



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

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Dear parents, carers, and all the children of DJS,

I hope that you are all settling into your new lives as well as can be expected.

Despite the carnage of people's ordinary lives all around us, I am choosing to be positive (as per Wellness Wednesday's message from Dr Andy Cope) and in my short walk outside today heard people greeting one another from across the street, checking in to see if everyone was alright.

I am embracing technology - the dinosaur that I am – and our Senior Management Team have had two remote Zoom meetings and I think this would also be doable for whole staff meetings too. The school is currently researching a way to join up class teachers with the children in their classes and when we have found a successful way to do this we will let you know.

So now it is officially the Easter holidays, but of course they will be unlike any previous holidays that you have had. We will not be uploading new material to the website for the next two weeks, but we have prepared some Easter activities for you to do **if you wish**. If you are a family who have got into a routine and want to continue that, you can always revisit the choice of tasks that are already up on the website or alternatively dip into the work that was put up there for those children self-isolating prior to the school closing.

School will remain open for school hours for the children of critical workers and we are expecting between 5 and 11 children in each day over the next 2 weeks. Just to remind you once again that we have set up an email address djshomelearning@gmail.com which is monitored from Monday-Friday as the office phone is not regularly answered.

For those children on free school meals, we are still waiting to gain access to the new e-voucher scheme that has been organised nationally. As soon as we do, we will be getting those out to you as soon as we can. If any of our families have been affected by changes to their employment and have recently applied for Universal Credit, please be aware this could also mean your child is entitled to Free School Meals. Check the link here to find more details: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/freeschoolmeals/juniorsecondary>

So to Easter activity ideas.... we asked Miss Halford, our Forest School expert to come up with a list of 10 different ideas for the 10 days of holiday and these are attached. Admittedly if you have access to a garden these are going to be easier to manage, but there are a couple of ideas there that can be adapted for window boxes/window sills.

I am sure that Joe Wicks will continue to broadcast daily, and don't forget #WellnessWednesdays. I heard on the local news about a local ex-teacher from Padnell who is running a weekly cookery lesson for children on YouTube so check out "Mr Baker's Cake School" every Friday. The Hampshire Schools Games organisation (through which we access all our extra sporting events) have produced a weekly guide for ideas to get moving, this week it includes some ideas for different Easter Hunt challenges around your houses or gardens (attached).



In addition, there is our Easter reading challenge; Spirit of the Community project work; reading for pleasure and our 'learn a new skill' challenge. It is these that we are seeking to find a platform for so that children can share with others. Children could start preparing a write up, or photos, or short film ready to upload.

And finally, we'd like to invite the children to take part in a lovely pen pal scheme with the new care home in Denmead – Denmead Grange Care Home. Rebecca Whatley, the Home Services Advisor there, would love it if children could write letters or draw pictures to send to the following elderly ladies and gentlemen in their home: they are Mavis, Daphne, Carole, Rita, Dick, Margaret, Jean, Kevin, Rosemary and Cynthia.

Please send them to rebecca.whatley@barchester.com We don't just want this to be a one off, but a regular 'pen pal' type of scheme. The elderly are particularly isolated at the moment and your letters and pictures telling them all about your lives and what you get up to, would make their day.

Take care and stay safe.

Elaine Viner
Head Teacher

N.B. Because so many of us are now accessing more and more resources online, that makes us more prone to scams and unsafe behaviour. I am therefore attaching a reminder from the National Online Safety organisation of some do's and don'ts regarding staying safe online.

