



Remote Message from the Principal 4

24th April 2020

Dear all,

I do hope everyone is well and you have managed to enjoy some of the beautiful sunshine this week. I also hope that everyone managed to have some form of celebration over Easter, albeit a slightly muted one. In all honesty I found it hard to switch off this holiday, as I am sure we all did, but I still managed to continue with my daily exercise, play a few board games, read a couple of books, catch up remotely with family, and have a very quiet but strangely content birthday and wedding anniversary.

It has definitely been a very strange start to term and, as I mentioned in my email on Monday, all staff are feeling very sad at the moment that we are unable to welcome all of your children back to CFS properly. However, we continue to do all we can from afar and I continue to be utterly proud of the community spirit of staff, parents and pupils during these strange times – thank you.

I have personally loved hearing from so many of your children over the past few weeks, as they have shared with me their successes with remote learning. But it has also been so important to be able to communicate with pupils who have concerns and are struggling at this time. Metaphorically, the School's doors are 'still open' and please do ensure you reach out if you need any support. Class teachers, tutors and the pastoral team in particular are in constant contact with pupils, but if you need us please shout.

In this situation I strongly believe that empathy is one of the most important attributes we can have for each other. We are in this lockdown situation together and sometimes just hearing how others are feeling, a reassurance that the emotions you are experiencing are 'normal', can be a tremendous help, even if your personal context is very different. So, please indulge me as I share a little about my week – simply to show that what you are perhaps feeling is perfectly normal.

On Wednesday I had one of 'those days', where my tolerance levels were at an all time low. Everything was bothering me and to an irrational level. Nothing of great significance at all, and nothing compared to what others and many of you are dealing with at the moment, but all really bothering me for some reason. And what didn't help was that our whole daily walk was spent on high alert, myself and my husband looking like a pair of inept ninjas scanning the perimeter and altering our course accordingly, because people seemed to have forgotten about social distancing. So when we got home my nerves and temper were a little on edge. Deep breath time. But then I made the mistake of reading things on social media and the general media that continued to rile and worry me, especially constant assertions and statements of 'fact' about when schools would reopen. Later I had some contact with my brother who was equally grumpy,



and I suddenly realised/remembered three things – firstly, **lockdown intensifies everything. The good and the bad.** I had also received some very positive emails that day which had meant the world to me, in a way perhaps I would have let wash over me more in 'normal' times. And I am enjoying these greater positives, treasuring things I would usually play down. But the irritations and worries are definitely more affecting, and the more people I talk to, the more I realise that this is normal and to be expected. Secondly, I was also reminded that **I can't control things out of my control** - other people's social distancing being one! And finally, I also suddenly remembered that 'bad days' are normal in 'normal' times too. How many times have we come home from work and had a rant, branding it a 'rubbish day?' Life is always a rollercoaster; **we just have to find new ways of 'getting away' at the moment.**

As I say, I am simply relaying this to say that I empathise with whichever intensified emotions you are feeling at the moment, even if the reasons for them are different. Take a deep breath, remember that life is always a rollercoaster, regardless of the situation, and that tomorrow is a new and hopefully better day.

As a school we are trying to collate all of the information we send to you into as few emails as possible. I have therefore collated all of this week's information into a separate file, the link of which you can find back in the main email. The subheadings should help you identify the bits that are relevant to you.

Please do also share this week's video message with your children. Many other teachers will be sharing similar messages with their classes over the coming weeks.

Wishing you all a wonderful and hopefully calm weekend.

With very best wishes,

Louise New

Principal