**15th January 2021**

**Dear Mums, Dads and Carers**

Well done everyone we’ve made it to another Friday!

Today my well done is going as much to the adults in the house as the children; the whole world knows home schooling is difficult and that’s before we factor in whatever else you may have going on at home! My thanks and appreciation to you all for really giving it your best and for being so positive and resilient. Remember the year group emails are a great way of keeping in touch with teachers who will do all they can to support you and your child, although we cannot necessarily solve your in house IT systems!

We are seeing brilliant work from children of all ages and the zooms are still going really well too with great feedback describing how children love seeing their friends and school staff. There are some pretty innovative things on zoom too; I’ve seen treasure hunts, discos, lots of dancing and a pretty full on Batman fitness session to name just a few. Our TT Rock Stars “battles” have also really caught the imagination; we’ve had over 70,000 correct answers in the year group battles this week with winners to be announced this afternoon. We’re thinking girls v boys next week!

**Free School Meals**

The government has said, quite rightly, that children entitled to **income based** free school meals should receive these during lockdown. Those of you to whom this applies will already have received a backdated voucher for Wonde and will receive ones from Edenred from next week. I deliberately chose to wait for the voucher scheme, although it has once again taken too long to be established, rather than begin the huge task of ordering, collating and delivering hampers for eligible families; although if we had done this I’m certain ours would be better than those you will have seen on the news! Children coming to school should bring a packed lunch.

**If you think your child may be eligible for income based free school meals please call 0300 1237039. If you do meet the criteria we are notified immediately and can issue you with vouchers the next time we put an order in.**

**Remember that we also get £1320 into our whole school budget for each child we have registered for FSMs. The deadline for this to get into the 2021’22 budget is Thursday 21 January and we really need this additional income if I am to maintain our teacher and teaching assistants numbers! Don’t delay phone today!**

We have a limited number (only 30 I’m afraid) of free data SIM cards; if you think you would benefit from one of these please email kmarland@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch.uk Kate will be in school next Thursday when she will go through these.

As the school office is only rarely occupied if you need to get in touch with us the best way is though the year group emails; reception@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch.uk , Y1@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch.uk  etc or if it is not a  teaching matter admin@charlesdarwin.cheshire.sch.uk.

**At these challenging times I know you will appreciate that school staff’s wellbeing, work life balance and family time is essential so emails will only be answered at a time convenient for them. I do not expect staff to be reading or replying at night or throughout the weekend!**

If you need to speak to me urgently please call 07486 705691.

I know you will all join me in once again thanking all school staff for their hard work, professionalism and good humour.

Have a great and a safe weekend everyone, take care.

Adam Croft