

Rise and shine: wk. bg. 13.7.20

Good morning Blackfen students,

It's Week A.

THE PIPS HAVE SOUNDED! GET UP! GET DRESSED! GET GOING!!

Tick-tock. Tick-tock. Ding-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling! WHOO-HOO! We rise and shine for the last Monday morning because it's the last week of the academic year! Are you ready for a holiday and sunshine and lots of ice-cream? Me too.

How time flies. Do you remember Monday 23rd March? It was the first day of school closure in the COVID-19 global pandemic. It was a grey, cold day, in a different world that seemed to be very strange and a bit scary. We had to stay steady and keep a calm head, so we went back to the good things that never change: the wise words of Mr Brown. This is what he read to us in his final Assemblies before the school closed. "Persevere because as individuals, we're useless. We can't lift heavy weight and we can't solve complex problems. But together? Together we are remarkable." And that is exactly what we have done and it is exactly what you are: *together*, we have persevered, as the remote Blackfen School community; and *together*, you and your family are remarkable. Not perfect. But truly remarkable.

Together, we have navigated the ups and downs, twists and curves, potholes and bumps of our shared journey of lockdown change. In March, we didn't know the route; we didn't have a SAT-NAV and, to be perfectly honest, we didn't know our destination. But we were in it, together. Families made routines for learning at home (somehow), while teachers got to grips with learning on 'Teams' (sort of). Then the journey took off! We chased rainbows and grew tomato plants; sent cards to local NHS heroes; faced up to the dark times and the struggles; created pots of gold; found and left trails; celebrated trailblazers; built windmills and walls and finally realised that the end was in sight. The remarkable journey of lockdown change has been far from perfect but we did it, *together*.

TikTok. TikTok. What have we become? TikTok is the social media platform for creating and sharing short videos. You can watch a short clip and then copy dance moves, singing, acting and all sorts of other things. Key Stage 3 students are going to have a virtual TikTok fashion show on Friday. In a world of social distancing and shielding, TikTok gets us so close to other people that we can change and become just like them. So who's worth copying? What will change do to you?

As the awful virus attacked, in March, we went back to the good people who never change and who would steady us and keep us calm. We watched brave medical staff, fighting a killer disease; kind neighbours, checking up on elderly people; loving parents and carers, working hard from home to keep their jobs; thoughtful strangers, putting rainbow pictures onto windows, clapping on Thursday evenings and saying 'hello' in long queues; dedicated staff, organising the school to keep it running. We watched ordinary people doing remarkable things with courage, kindness, love, selflessness and dedication. We changed to be like them because we learnt that these qualities make us *better together*.

The best change to copy is the one that makes *you*, a better version of *you*. The change shouldn't replace *you*, hide *you*, spoil *you* or make *you* into something that is not *you*. You should continue to be *you* and change to be an even better *you*. School will be different when you return in September. We will continue to be Blackfen School but we will be a changed Blackfen because we are trying to be a better Blackfen. It's still your school and you are still our students. We will succeed and make the changes that make us *better together*. There's a short dvd clip to watch which explains this message and which comes with love from all of us, to all of you. <https://vimeo.com/432074742>

Best wishes to you and your family during the Summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Miss F Minnis

Deputy Headteacher

On behalf of Blackfen School leaders and teachers