Twitter Thread by Primary Head



Primary Head
@PrimaryHead2020

1/

We had suspected that we have a number of families who were not on our usual radar who are really struggling, who are soldiering on and not claiming anything or asking for support through the usual channels... including not claiming FSM.

2/
We decided to phone every family today, just to check in.
15 calls in so far.. 8 families who need help. Who DESPERATELY need help. Food, mortgages, rent, petrol... many in fear of losing their house... jobs... marriages...

3/
Families telling their children that Santa is in quarantine because they can't afford presents...

4/
Parents in tears as they tell us that they haven't told anyone because they are desperately trying to keep it together, to manage... because they know that there are others who are 'so much more worse off than us'...

5/
We are taking immediate action... food parcels, gifts for the kids, signposting to financial support, getting them to sign up for FSM, giving them the 'free data' cards we got from Vodaphone, giving them the details (again) to the county council Winter Grant hub...

6/
I know that if we had not made the calls we would never have known. Not because we haven't sent out information or because we don't engage with our parents, but because so many haven't said anything.

7/
Our 'bubble' life has also made it difficult to parents/teachers to engage with each other 'normally'. They don't see each other every day now that we are dropping off at the gate and not at the classroom door.

8/
The personal call from our amazing Inclusion Worker to ask 'how are you doing?' has been all it has taken.

She is calling every family... not just the ones who we think may be struggling.

9/
On the surface for our school no-one would guess.
But the hidden poverty is real.
The impact of the pandemic is massive. This is in an area of low cases but huge financial implications.
The impact on health and mental wellbeing are overwhelming.

10/
This is not a 'whinging headteacher' tweeting or one that is trying to be a 'hero'.

This is just life... in EVERY school right across this country.
END.