

### Invest now - reap the benefits later...

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Governors,  
As we reach the last day of this half-term, I want to pass on my thanks to you all.

The staff team have been amazing – flexible, creative, energetic, empathetic, professional and above all working brilliantly as a team. What you have achieved is remarkable.

Our governors have been unfailingly supportive. Asking the right challenging questions, ensuring that they themselves understand what needs to be done, backing our professional judgements and making it possible for us all to do our jobs. We are very lucky to have such an expert oversight and support.

I take my hat off to all our parents and carers. This lockdown has put pressures on households and family relationships in a way none of us has experienced before. Thank you for all your efforts to support learning at home, for your openness and honesty, for your messages of support and for working in partnership with us so well in order to help the children. I am humbled by the trust you place in us.

Normally this is the point at which I might share some of the things I would be planning to do over the half-term break. However, sobering reports in the papers this morning from scientist's state that, despite that fact the infection levels are dropping dramatically, they are still at a level that would drive us INTO lockdown were we not there already. So instead, I am going to share with you what I will NOT be doing:

- I will not be hugging my parents, despite the fact they have been vaccinated: I am not legally allowed to get within 2m of them; I cannot legally enter their home; and I want them around for my daughter's wedding in July (and beyond). Today she is travelling with her fiancée to his grandfather's funeral. He died with COVID last week.
- I will not be inviting people round for sleepovers, and drinks in the garden: lockdown means I cannot have anyone else in my house or garden and I cannot go to anyone else's. So for us tonight it is a Zoom meal to celebrate by father-in-law's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday, despite the fact they live nearby.
- I will not be getting my hair cut (much as I would love to!) It is not a business that is legally allowed to trade at the moment. Equally, I will not be letting my husband loose with the scissors!
- I will not be seeing my children. They do not live locally, and lockdown means we cannot travel, and anyway I cannot be with more than one person outside my household outside –even then I need to keep 2m away from them.

I will be honest with you – I believe that school return on 8<sup>th</sup> March is on a knife-edge. Amongst other things, I fear that, across the country, people will flaunt the lockdown rules over half-term, which could put back the return by a month or more. Why do I think this? Well, many of your wonderfully chatty children have been excitedly sharing your half-term plans with us already...

I don't know about you, but I desperately want school to be fully open to all children as soon as possible. So what will I be doing? I will continue to live rather like a hermit! I will keep off screens as much as I can, going on lots of walks, doing my cross-stitch, making music, reading and trying not to listen to the news all the time. Above all, I am going to hope and pray that our leaders hold firm and don't release things too soon – and that we all find the inner strength to continue to bear this burden, in faith that better days are on the horizon.  
Stay safe, stay home, save lives.

Sarah Lewis

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