



22nd January 2021

Dear parents and carers

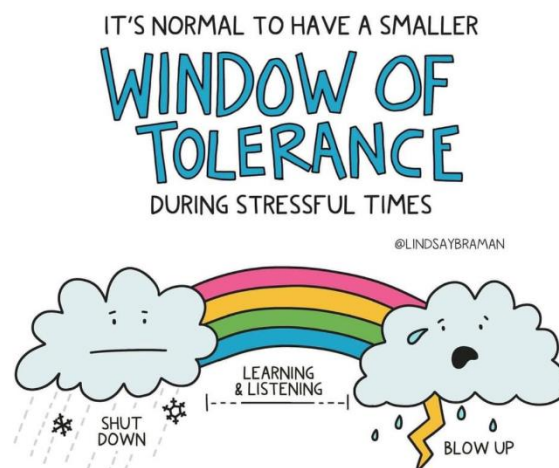
I started this year by sharing some key words for the year ahead; adaptability and agility; compassion and kindness. These words continue to be relevant as the weeks unfurl.

Firstly, you may have heard the further communication from Gavin Williamson, assuring us that there will be two weeks' notice before all schools start back. I am sure this is welcome news for everyone; we will continue to work toward a return on the 22nd February and await further confirmation in early February.

Secondly the DfES have now paused their instruction to schools to use daily lateral flow tests for close contact. To clarify, if there is a confirmed case in school, including from a lateral flow test, we will identify any close contacts who will then be required to self-isolate for 10 days, as per last term.

It is frustrating for everyone to hear more change of plans but I sincerely hope the clarity we need over return dates is forthcoming and can give everyone, schools and families alike, time to plan and adapt. Naturally, I will keep you informed and updated as and when we hear more.

I was reminded of the importance of compassion and kindness, when I saw the following image this week.



I think we can all recognize the impact isolation, anxiety and uncertainty has on each of us and the heightened need to be kind, patient and understanding with each other and ourselves.

As a staff team we continue to consider the complexities of remote working and learning and the added challenge of maintaining relationships at a distance. We will continue to look for and develop the best ways to engage and motivate students and are very mindful of the variety of challenges students might be facing at home.

It is also important that we are all kind to ourselves, to be mindful of our needs and ask for help when needed. As the message of Meaningful Monday this week told us, we are all “trying our best”.

Please do reach out if you need support of any kind; tutors, teachers, all staff are all here to help.

I wish you an enjoyable and safe weekend ahead

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Taplin', written in a cursive style.

Emma Taplin
Principal