

# St Mary & St John CE Primary School

Headteacher: Elizabeth Burton



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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are safe, well and coping with the sub-zero temperatures! We are at the end of this half term. It has been a strange half term, to say the least, with us all in lockdown. January and February are always difficult months and we usually cheer ourselves up with visits to the cinema or theatre, meals out, meeting someone for coffee or in a pub, visiting family, sharing food - and so on. We have all missed something over the last few weeks and the general lockdown fatigue is hard going. I must thank you for being so supportive with home learning which can also be a slog. I have spent quite a bit of time this week looking at every year group's Seesaw pages. I continue to be impressed with your children's efforts and the efforts of our staff too. There are lots of encouraging and friendly messages to the children from staff with guest appearances from guinea pigs, cats and dogs! Needless to say, we are all desperate to get back to our school being fully open. I am now more optimistic about the proposed March 8 date as the success of the vaccine roll out, coupled with lockdown measures, is starting to impact positively on the virus data.

I don't have lots of news! The governors are already working hard on finding a new headteacher for our wonderful school community. Children, staff, parents and carers are warmly invited to give their ideas. All these will help in finding the right person. Someone has a fabulous job in store!

I was talking to the Year 5 and 6 this morning about well-being, using some research ideas from the New Economics Foundation who have come up with Five Ways to Wellbeing.

They are :

- 1) **Connect** – feeling close to and valued by other people, belonging, spending time with positive people;
- 2) **Be active** – regular exercise can lift mood, not necessarily strenuous or sporty, just getting moving;
- 3) **Take Notice** – savouring the moment, be aware of the present and reflect on what you are feeling;
- 4) **Keep Learning** – embrace and engage in new experiences and maybe surprise yourself (it can be something very small !);
- 5) **Give** – this is not material giving – it is about giving time, thought, kindness and help to others.

At the moment, many of us have fragmented and become quite involved with our own thoughts. I found it helpful to think about the above and discuss with a small group of children. As I said to the children, we can try some of these, even during a pandemic, to help us feel a bit better.

None of us will be rushing to an airport or a ferry crossing in the next few days but I do hope the half term gives you a bit of a break from screens and Seesaw! We are not setting any work over the holiday. When we return, we are planning on two more weeks of home learning before we reopen again.

My thoughts are with you and your families.

Best wishes,

Liz Burton