

Email subject line: Rise and shine: wk. bg. 6.4.20

Email message:

Good morning Blackfen students,

It's time to rise and shine *a little later* ...

Loving the PJs! Never expected to see you looking like *that!*

Mr Brown's wise words to you, last week, focused on different kinds of journeys. It made me think about my travel plans, as I drove home from school through the empty streets of Blackfen and then through Sidcup. Like me, you might have planned a special break over the Easter period, which has had to be cancelled. My Mum and I had booked a surprise break for my sister's April birthday. It saddened me to see the cancellation email in my Inbox because we had been looking forward to it, for so long. Some of these changes in our new 'lockdown' world are not easy to take on board. Mind you, we still haven't told my sister about the surprise location and we're planning to re-book it for next April.

As I whizzed home in my car (no traffic, no queues), I noticed the increasing number of rainbow pictures, placed in house windows, as part of a national initiative to cheer us all up. You might have heard the Queen refer to them in her television message, on Sunday evening. They certainly put a smile on my face. I thought about the journeys of rainbows: the way they unexpectedly appear after a deluge of stormy rain; how they stretch across the horizon to capture whole towns and landscapes; how their cheeky colours stand out against everything else in the sky - you cannot miss them! Even in school, we stop for a moment, point upwards and watch their magic.

Journeys of rainbows ... *Journeys of Blackfen School rainbows*. Imagine hundreds of mini rainbows flying across the sky and zapping the nasty virus bugs: little particles of hope and encouragement drowning some of the feelings of sadness and worry that are floating around. Where might these rainbows travel? Where might they land? At that point, as the answer hit me, I almost drove into the car in front, which had stopped at the traffic lights beside Kaspas. A mad, mad plan started to take shape. Let's make rainbows and send them on special journeys. Just imagine it: 1200 rainbow cards ... 1200 special journeys ... 1200 people, facing the toughest weeks of their lives, find a rainbow has shot through their letterbox. Pow! Wow! What an impact!!

There are over 1200 students in Blackfen School. As a school, working *together*, could we lift the spirits of our local heroes, working in tough times, on our behalf? The Queen has taken direct action to do this for everyone living in the UK, broadcasting her special message of encouragement to say thank you to the NHS and key workers for their work and to urge us all to stay strong, *together*, in the coming weeks. Well, we can put that message into action, this week. Could you make a card with a rainbow design and send it to your local surgery or clinic? Our local doctors and nurses are mighty heroes who probably won't be seen on TV. They have known you and your family for years and some of them have worked in your area for the whole of their professional career. Surgeries are now operating telephone appointments, only, so these invisible heroes are overwhelmed by phone calls about the virus, as well as every other illness that exists and still needs attention.

Come on, Blackfen students; I think we can do it. Working *together*, even though we are apart, we can make a difference in Blackfen, Sidcup, Welling, Erith, Eltham ... You know the place to which your rainbow must travel. I'm expecting something very whizzy from students taking GCSE and A-Level Art and Photography courses. Everyone else, like me, can find paint / gel pens / coloured pencils / sequins / ribbon / tissue paper and produce masterpieces with similar enthusiasm. Inside your card, write something like 'Blackfen School adopts [insert name of the surgery] as our local hero. Thank

you for being there, for us, in tough times.' Write your name and add other words of encouragement, if you wish. Take and save a photograph of your rainbow and perhaps there will be enough photographs to cover every noticeboard when the school re-opens. Pow! Wow! What an impact!!

It is the Easter 'holiday' period, so you need to run away from Teams. Set your brain into 'power down' mode and give yourself a proper break. There's plenty of time to make a stunning rainbow card and planning a lovely surprise for someone else often helps to shake off a sad mood. But if that's hard to do and you need your own 'rainbow' moment, then head to the tab on the school website called **Covid-19** and click on the right-hand side, on the red section called **Safeguarding and Student Welfare**. This brings up our contact details, including how to get in touch with your Student Support Officer, as well as a document called **Wellbeing information for students, carers and parents**. Mrs Kingsbury-Barker, our Librarian, suggests heading to the 'Home Time' section at www.BookTrust.org.uk for a whole host of live readings and other freebies to help you unwind and relax and Harry Potter fans might like to try out <https://www.jkrowling.com/harry-potter-at-home-launches-in-response-to-covid-19-emergency/>. As it's Easter, that sounds like the perfect opportunity to combine a restful sit-down with a little bit of chocolate!

Best wishes to you and your family this week.

Yours sincerely,
Miss F Minnis

Deputy Headteacher
On behalf of Blackfen School leaders and teachers