



Friday 12th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I trust that you and your families are all keeping safe, well and warm. This half term has been an unusual one, given that school has been open for a small minority of pupils as per government guidance. However, I would like to bring to your attention that the percentage of pupils we have had in school is higher than the overall total for special schools in Milton Keynes.



Staff have been working hard since the lockdown and we do need to remember that the infection rates from Covid 19 in Milton Keynes in January were some of the highest rates in the country. During this half term all staff have participated in a wide range of online learning which includes physiotherapy, VI/HI training, ASD training as well as a significant number of staff qualifying as mental health first aiders. Some of the strategic leadership team have also completed training regarding Diversity and Equality which is going to be cascaded to all staff after half term. In addition to all of this, we have continued to provide home learning resources/ activity packs and maintained weekly contact via phone or even zoom and some classes/groups have had group sessions with their class or the therapists too. Brad has continued his sing-a-longa sessions and other learning activities have been posted on YouTube. We have not been idle!



The photographs you have sent in showing your home learning activities have been a delight to see and these together with photographs from this half terms work in school will be made into a display in school for staff to see and enjoy.



I am also pleased to inform you that many of the pupils in Transitions have received AQA Accreditation Certificates for the work they have done, these are also being displayed within school. Well done to them!



A positive to this period, since the new year has been that with the assistance of Caroline Marriott Head of SEND at Milton Keynes Council all staff who are able to have the first of the two Covid Vaccines. We are all very thankful for this.



After half term we are slightly increasing the numbers of pupils we have in school. However, as you are aware, we still await the Governments decision - and therefore Department for Education and Local Authority guidance - on dates for permission to resume full opening at school. This is subject, of course, to scientific and medical advice over virus transmission and hospital rates.

Whilst the school has been able to offer places to more than a third of our pupil roll under lockdown rules, the Senior Leadership Team and Governors remain wholly committed to extending school opening to all pupils at the earliest and safest opportunity and we are currently making preparations accordingly. We anticipate - and sincerely hope - this will be during March and we eagerly await the Governments evaluation.

Our action plan for a phased full reopening has been drawn up and is ready to be enacted; this includes continuation of regular staff testing, enhanced hygiene and cleaning practice, and use of strict teaching and transport 'bubbles' to limit risks and impact of any positive testing. Alongside this, there will be 'recovery curriculum' focus on pupil wellbeing and EHC target catch up.

We will, when permissible, be acting as quickly as possible but we will ask parents and carers for their understanding as we take the measured steps necessary for the staged return to full pupil and staff attendance. We will communicate further detailed information and guidance as soon as is possible.



In the meantime, we continue to support our young people in school where allowed and at home via resources, online teaching and activity and visits where practicable. We have been inspired by the hard work of many of our pupils and the support of their families; we wholeheartedly thank parents and carers for their assistance and resilience.



We know this has been an unusual and difficult time for everyone and assure you of our teaching staff's genuine desire and effort to continue to all they can for the children now, and in the future.

A special well done has to be said to Lee who has been busy making a 'woodland water play station' for our forest school area on the field. He has done a fantastic job and the pupils would agree!



Finally, I hope that you all have a good half term holiday and that you all stay safe and well.

Ruth





NOTICES FROM THE ADMIN TEAM

February 2021

SIMS PARENT AND SIMS PAY

SIMS Parent allows online payments for Dinner Money; access to your contact details; attendance information and allows us to update you via email. This is a great tool, and we encourage you all to register. You should have received an email with a registration number dedicated to you. If you have not received this or you need another email, please let us know on parents@theredway.net and we will send one to you.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORMS

Please remember to let us know immediately if any of your contact details change, even if your child is not attending school at this present time. This helps us to ensure that we are able to contact you if required.

If you have changed your mind about any consents that you have given please let us know at parents@theredway.net.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

How do I register?

There is an online registration system for free school meals. If you think your child is eligible, please register at: www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims

More information

If you have any queries or if you do not have access to the internet or for any other reason would like us to register for you, please contact Alison Grigson at school on parents@theredway.net.