



BANWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Belong Believe Achieve

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Dear parents / carers,

Well what a week this has been!

We started by being ready to welcome all the children back on Tuesday but very quickly changed to being ready to lead the learning remotely for the whole term. Whilst we had been preparing behind the scenes for the possibility of remote learning we weren't expecting to put it into action with such little notice and quite so quickly. I would like to personally thank all parents for being so accepting of the need for us to call an emergency closure day on Tuesday at such short notice. I would also like to say a thank you from the staff team for the many positive, supportive and encouraging comments that have followed throughout the week. The team at Banwell have been fantastic in adapting to these changes so quickly and we are all learning by the day (at times by the hour)! Your patience whilst we get to grips with technology issues has been appreciated and we know that day by day we are all adjusting to this term's way of working. We are aware that at the start of the week eschools was struggling, mainly due to the overwhelming number of people trying to access it. We are confident that this has been resolved and it is now working as it should. Again this is something that is out of our hands but we have been in contact with eschools to try and resolve this.

It has been lovely to see so many children at the daily Zoom meetings this week. I am hoping to join some next week too. It is really important for the children to connect with their classmates and teachers and for them to have the teacher's input for the day. I do hope you have all found these meetings useful. We continue to find our way with the remote learning. The class pages that you all have access to are looking great and I know that staff are becoming increasingly confident with the variety of resources they are uploading. As a staff we have met a number of times this week and continue to fine tune what we are doing in the hope that our remote learning offer meets everyone's needs.

The teachers are on hand throughout the school day to assist children and parents with remote learning. The children who are coming into school are being helped to access the remote learning predominantly by support staff. This is the same learning that everyone at home has so that it is fair to everyone. This frees the teachers up to lead the learning for everyone and be contactable throughout the day. Please contact the teachers via the ESchools messaging service as this means your queries can be picked up by other staff in the event of teachers being absent. If you send a message to their "banwellprimary" email address it may not be picked up.

It is inevitable that during these times we will be faced with staff absence due to shielding, self isolation & illness. Please therefore bear in mind that your children may have other teachers and support staff working with them both in school and remotely.

I appreciate that there are challenges with having enough devices in some families for the children to complete their online learning. Our DfE laptop allocation cannot be ordered at this time as devices are being prioritised for



secondary schools. Please be assured that we are looking into schemes locally that may help us to obtain devices for those families who need them.

Can I again remind those parents who have now registered for a place for their child in school at this time, either because they are a critical worker or because their child is deemed as vulnerable, to only take up the place when it is absolutely necessary and when there is nobody who can care for the child at home. The DfE guidance relating to restricting attendance in schools states that:

“limiting attendance is about supporting the reduction of the overall number of social contacts in our communities”

In other words, the less people we have in school, the less chance there is of the virus spreading within our community.

Finally, I am sure you will join me in welcoming Paul Davis, our new Deputy Headteacher, to Banwell. I am sure this has not been the first week in post that he was expecting but he has hit the ground running and has already become an integral part of the team. Welcome Paul!

Please take some time out to relax and enjoy some time together this weekend. It has been a tough week for adults and children but everyone is adjusting and doing just fine. Please recognise all that you and your children have achieved during this difficult week.

Best wishes,

Claire

Claire Pocock
Headteacher

