



GOLDINGTON GREEN ACADEMY

Headteacher: Mrs C Skingsley BEd Hons

Goldington Road, Bedford MK41 0DP

Telephone: 01234 326335

E-mail: admin@goldingtongreenacademy.co.uk Website: www.goldingtongreenacademy.co.uk



20th December 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

It is with deep sadness that I am writing to you today to inform you of the sudden and unexpected death of Mrs Viola. A much loved teacher, and such an important part of the fabric of the school for over 18 years, we appreciate that her passing will affect members of the local community as well as those of our community of Goldington Green. As well as a fantastic teacher, the wonderful Mrs Viola has impacted so many hundreds that have passed through the doors of Goldington Green and has been a well-respected colleague and friend to staff past and present. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family at this tragic time.

We appreciate that such news is so very difficult to hear and process and, as such, we have not informed the children of her passing. However, we do appreciate that a number of parents and past students may already be aware. As a school, we will be speaking to children about this sad news on their return in January. We do, of course, appreciate and respect that you know your children best and, as such, understand that you may wish to manage such sad news as appropriate for your family.

Your child may wish to talk over the coming days, and although this may be a difficult conversation we would encourage this. As a school we will be offering more support as the term starts but over the holidays support is available from Childline on 0800 1111 and Samaritans on Freecall 116 123. Both these organisations are available over the festive period.

As we come to terms with the loss ourselves, the coming weeks and months are going to be a difficult time for children and staff alike. I have already spoken to a variety of organisations that will be able to offer support to our pupils and staff early in the new term. However, if you or your child would like to speak to anyone over the Christmas break, the local CHUMS (Emotional Wellbeing Service) offer advice and guidance and can be contacted at 01525 863924 or www.chums.uk.com

In addition, the advice below is from our local public health guidance and might be helpful for all adults as they support children.

- Children can react very differently to news of a death, some may appear to carry on almost without reacting, while others may cry and be completely overcome by their feelings. It is good to remember that there is no right or wrong way to grieve and no rule book to follow.
- Try not to overwhelm your child with information or give more information than asked for. Children may, when receiving news of a death, ask a few questions at a time in



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order to process the information. Like adults, children may need to hear the story more than once and ask the same questions again.

- Reassure your children that you are available to listen and talk about the death.
- If your child is concerned and upset by how they are feeling it can help to know that other people often feel shocked, numb, angry, sad and overwhelmed by the death.
- Encourage your child to ask for support in school if needed.

I appreciate that such sad news may raise questions and, of course, I will be in touch in the New Year regarding the appropriate arrangements which are to be made regarding the funeral.

As far as the teacher for Apple Class please rest assured that this is being addressed to ensure the children continue to receive the high quality teaching they have received to date.

Again, our hearts extend towards her family and friends.

With sadness,

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Skingsley
Headteacher

Mrs V Carter
Chair of Governors



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