

DRIFFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL – Friday 8th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of what has been a very challenging week, I wanted to say a massive 'thank you' to our children, parents and staff.

I'm sure, like me, the lockdown announcement itself wasn't a complete shock to most of you but the fact that it was to start pretty much straight away was definitely a surprise, and not a good one! It gave us no time to be able to establish which children would/wouldn't be attending school and which staff would be required and in what capacity, and it gave you no time to arrange childcare for the day we had to close.

I am so sorry that we had no other option than to close on Tuesday but I can assure you that it really was necessary. It took several staff the whole day to be in a position where we could open for the eligible children on Wednesday, however we got there in the end! I am fortunate to work with a wonderful staff team who leapt into action to ensure that provision was in place as soon as possible (both in school and at home), and I'd like to publicly acknowledge this and thank them all very much.

We have over 160 children in school (approximately 33% of our usual school population). This is a huge increase on the numbers we had in during the first lockdown and has come as a bit of a surprise really. The latest guidance clearly states:

'Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.'

This makes sense in that the Government is trying to minimise person to person contact as much as possible so, to anyone considering requesting a place or anyone who already has a place for their child, please bear this in mind. If your child is currently in school and your circumstances change, meaning you can keep him/her at home, please let us know. We can then support you with home learning.

With almost 70% of our children at home, you'll imagine we need a significant number of staff available for planning and setting the learning, feeding back to children, helping with queries from parents, making welfare calls and much more. Thanks must go to those staff who have already been working tirelessly, mostly from their own homes, to ensure that children are able to continue their learning successfully and that they are safe and well.

Thanks also to the staff working in our new bubbles who have made the children's first few days back at school so productive, safe and happy!

Additionally, I'd like to say WELL DONE to those children who have worked really hard this week at home. We are all very proud of you. Keep it up!

I am delighted that we have been able to loan out a large number of Chromebooks to help those families who either have no suitable devices at home, or who have only one device to share amongst several siblings. There have been a small number of teething troubles but, hopefully, everyone who received a Chromebook is now sorted!

The year group bubbles are all working very well and the children have quickly adapted to the slight changes that have been put in place. I have been so impressed by their resilience and positive attitudes so far!

Procedures for arrival at school and collection at home time are going very smoothly; thank you to the parents and carers of years 3 and 4 children who come onto the site to collect children for dealing with yet another change!

In summary we have made a great start to the lockdown period and I am delighted with how our 'on paper' plans have actually worked in reality thanks to the support of you all and of my fabulous staff team.

I wish you all a good weekend (as much as lockdown will allow). Stay safe and take care.

Yours truly,

L J Laird

Linda Laird

Headteacher