



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Hope, that's what we need. I think it was Oscar Wilde that said, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking up at the stars!" And following on from that, "Only in the darkness, can we see the stars." There's no two ways about it, this pandemic does feel like a 'gutter' of a situation but looking forward (which we absolutely must!) there is hope in the stars. And we are surrounded by stars...

Your children are the number one stars. They are simply quite remarkable. They both surprise me and make me smile every day, whether it be your children or my own. With our support, they will be stronger because of this experience.

Then there's my staff. They are all stars too. I can tell you, they are all running on empty but still determined to give their all, for your children and in support of each other.

And the final superstars are yourselves; my extended staff! Whether you are critical worker, working as hard as you do, in very stressful circumstances or you are part of that large army of home-schoolers, juggling everything that you do, working all hours but remaining so positive (most of the time anyway) with your children – you are all incredible and together we represent a galaxy of hope!

The holidays are usually a time to unwind and to spend some quality time with our children. Holidays during lockdown however, take on a different dimension. Whilst I'm looking forward to spending some time with my family, I'm acutely aware that my boys behave better when there is a structure around them. Whilst we won't be doing 'home-schooling' with my boys, I think we will put in some structure, especially in the mornings, during the week. We will have the weekends separate but keep a semblance of a routine during Monday to Friday. I think this will work for us, your children may well be different, but this approach has worked for us in the past.

Looking ahead, we are anticipating no immediate changes to the way in which we organise school, both in-school or online, after the half-term. We will however, wait with bated breath, as to what the government has in store for us all, with a HOPE that ALL children may return sooner rather than later. They have said that they will give schools two weeks' notice to prepare and when this happens we will update you further as to the school organisation and any changes that we might implement.

For those of you thinking about the learning beyond half term, learning packs have been generated and printed, however we will make these available from Friday of next week, so that all you eager beavers don't get ahead of yourselves over the holiday. For those requiring a hard copy for the week of 22nd February, packs will be available upon request from 1pm next Friday 19th, in the usual place outside reception.

Beyond that, you might be anticipating a parents evening in March. We are preparing for an online version, much like we did in the Autumn term. We will dovetail it in with the return of all children, so that these meetings can be as meaningful as possible which could mean that we push these meetings back to April. As always, we will share details of this as soon as we can.



My final thought for this week is that hope should always be viewed with a smile on our faces. In amongst all this darkness, there has been many things that have made me smile. I saw this on the news yesterday...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-56009062>

If I see any cats on MS Teams when we return, I'll only have myself to blame!

I hope you all have a great half-term break.

Best wishes from all of us,

A. Clarke.

Mr Andy Clarke

Head Teacher

