



**Newsletter 21**  
**February 21<sup>st</sup> 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have learnt of two positive cases of COVID-19 this morning. Having taken advice from Public Health England, we have carried out contact tracing and have sent letters to those that now need to self-isolate. The two affected pupils are in Year 3 and Year 4 and have not been in school since Tuesday. Families of children self-isolating do not need to self-isolate unless their child develops symptoms. We wish the two pupils a speedy recovery. Remote learning will continue next week for all pupils. Year 5 and Year 6 bubbles in school are unaffected by these cases.

We have now moved into whole school return mode and preparations are underway to manage the move back to school. With signs of Spring now appearing and Lent upon us it certainly feels like a time of hope and new beginnings. It will also be a time to reflect and renew following the many losses and hardships nearly all of us have suffered in one way or another. While our children are probably the most resilient amongst us, we will be mindful of their mental health and well-being while wanting to return them to normal school life in the three weeks of the term that remains.

**Return to school details**

Details for the whole school return will be sent out early next week and posted on the website but will be very similar to those sent out for our return in January. All children will be welcomed back on Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. The start and end of day times will be similar and children will be required to be in school uniform. Breakfast Club will also start from March 8<sup>th</sup>. We will remain in bubbles.

**World Book Day**

Next Thursday is World Book Day and all pupils are invited to dress up as a book character. Please do not feel you have to purchase anything new for this day – even props or a special hat will prompt discussion around a book character. Downloadable book vouchers went out with the Wednesday email this week.

**Lenten Promises**

The template for Lenten Promises went out again in the Wednesday email. This is a PA initiative with money raised going to the school. It was wonderful to hear Fr Brian's delight at the Promises from our children that are now displayed on the altar at St Mary and St Joseph. If we get more we will be able to display them in school as well.

**Staff Changes**

Thank you for the welcome to Miss D'Souza who has stepped in as class teacher in 3Anning. She has now completed her first week of home learning and is enjoying getting to know the class – even if it is remotely! She looks forward to meeting the class in person from March 8<sup>th</sup>.

## **Empower by Watford FC Trust – for Year 5 and Year 6**

Empower is a 48 week project that aims to improve young people's mental health through the use of physical activity. Each session is 90 minutes in length and consists of 60 minutes of physical activity, typically in the form of a sport session such as dodgeball, football, basketball, badminton or dance. Following the physical activity, they complete a 30-minute wellbeing workshop, which is a facilitated conversation between participants, Watford FC Community Sports and Education Trust Coaches and a NESSie psychotherapist.

The free project is split into three phases (detailed below). Each phases scales down in contact time with participants, coinciding with psychotherapeutic approaches and NICE guidelines.

- **Phase one** (Developmental) consists of 12 weekly sessions
- **Phase two** (Maintenance) consists of 6 sessions occurring fortnightly
- **Phase three** (Reflection) consists of 6 sessions occurring once a month
  
- **Phase one** – 5- 6:30pm or 6:30pm – 8pm – **From 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021 until 30<sup>th</sup> Jul 2021**
- **Phase two** – 5- 6:30pm or 6:30pm – 8pm – **From 13<sup>th</sup> August 2021 until 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021**
- **Phase three** - - 5- 6:30pm or 6:30pm – 8pm – **From 5<sup>th</sup> November 2021 until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**

There are 32 spaces available for this cohort in Hemel Hempstead. It is open to Year 6s even if they will be completing the phases when they are at secondary school.

If you would like your child to take part, please refer to the registration form sent to Year 5 and 6 parents in January or contact the school.

## **Finally**

Thank you for your continued support of remote learning. We are all looking forward to everyone being back in school. It was a shame that our Critical Care bubbles were burst this week for the first time but hope it will mean we are all clear and ready for the following week. One parent appeared to think that by closing the bubbles the staff were all going to take a holiday – I can assure you this is not the case and that we are sorry for this further inconvenience. Our thanks to the vast majority of parents who have been so appreciative of the efforts of our school community. We will not be offering critical care and vulnerable places in school next Friday as we will be deep cleaning and preparing classrooms for the full return. Remote learning will be available.

I hope you are all able to take advantage of the better weather this weekend,

Best wishes

Mrs Smith  
Head Teacher