



26 May 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: 'Appreciate the little things' (May 2023)

This half term has been marked by lots of unusual events. Extra bank holidays, teacher strike days, a Coronation and sadly the sudden passing of our trusted friend and colleague, Russell Plester (Headteacher of Finham Park 2).

There was so much I didn't tell my friend; how much I admired him, respected him, listened to him. How much I valued him as my 'go to' confidant and how much I appreciated talking about the little things that didn't really matter. We would chuckle about the common things we both struggled to get right and how powerless we often felt to get it right. We would spend time talking about music, guitars and cars and would openly (and amusingly) compete in meetings! We would muse about how vocational and personally investing teaching is. He would take the micky out of me as he found it highly amusing the fact that my car gave me back ache. We would drink coffee and would talk about our passion for educating and shaping the future and what an immense privilege being an educational leader was. We both agreed that our job is truly the best job we'd both ever, ever had. And although there was so much unsaid between us, I hope he knew how deeply I regarded him as so much of our communication was often implicit, rather than explicit.

I miss him, I know we all do! There is a line in the movie 'Up' that says:

'Enjoy the little things in life, because one day you'll look back and realise they were the big things.'

Never a truer thing can be said.

I visited Finham Park 2 a few times over the past few weeks, to say hello and help out as needed. It was so humbling to see so many thoughtful 'yellow and blue' flowers. They were from schools across Coventry and Warwickshire - from friends, colleagues and well-wishers. Being a part of such supportive communities like ours makes it a truly special school to work in and serve. This is something we should always work towards protecting and keeping. Our football teams have done remarkably well this year with both Year 7 and 11 teams winning the Coventry Schools cup in their age groups. It was remarkable seeing them demonstrate our values of humility, kindness, courageousness, perseverance and integrity on the football pitch. They were such a credit to the school, to you and to each other. I could not be more impressed as they have clearly improved each year to be able to perform at the highest levels.

I recently had a 'check out' lesson with a new flying instructor at Coventry Airport and whilst I love flying solo, it did remind me of the need to always listen, learn and improve as there are always things we can do better; something all schools, pupils, teachers and leaders should appreciate. And we all must do this with good grace and positivity to ensure we adapt and serve those around us properly because, as Russell used to say, *'we set our own weather.'*

'Sometimes the best thing you can do is not think, not wonder, not imagine, not obsess. Just breathe... and carry on, in faith.' (Anonymous)

Yours faithfully,

Mr C Bishop (Headteacher)