

Garden Fields J.M.I School

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Dear Parents,

As we battle through another lockdown and partial closure of our school I wanted to provide you with a brief update from the Governing Body. We are working closely with Mr Farrugia and his team to ensure that the school does the best it can in these exceptionally challenging circumstances. The announcement of closure was given just 12 hours before the Spring term was due to start after so much work had gone into preparing for the start of a new term. We had always anticipated that the school or large bubbles may have to close and the team had been working behind the scenes to get systems in place.

As well as delivering remote learning for the majority of children, the staff also have huge demands in providing in-school learning for children of key workers and other vulnerable groups. They are also no different to the majority of us in having their own personal challenges that lockdown and this virus brings. I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the staff for adapting so quickly and maintaining a seamless provision of education for the children.

As a parent who is having to home-school my own child I know first-hand just how difficult this is for us as parents and, as Chair of Governors in regular contact with the staff, I see how difficult this is for the teaching team. They are working long hours to do their very best. I hope you will agree with me that we have come a long way since lockdown 1 and the remote learning has significantly developed since last year as teachers become more familiar with this method of teaching. The introduction of google meets has gone down really well with the children. The remote learning offer is evolving all the time in response to what the teaching team feel is working best for the children. Please be patient as this develops still further, every year group will face its own challenges along the way.

The Governing Body are very clear that the core aims during this period include;

- the provision of remote education (using as much teacher child interaction that is reasonably possible);
- ensuring the welfare of both children and staff;
- the provision of in-school teaching for children of the key worker and vulnerable groups;
- to maintain our on-going safeguarding responsibilities which can become heightened in times like this.

It is the role of the Governing Body to work with the school to stay on track to achieve these aims.

We know that the lockdown situation will remain this way until at least February half term. I'm sure you will all share with me a hope that we make a return to normal school life as soon as we can.

Thank you for your patience and endurance during this time. I know the teaching team have been encouraged by the many messages of support.

Nicola Dale
Chair of Governors