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MUGGINTON C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL
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Dear Parents,

Congratulations on completing 6 weeks of home schooling so successfully. I hope you will agree with me that staff have done everything they could have to make this term as easy as it can be for you and your child. We have made the curriculum as consistent with 'normality' as it could be and have loved teaching the children about swallows' migration and the countries they pass over.

The topic will remain the same for the next half-term. Infants will begin by reading The Great Kapok Tree and the juniors will complete Journey to the River Sea in the first two weeks back.

Of course, the £64,000 question is the date when schools can re-open fully. I have no additional information to what is reported in the news, however I remain cautiously optimistic that we will be able to welcome children back to school after 2 weeks of the new half-term. I have three reasons for this: first, the statistics point to the lockdown working. Cases are coming down by about 25% per week and 20% of the population have been vaccinated – with another three weeks we should be in a strong enough position to re-open primary schools at the very least. Second, a number of studies have been published this week emphasising the damage done to our youngest primary-aged children by extended periods of lockdown. This age group are the least likely to become infected or to become seriously ill if they do contract coronavirus so, at the very least, we should expect to have Reception and Key Stage 1 back on March 8th. Finally, I believe the government would come under intense pressure from their own party if they reneged on the plan to begin re-opening on March 8th. In short, fingers crossed!

I hope the Friday feedback sessions have provided you with a frequent opportunity to offer your thoughts on our remote learning. Thank you so much for the many generous and supportive comments we have received. I asked the junior children to complete a questionnaire about the last six weeks of learning and the results were very interesting. Overall, the children were as happy as possible with the arrangements but missed being with their friends. No children reported that the work set was not enough and three mentioned there being too much. I received some lovely book recommendations – one, Future Friend, has been chosen as our next reader. Finally, a suggestion they made, which mirrored a suggestion I received in a Friday parent session, is to try and split the junior class into two or three smaller groups at set times in the week for learning and social purposes. We will try to do this in the first week back.

We will use this week to begin preparing for an anticipated school re-opening on Monday 8th March. The safety measures we put in place will be identical to those from December 2020. Staff will take a Lateral Flow Covid Test at least once per week and we will continue to spend as much time outside as we can. We aim to have a parents evening in the final week of this term. This would allow us four weeks in school with the children and will give us time to assess the academic progress of the children ready to feed back to you.

Mr Wraith and I have discussed the children's fitness levels and one concern we have is that the children have had an extended period of relative inactivity. I want to stress that this is not meant critically in the slightest – I know from the zoom lessons that you are doing everything you can to get your children outside for walks etc. It is simply far more difficult to be active for sustained periods of time during a lockdown! With this in mind, sports, running and walking will be central to our planning once we are all back in school.

I intend to buy Fitbit Ace's for the children in the junior class (to begin with). The children will keep their watches in school and focus will be placed entirely on keeping active and achieving over 10 or 12,000 steps over the course of a school day. I know several children already own Fitbits or Garmins. **If they do and you are happy for them to use them in school please could you let me know as soon as possible please?** Children who do not need a Fitbit will receive a £10 voucher for Decathlon to spend on sportswear so everybody can benefit from this school initiative. This plan is in its early stages so please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions.

A final thing, we had an INSET Day planned for Monday February 22nd. We want to be able to open for Key Workers so I have cancelled this INSET day. **It is now set for Thursday 22nd July.**

I would like to wish the very best of luck to the Flynn family on your exciting move to New Zealand. It has been a pleasure getting to know you both and your lovely boys and we hope you will stay in contact.

I hope you all have a restful and relaxing week. You are doing an excellent job!

Thanks

Joseph Green

Headteacher, Mugginton CE Primary School

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