

Headteacher: Mr D Childs

18th December 2020

Dear Parents,

I'm going to begin my final letter of 2020 with some information about what to do if you are impacted by Covid-19 over the Christmas holidays.

Covid-19 - Safety Update

Following advice from the Department for Education, we would like to make all of you aware of the following:

- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school. If your child becomes symptomatic from the end of term until 3:30pm on Sunday 20th December, please contact me on daniel.childs@ryarsh.kent.sch.uk. I will be available to assist and support all families, as well as help with NHS Track and Trace, until the 24th December.
- If your child returns a positive test, despite being asymptomatic, at any stage from now until Sunday 20th December, please follow the same steps as above.
- Where a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace. This means that if your child becomes symptomatic from 3:30pm on Sunday 20th December, you do not need to contact the school about this but will need to follow instructions from NHS Track and Trace.
- If any families are in a period of self-isolation over the Christmas Holidays and this impacts on the start of the term, please let the office know on office@ryarsh.kent.sch.uk.

Thank you

As I began typing this, I took a deep breath in the hope that I would be able to find the words to express my gratitude to you all. I am only on my second sentence and already realise that it is impossible for me to articulate how grateful I am to each and every one of you for helping to keep our family as safe as possible.

Over the past week, we have received some amazing messages and incredibly kind gestures from our families. We received around 60 messages to display in our staffroom on Monday and there were certainly quite a few tears. Your beautiful words will echo in the hearts of our staff for quite some time. Today, I asked the staff what messages they would like to give to you all and here is what some of the staff wanted to share:

"Even though it has been a difficult year, Ryarsh has been my oasis. Working with these parents and these children reminds me of the important qualities we all need in life: love and hope".

"What an amazing bunch of children with amazing personalities. Thank you for all your parental support".

"Thank you for helping to keep us safe during drop off and pick up. You may not know the huge difference this has made".

"Our parents support us as much as we support the children".

"Without the parents' understanding, we would not have been able to keep the school running in the same way. The office team are so very, very grateful".

"Our children are so generous and supportive. We can see where they get it from!"

"Thank you for being so pragmatic and understanding at such an uncertain time".

"Your positivity and support has been amazing, especially with all the home learning".

"Your wonderful and polite children are a pleasure to work with".

"The relentless support and understanding is a testament to you all".

Keeping our children as safe as possible was always going to be an enormous team effort. You adapted to new routines and procedures and had to make so many adjustments to your life. You may have needed to physically distance but we have never felt as close to our families as we do right now. You home-schooled, you isolated, you battled through weeks of lockdown. These achievements cannot be underestimated.

Throughout the year, I have used the phrase, 'It takes a family to raise a child, but a community to protect them'. As a community, you have protected not only your children but helped to protect the rest of our family. For this, I cannot thank you enough.

It really is a privilege for us to work with such wonderful children. These amazing children of our Ryarsh family are only like this because you have made them so. They are a complete credit to you all and I look forward to the day when we can invite you all back in school so you can see this for yourself.

Merry Christmas. I look forward to seeing you all in 2021 on Tuesday 5th January.

Mr Childs and the rest of the team at Ryarsh Primary School