

Report to the Fressingfield Parish Council

April 2021

What an extraordinary year the children, staff and parents have faced. It was a little over a year ago that the school, and wider society, went into the first lockdown due to COVID-19. At the time no one could have imagined the year we have just been through and what it would mean for Fressingfield CofE primary school.

Up until the first lockdown the school year was going extremely well and included a trip to the coast for the older children to find out about oceans and the lost city of Dunwich. Then the lockdown struck, and things have been very different since.

Firstly, most children spent half of the Spring and all the Summer term learning at home. The staff did a fantastic job in providing work for the children, making sure those eligible received their free school meals entitlement and staffing the provision for key worker and vulnerable children right through the term and holiday periods. The very positive feedback from parents was well received and appreciated by staff. In June of 2020, the school could partially open again and some children returned to everyone's joy. It was evident how much the children and staff missed being together, although some of the children were a little unsure of how to initiate play with others. The classes formed bubbles with their teachers and support staff, and unfortunately this is still the case.

Having got through the Spring and Summer terms of 2020 everyone was excited about having a more normal school year from September. Again, the year started well with new flooring installed throughout the school, and things felt more normal despite the bubbles. However, the school was hit by another partial lockdown at the beginning of January and with just a few hours notice the school had to be closed again to all pupils apart from those of critical workers or individuals deemed particularly vulnerable. This time though the teachers were armed with the Goggle classrooms and live online lessons took place every day. The school staff worked hard to ensure every child was connected to the internet and loaned out over 20 laptops to children and their families. Some families were also supported in getting an adequate broadband connection installed. Again, during this period, the staff were working full time and in many cases doing many additional hours keeping in touch with families and supporting parents. The children produced some fantastic work, but it is very evident that despite the schools and parents' best efforts many children are significantly behind where we would expect them to be had they been in school everyday during the last year.

Thankfully, and to the relief of many parents, all the children were again allowed to attend school again in March. This time the school was prepared with new play equipment and the children got straight back into enjoying being with their friends again. A great deal of effort was put into looking after the children's well-being and making sure they are ready for the summer term.

Things to look forward to:

- Having a whole school assembly
- Being able to play inter school sport
- Using the new climbing traversing wall (see picture)
- Opening of our new reflective cabin (see picture)
- Designing and building our sensory garden
- Being able to use Fressingfield parish church for whole school celebration events

