



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sitting here, writing this newsletter wearing my son, Harry's Superman cape and his Owlette mask from PJ Masks! As you can imagine, it does feel quite strange at the moment for a whole variety of reasons! On the one hand, having all the children back in school is really wonderful... there is a sense of, dare-I-say it, normality. There is also a lovely buzz around school, the children have transitioned back well and appear to be happy, especially at playtimes and lunchtimes and when they are outside or in the hall practising their basketball skills.

But I am still mindful that we are in this global pandemic, despite the good news nationally of the rapid roll-out of vaccines and more locally, the drop in the local infection rate and, 'touch wood', our recent good fortune with regard to positive COVID cases. The need for continued vigilance is still paramount both in school and beyond – rest assured, we are still acting accordingly.

Our online Parent Questionnaire went out earlier this week regarding your lockdown experience; thank you to those of you who have had time to reply already. You can access it here: <https://forms.office.com/r/O1vNkEqCrW> and it will remain open until next Friday at 12pm when we will fully analyse your responses and comments. As an additional channel of communication, if for whatever reason you were less than happy about our response to lockdown and the return and you would like to discuss the matter further, please make contact and I will make time to speak with you and listen to your concerns. It's very important to me that all of you feel that your child is getting the very best deal and I do want to know if we have fallen short in this regard and what we can learn from this moving forward. I will dedicate a detailed letter to the findings of this questionnaire so that you can broadly understand why we made the decisions that we did and what we might consider doing differently next time, although we sincerely hope there is not a next time!

As a side note to this, I am still regularly reviewing the last questionnaire, with all your thoughtful responses. I hope to also give you an update on that too, but hopefully you will have seen, in some of our many actions, that we have already been responsive in a number of areas already.

Last Friday we enjoyed a very exciting World Book Day and this week we are currently in the midst of an equally exciting Red Nose Day.

I think both days have been well timed, as a fun end to the week but with a reflective point for us all to think about. If you are able, please do make a donation via your online SCOPAY account.



This leads me very neatly to sending a big thank you to those of you have made a contribution to our new library proposition – we really appreciate this. We are very keen to pursue this venture, especially at this time when there has been so little to look forward to. Please see below more pictures of what the library will hopefully look like. The video we shared last week can be watched here: <https://youtu.be/TpDqdvFnjw>



We're really looking forward to seeing you virtually again soon, at our Parent Evenings next Tuesday and Thursday. By Monday lunchtime, you should be able to see your meeting in your child's MS Teams calendar section. If, for whatever reason, you have missed booking a slot, I would still encourage you to get in contact with the school office to book a time. These occasions are always important, but even more so now that we have fostered such a close working relationship. We will provide you with an insight of how your child has settled back into school, along with what we have assessed they need to focus on, and then on how you can support your child best at home. We really value the partnership we have with you, and I hope that during these difficult times, that this has been strengthened in how we have already worked together.

A couple of reminders now: Class photos will be also be taking place next week on Wednesday and I know I have said that the uniform requirements won't change this academic year, but perhaps you may wish to aim for the full uniform look that day, so that in years to come, you can pretend none of this ever happened!

Please can you make sure that your child brings in a filled water bottle each day, especially as the days are hopefully getting both longer and warmer. On our part, we will be encouraging your child to drink the aforementioned water, as I know from personal experience, that some children do need that regular reminder.

Can I finish with a plea regarding the ongoing issues we have with car parking. Please continue to act responsibly when parking either within the car park on in the local roads. Please do not block spaces or park where you are not allowed and continue to move around the grass triangle area at the junction in a one-way flow. I know the car parking in this



area is less than ideal and that the vast, vast majority of you do act responsibly but please continue to do your best and be mindful of others when doing so.

And finally... I was reminded today by Mrs Baker, that not all heroes wear a cape and that is definitely the case with you as parents, my staff and your heroic children - they are amazing in so many ways! Don't get me wrong, some of them do make me laugh and pull my hair out in equal measure but my goodness, how extraordinarily resilient they are and what a credit they are to you as well. I once read, "Building resilience in children is not about making them tough. Resilience is the ability to recover from difficulties and to manage how you feel." They are learning just that and in some ways, we can learn from them too – they are the true heroes of this pandemic.

Stay safe and have a great weekend.

A. Clarke.

Mr Andy Clarke
Head Teacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- **Tuesday 23rd 4-6.30pm & Thursday 25th 5-7.30pm** – Parents Evenings via MS Teams. Please check on Monday you can see your appointment via your child's MS Teams login.
- **Wednesday 24th** – Class group school photos – full uniform (or as near to it as possible) advised.
- **Thursday 1st April** – Last day of spring term (Friday 2nd – Bank Holiday Monday)
- **Holiday club running with ABC during the Easter holidays:** Contact Ashley for further information via ashleybarkercoaching1@gmail.com

