



Denmead Junior School

Building success, inspiring curiosity

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Dear Parents and Carers,

What a change, to write a newsletter with the sun out and the warmth that it brings – it almost feels like summer ... all well timed for half-term!

I'm going to start off this newsletter with a little point of clarification. If you receive a parentmail from me saying, "GREAT NEWS! Your child has been awarded a PRIDE certificate ... watch Mr Clarke's assembly on the website", that means your child has actually won the PRIDE certificate for that week. We only send that parentmail to the parents of the 12 winners and not to everyone else. So please, if you receive one of these parentmails, do have a look at the assembly as you'll find out why your child was awarded their certificate and share with them in their excitement and their achievement.

I do love chatting with your children when I get the opportunity, either before school or at break times – they are an amazing source of information, some of which may even be accurate! I often get asked what football team I support. I am always eager to tell them that I support the best team in London, which very often gets the reply, "What? Manchester United?!?" When I tell them that I do in fact actually support Queens Park Rangers, they will either give me a blank look or even laugh - would you believe that?! When they tell me that they support a 'top team' like Liverpool, I always ask them which part of Liverpool are they from? My most recent response was, "Portsmouth!"

I have the same trouble at home. My youngest, who is heavily into football is currently a West Ham fan – I am so disappointed!

I was listening to the radio on my way into work today and there was an interview with the former teacher of Phil Foden, of Manchester City and England fame. They described a really humble and unassuming boy who was extremely skilful but who would never boast. They described the time when he was first scouted and the interviewer assumed he must have been much older when in fact he had been in reception. They talked about how the scouts were reluctant to include him in the trial because he was so young but the teacher thought that they wouldn't turn him away if he turned up in his kit. He went out, full of excitement and showed everyone what an amazing talent he was. The rest, as they say, is history. His teacher described him as "small in stature but his light shone that day."

One of the roles of the teacher and all adults in school, is to recognise emerging talents and passions and to kindle, foster and encourage. If you're not open to the fact that all children can achieve and achieve greatly then you are already capping learning and achievement.

There is that scientific study conducted on fleas, which as creatures, are incredible. They can jump many times their own body size. However, when placed in a cup with a piece of cupboard covering the top, they repeatedly hit this lowered ceiling. It's not long before the scientists are able to remove the cardboard top and the fleas have learnt, despite the removal of this cardboard ceiling, that they can only jump so high.



We must all be the believers in our children. There is the song from Annie Get Your Gun called, 'Anything you can do, I can do better', which we have changed for Denmead to read, 'Anything I can do, I can do better!' We must not be the cardboard cap to their aspirations.

I ask my staff to imagine they have William Shakespeare or Pablo Picasso or Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in their classes. Would they do well? Would their talents be recognised and their passions built upon?

Our strapline is 'Building Success, Inspiring Curiosity'. For it to be more than just a strapline, we need to encourage and nurture success and curiosity. Too often, children begin life being eternally curious and wondering about the world and for then later, as older children and adults, to have lost that curiosity in life – where and why did it disappear?

One of my great influences is Sir Ken Robinson, and he describes an occasion where when speaking to a young child who is busy drawing God, tells the child, "But nobody knows what God looks like." The young girl keeps on drawing and without looking up, replies, "Well they will in a minute!"

Sir John Jones also captures it for teachers not just to teach history but to teach the love of history.

At Denmead Junior School, we believe passionately in the ability of all children. We believe that it is our role to encourage, foster and sometimes cajole a genuine love of learning. We also believe that there should be something in school for everyone. A range of experiences for children to discover something new about themselves and maybe/hopefully a future love.

Our children may not all play football for England or become successful novelists, artists, engineers or scientists, but we must believe they can.

We must help them find their passions. And if they can carve out a future from them, then they will never have to work another day for the rest of their lives.

Have a great weekend and a half-term break.

Kind regards,



Mr Andy Clarke
Head Teacher



DIARY DATES:

- **31st May:** Half Term week
- **Monday 7th June:** First day back
- **Friday 25th June:** SPORTS DAY
- **Monday 28th June:** **INSET DAY**
- **Friday 2nd July:** **Enterprise Day – more details to follow**
- **5th-9th July:** Yr 6 Tregoyd Residential visit
- **Friday 9th July:** School reports sent home
- **Thursday 23rd July:** Y6 Leavers afternoon – *more details to follow*
- **Friday 23rd July:** Last day of term – **1.30pm finish for all classes**

ALSO TBC...

Lower school Egyptian Day, Y6 group photo (dates tbc)

EVENTS CANCELLED:

A message from DABS: Having carefully considered the logistics and the health and safety of children and helpers alike, the DABS committee have sadly decided that DABS will not be going ahead this year. We do, however, fully intend to hold the 40th DABS next year, with lots of celebrations and special events taking place during the week. We really hope to see you all there, helping us to celebrate the wonderful achievement of holding a Holiday Club for 40 years. Have a good summer, The DABS Committee.

*Similarly, the **Pantaloons** will not be able to attend next month as originally hoped. We do have a provisional booking in place for 2022 however.*

COMMUNICATIONS SENT THIS WEEK:

- Year 6 – Tregoyd kit list and consent form packs handed out – due to be returned by Friday 18th June
- Anthill house cup winner confirmation email
- Joint announcement from the Infant and Junior schools regarding September 2021 start and end dates

