



Friday 5th March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we approach the next phase in the Covid journey at school, we have been taking some time to evaluate the past year and consider our priorities for the coming weeks and months.

Understandably and justifiably there has been much concern about the time that children have missed at school. We know that even with the best remote educational provision, nothing makes up for actually being in school. But, whilst the children have missed out on being in school with their friends and the teachers, they have spent more time with their families who love them. Many children will have developed new skills and qualities.

It is easy to focus on negative experiences and what we have missed out on since last March, but we have been hearing some fantastic things that have been happening at home including:

- Older siblings supporting younger brothers and sisters with their learning
- Children organising themselves for daily learning and showing responsibility for themselves
- Children learning how to use IT skills for things other than gaming and watching YouTube
- Children learning to make their own lunch and cups of tea for mum and dad
- Whole families taking part in yoga, physical fun and dance activities
- Compassion shining through when a family member has been unwell

At RMPA we understand and acknowledge that every child will have differing experiences from the past year, positive and negative.

We now see it as our joint responsibility, along with you at home, to use what we have learned and experienced to help us with providing the very best support for every child to reach their full potential – or as our school rule states; to be the best they can be.

Many of the children, even if they have been in school for the past few weeks, will be feeling anxious about the return to school for everyone.

We will do our best to reduce the anxiety that children may be feeling as a result of disruption to their learning.

The approach we take, and language that we use, will be key to building their **confidence** with their learning and **motivating** them to move forward in a way that is **supportive**.

We will be avoiding using language/phrases such as;

- Catch up
- Learning gaps
- Lost learning
- Damage to learning and mental health
- Behind



Instead we will focus on positive and healing language;

- Move forward
- Identify where we are
- Build upon
- Challenge ourselves
- Look at what we already know
- Work together

We will continue to promote our Make a Difference values and school rules as the foundations of our school behaviour policy and expectations. Embedded in our culture is identifying the positives and using these as encouragement and guidance.

We have identified the following as priorities for the children as they return to their classes on Monday;

- Time to be together – to play, talk and rekindle friendships
- Opportunities to get outside and active - to build up physical health and fitness levels
- Creating calm, friendly and safe classrooms by revisiting the school rules and values
- Identifying where children may need some additional support either emotionally, socially or academically and addressing these needs

As always, we welcome your feedback. I will be sending a parent survey out next week which I hope you might take a little time to complete.

In the meantime, we are all hopeful that the Prime Minister's 'roadmap' out of Covid goes to plan and that we will be gradually able to return to greater levels of normality in the Spring and Summer.

We can't wait to see you and your children next week!

Best wishes
Mrs Essex

