



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

Bere Road
Denmead
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 6PH

Tel: 023 9225 2735

Mr A Clarke
Head Teacher

www.denmead-jun.hants.sch.uk

Friday 18th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Weekly news update

We've had another beautiful week of weather and another fantastic week back at school. Thank you for all your positive comments and helpful critiques that have enabled us to make tweaks and polishes to our risk assessment, which hopefully have now made things easier, safer and clearer for everyone.

Your children have been brilliant throughout. They are behaving safely and responsibly at all times, following our expectations on hand hygiene, social distancing and letting us know when they feel unwell. Despite the changes we have made, your children are both enthusiastic and focussed, and responding well to the challenges we set them in their learning.

Staff have been working extremely hard in planning learning that allows children to be stimulated, challenged and successful in equal measure. The teachers and LSAs are spending much of their time assessing the children without them realising it, so that we are able to identify the gaps and to recognise where children are also exceeding.

We have also been prioritising our PDL curriculum, as we are acutely aware of the importance of mental well-being during this difficult time. Please do let us know if you feel, for whatever reason, your child might be struggling with their emotions. In sharing this information with us, we can better support your child at this time.

Although there are many plates we are juggling at the moment, we do have a particular focus on Reading. We are fully committed to ensuring that every child sees themselves as a reader and to promote the pleasure in Reading. We will be launching a range of initiatives over the coming weeks and months that should interest all children in different ways and we will be monitoring the success (or otherwise) of these by measuring them against how often children are reading and what they tell us anecdotally, through pupil conferencing, about their experiences of the various elements we introduce.

Your support, as ever, will be much sought and appreciated. We recognise that you all live busy lives but supporting your children to become enthusiastic and successful readers is one thing we can work on together – so please try and find time to share a book with your children and to continue to show an interest in what they read. Every entry into your child's reading record matters as your child will receive a ticket for our book prize draw for every 5 entries recorded. This is a rolling programme throughout the year, drawn periodically.

We are currently working on a planned response should your child or a school bubble or the school in its entirety, be placed into lockdown for a period of time. Whilst our response to the original lockdown was broadly very good and coherent, we have responded to the critiques shared with us, in designing a more inclusive and equitable response that places an emphasis on a high level of communication with yourselves in the event of any prolonged absence from school due to Covid. I will communicate the agreed document with you next week so that you can be assured ahead of time, how we intend to support you and your child in this potential eventuality.

On Monday, we will be sharing with the children our first PRIDE assembly, based around our PRIDE values of Positivity, Respect, Inspiration, Determination and Excellence. There will be a child from each class nominated by their peers, for demonstrating their use of one or more of these PRIDE values. They will receive a very special PRIDE certificate from me which they will take home and a further copy will be displayed, in pride of place, in our school hall. There will also be a sense of satisfaction for all the other children in the class nominated by their peers, as this will be a really lovely moment where they are openly appreciated for their efforts by their class mates. We are looking at ways in which you can share with us these special moments and certainly, post-Covid, we will be inviting you in to these assemblies so that you can enjoy these occasions with your children, first-hand.



My PRIDE nominee for this week is Mr Marley, our Site Manager, who has been extremely busy since I joined in September. There have been a large number of improvements already made to the school site, both internally and externally, along with a large number of planned projects, both big and small, that Mr Marley has been fully involved in. We are very lucky to have such a dedicated and highly skilled Site Manager, who is making a big difference to your child's school experience.

When working with staff, walking the school grounds, spending time with yourselves before and after school and most importantly, spending time with your children as they enjoy school, I can't help but pinch myself because of how lucky I am to be at Denmead Junior School. I hope you feel the same too but if, for whatever reason you don't, please let me know directly... I will always want to know and to try and solve any problem or issues.

For example, I was asked by a parent, when will the children begin receiving their spellings ... it will be from Monday! And, it was brought to my attention about the issue of a lack of Art shirts, resulting in uniform being covered in paint, which I recognise is less than ideal. Can I ask that you bring in an art shirt that will then stay in school? With art happening usually once a week, they can be stored altogether without worry about possible Covid transmission. We will augment your supply with art shirts already in school so that no child should end up doing art without an art shirt moving forward.

It was also brought to my attention, how potentially dangerous, the front entrance of school can be in the mornings, with the pavement area being congregated by waiting year 5 and 6's, the car park being actively used and pedestrians trying to make their way round to the lower school playground gate – not a great recipe. To alleviate this issue, we will open up the staff car park, which is closed to users from 8.30am to 9.20am, from 8.30am to clear the pavement area for others to use safely.

This leads me on to the wet weather plan for after school for waiting Year 5 and 6 parents. With a wet and boggy field, it may not be ideal for hundreds to be waiting on the field area, so as above, in wet weather, we will open up the staff car park gates for you to safely wait in and your children will come to you at the end of the day. I hope this all makes sense and demonstrates our desire both to be responsive to your concerns and to make things better and safer.

And finally, could you help us? Could I remind you, that in the interests of health and safety, there should be no cycling or scootering on the school site. Could I also ask that no children (or adults!) should be using the trim trail before or after school? Could you further be mindful that after 9am a number of lower school classes will have begun their learning. And finally, finally, could we ensure that your children come into school in the correct PE kit. I have cut and pasted this from the school website for reference:

P.E. KIT: We participate in a variety of activities indoors and outdoors in most weathers. Please provide your child with the following items: **Shorts:** Black or navy, **Polo top:** Royal blue with DJS school logo, **Trainers:** Sensible plain pair, **A pair of socks:** White, grey or black, **Tracksuit:** Black or navy bottoms and top.

Thank you for cooperation. Have a great weekend and long may this lovely weather continue.

A. Clarke

Mr Andy Clarke
Head Teacher

Key information sent out this week:

- Year 3 Forest School club letter
- Parking information email
- Year 6 bikability information
- Pupil absence advice – from Infant & Junior schools

Key dates:

As you would expect, normal events like parent meetings and educational visits are unable to take place currently. We will update you as and when this changes.

In the meantime, we have now rescheduled the school photographs to take place now on **Monday 28th September.**

