

# Homework

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

**“Have courage and be kind. Where there is kindness there is goodness, and where there is goodness there is magic.” - Disney’s Cinderella**

That is a nice quotation to start the New Year 😊. I hope that everyone enjoyed the Christmas holiday and that we are full steam ahead for the rest of this term.

When I was the same age as Ivanhoe children, I went to school in Watford. My NHS dentist was called Mr Greenborough. My GP, when I was a child, was called Dr Sills. These same people were my doctor and dentist until I left Watford for university when I was nineteen. Imagine having the same doctor and dentist all the way through your children’s school career – wouldn’t that be brilliant! When I went on a bus, there would be a driver and a bus conductor to keep an eye on things. When I went to the park, I would expect to see a Park Keeper (I **was** a Park Keeper between school and university when I took a year out.) When I went to Euston Station to go into London, there were always plenty of people to help with travellers – and there was a Station Manager to oversee that. When I walked through the streets of Watford, I would often see police officers also walking the beat. Wouldn’t we all like something like that nowadays!

As a child, I was quite well off and lived in a three bedroomed semi. Some of my friends were quite poor (even as a child, I considered them poor) and they lived in two-bedroomed terraced houses. When I last went back to Watford, I noticed that these tiny houses were now nearly all divided into two flats and I have just seen one tiny flat for sale at £230,000 (and I have looked at it and it is horrid!) No wonder people struggle to get on the housing ladder.

In my lifetime, I have seen our country change so dramatically and I really struggle to see that any of it is an improvement. When I was a kid, a dad would go out to work and a mum would keep home – now both parents tend to work and sometimes one or both of those parents have two jobs – just to make ends meet.

I may sound like a traditional ‘grumpy old man’ when I write these things, but I really worry about the difference between the world in which I grew up and the world in which my young children are growing up.

The one thing that we all have that is a **force for good** is the **community spirit** within the community school – that sense of community where children are safe, where they are well looked after and where they learn about themselves and about life – these are things that we can ensure, with your help, on your behalf.

There are so many unhealthy forces out there that take away from the quality of life of our children that we must continue together to ensure the very best for our youngsters as they go through the education system.