

A belated Happy New Year to you all!
On behalf of myself and our staff, may I take this opportunity to thank you for your very generous Christmas gifts and kind words.

COVID update:

The whole school closure has come as a surprise to us all, and certainly not what we were wanting. However, as always, the New Islington School Community of children, parents, and staff have risen to the challenges brilliantly.

A few reminders:

I know that many families are struggling with a lack of technology. Some parents have emailed me and I now have a growing waiting list. In October the Government sent us an allocation of just 10 laptops. The portal to order more does not open until 15th January. I will order as many as I possibly can and as soon as these arrive, I will hand them out to those families who have got in touch.

Some of our families have, in previous bubble closures, received the Free School Meal vouchers and Morrison's food hamper scheme. As soon as the Government decides what to do to support our families, I will let you know. Please be patient; as soon as we have more information, I will get in touch with eligible families.

I will signpost activities and events to families as soon as I receive updates. Today you have been sent information about a free online information event for parents to support phonics development – I hope this is of use. Similarly, I hope that families take up the offer of the Rattle and Roll dance sessions.

Online teaching – our teachers are working really hard to make sure that the remote learning provision is manageable and meaningful. All teachers are leading live lessons, as well as ensuring the curriculum is broad and balanced. We know that remote learning is hard and it certainly cannot replace face to face learning in school. However, the team are determined to make this period of school closure as positive as possible.

Do please email me directly your comments – tell us what is going well and do suggest ways we might improve. We are not mind readers, so please do keep communicating with us. We know that there may be technical glitches, that work may get mislaid, and that both children and parents' levels of anxieties may increase.

You are not alone. Keep in touch and things can be resolved. Your feedback is really important.

We are all in this together, and only by working together will we make this both successful and enjoyable.

And in other news:

PTA Events: The next meetings (via Zoom) will be held on Wednesday 13th January at 7pm and then again on Friday 15th January at 2pm. Please do join us to review the Autumn term events, and to plan future fundraising opportunities.

EYFS and KS1 Spring Term Clubs: These will go ahead as soon as we are back in school; your places and payment will be held securely.

As always, email me any time about anything: t.smith@newislingtonschool.co.uk