we are looking to present work in ways that the children can access and which supports you in supporting them.

### **If you are really struggling...**

Please, please, let us know and we will help. However small the issue, we will do what we can to support you. Asking for help is a strength, and who of us couldn't benefit from help now and again. It is also important not to expect too much of yourselves, give yourselves a break, some family time and accept that you will not be able to do everything perfectly all of the time.

### **A message specifically to the children...**

I know it is easy to say, but we all are so pleased with how positively you are working - Well done! We are so proud of you! We know it's hard to get out and play, and looking at screens/ working all day without seeing friends is just not fun! We know you want your mums and dads back and your teachers out of your homes, but this is your time. You will not get this time in your life again so make the most of it. Work hard, listen to your grown-ups at home, go easy on them and most importantly, remember they are still your mums and dads underneath their teacher hats!

I hope that all of you will be able to spend some relaxed time together this weekend, get outside and splash about in the mud! I am a great optimist and genuinely believe things will get better. The days are getting longer, more and more vaccines are being distributed and there are even the early signs of a few spring flowers!

### **Thank you to all our donors including the mystery ones!**

After all the excitement of having 'arrived' at Bethlehem just before the Christmas holidays, it is wonderful to see that donations are continuing to be made. We have received some donations by cheque, thank you, and on checking our Just Giving Page, it has been great to see that our balance has increased quite substantially thanks to some mystery donors! Whoever you are, thank you very much. Our Just Giving balance stands at £6532 (+ £1210.50 in Gift aid) with at least another £150 in cheques!



One of our donations has come from Mrs Phillips (not me, but I wonder why we share the same name?). At the end of this letter you will see a letter from Mrs Phillips who you have all helped over the last few months (delayed in the post so it didn't arrive until this month). How? Mrs Phillips is over 80 years old and decided that she would like to challenge herself to get fitter. As she has visited Bethlehem herself, she also wanted to support you all on your journey! During the last half term, Mrs Phillips went for a walk every day and promised to donate some money each time she walked! Thank you very much Mrs Phillips, we are very grateful and hope you are feeling fitter!

We are now getting much closer to 50% of our target sum and exploring match funding options which might enable us to build the Shepherds Hut this year. What a fabulous start to post pandemic life that would be!

I hope you are continuing to enjoy our online Collective worship. This week Mrs White shared her snow pictures; this is my favourite!



"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."  
**Romans 12:12**

**Have a wonderful weekend.**

Kind regards  
Mrs R Phillips  
Headteacher

December 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

Dear Children,

I heard from your Head Teacher, Mrs Phillips, that you were using a map and virtually walking across Europe to your destination which is to reach the stable in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. I was much impressed that you want to raise money for a shepherd's hut and wondered if I could help. I have visited the stable but I went by plane and coach and did not walk the journey! You may like to know that now a church has been built over the stable and lots of people visit from around the world. They walk through the right hand side of the church to the back, then down some dark stone stairs and kneel to peer into the stable which is actually quite small and very dark. It is a wondrous place!

I have included a cheque for you to add to your funds. You may like to know that you have helped me as I am quite old but try and take a walk each day to stay fit. So when I get home I have recorded the date and increased my contribution day by day to your fund. I saw you walking around your field and know that it will take some time to buy that shepherd's hut.

Good luck and perhaps when Mrs Phillips has bought the hut I may come and visit it and say "Hello" to you.

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and lots of love,

Christine Phillips