



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

Bere Road
Denmead
Waterlooville
Hampshire
PO7 6PH

Tel: 02392 252735

Mr A Clarke
Head Teacher

www.denmead-jun.hants.sch.uk

Thursday 10th September 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a great first week back! Your children have come back to school with enthusiasm and positivity, and despite it feeling quite a long first week back (as they often do after a long break), they are maintaining their resilience and getting back into the swing of things admirably.

A massive thanks to you all for helping us adhere to our risk assessment. Your understanding and flexibility are much appreciated as we feel our way through this first week back.

As with any risk assessment, sometimes what you have planned either doesn't work, doesn't work as well as you would like or needs adding to, as you discover new areas that need to be addressed and this week has been no different. We did spend a lot of time over the Summer break discussing our arrangements for your children's return and again on our INSET days to make sure we all understood our roles in enabling your children to return safely. That said, we have discovered a number of aspects requiring further adjustments and we are now in a position to outline those to you.

Some of the areas that I will cover have been brought to my attention from you as parents and I would like to thank you for doing so. Please can I encourage you to continue to bring things to my attention either by catching me before or after school or by contacting the school office. Facebook is a wonderful thing but I will not often catch issues if they are only shared on this forum, so please feel confident to raise issues directly with me.

School Bags:

In our bid to try and reduce or eliminate use of the cloakroom areas because of the mass congregation at any one time, we asked if you could not bring in school bags. The thought was that children would only need to bring in a coat on cold and/or wet days, a water bottle and a lunchbox. We felt that the coat could sit on the back of the chair, the water bottle on top of the table and the lunch box underneath.

We would still like to encourage you/your child not to bring in a school bag but with these caveats:

1. Your child is cycling to school, so for safety and for additional storage of their cycle helmet a bag is needed
2. Your child is attending Forest School, so needs to bring additional clothing
3. Your child is going to a different household setting after school, so needs to bring in additional items that day

If you feel your child still needs to bring a bag into school and it doesn't fit any of the above caveats, please contact the school office to discuss further, **if you have not already done so.**

By helping us with the above we should then have only a very small number of bags that can be safely accommodated in a small area of the cloakrooms, which will help keep the classroom clear, but still stop the mass congregation in the cloakroom spaces.

Lunch Boxes:

The issue of having lunch boxes located on the floor beneath children's tables we think we may have also solved. We have ordered 12 lunch box trollies for lunchboxes to be better located and then stored outside of each classroom. We have discussed a system where we can get the lunch boxes onto the trolley and then distributed safely at lunch time.

Snacks:

The further possible issue of snacks we also think we have solved by ordering door hanging storage pockets for the snacks to be conveniently located and then accessed in a safe and manageable way, much like the lunch boxes.



Beginning of Day arrangements:

At the beginning of the day, in a bid to ease congestion around the lower school entrance, we will endeavour to open that playground gate at 8.40am, allowing parents and carers more space to wait until your class is ready to receive the children. We have introduced a sibling rule which meant that some children may enter the classroom before their allotted time, however if this does not apply to you, please continue to wait patiently until your child's stated class time.

If, for whatever reason, you are not able to wait with your lower school child before school, then can we encourage your child to wait on the top playground where at least one member of staff will be on-hand to supervise.

End of Day arrangements:

At the end of school, we will endeavour to open up the playground for lower school parents earlier (3.10pm) to allow parents to wait in a more socially distanced space.

Wet Day arrangements:

The change to social gathering restrictions yesterday, highlights the importance of maintaining our staggered bubble timings, so please continue to observe these. However, on the inevitable wet days, we will open up the whole school from 8.40am so that if you arrive a little earlier you will be able to get your child into the dry as soon as possible.

Car Parking:

I have seen in the morning first hand, some of the parking issues that you all have to contend with. Whilst I don't have any solutions to control or manage the Parish car park, outside the school gates, I would ask that you continue to leave the marked disabled spaces clear and accessible to help those children and families to more easily access our school site.

To create a safer environment in and around this area, I have closed the staff car park from 8.30am to 9.20am and again at 2.50 to 3.40pm.

Forest School:

For those of you who are new to our school, Forest School is an outdoor afterschool club, which began last summer, hosted by one of our teachers Miss Halford. She has been eagerly looking at the most recent government guidance and believes that Forest School will still be compliant and therefore continue as it is currently unless we are told otherwise. I am aware that we have not provided our new children with the opportunity to attend Forest School yet, so we are looking into the possibility of opening another session on a Monday if numbers allow and Miss Halford will be writing to you shortly with further details.

Topic Newsletters:

Topic newsletters will be communicated to you next week and will have a plethora of information on there for you to get a really clear picture of not only what we're teaching but also how you might be able to support your child at home in their learning – please look for the email.

Year 3 Parents:

And finally, to our Year 3 parents, I am acutely aware that we have not been able to communicate with you to share information, as well as we would like and we are currently working on a 'virtual' way to remedy this. We will be contacting you shortly with further information. In the meantime, it is wonderful to see how your children have settled in delightfully and are already a real credit to the school. If, for whatever reason, you don't feel this to be the case for your child, please do contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you for all your support this week – I have much appreciated it.

Mr Andy Clarke
Head Teacher

