



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

Friday 10th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a great first week back! Your children have settled beautifully; they look smart, they look happy and they are ready to learn. Thank you so much for making sure that your children are ready for school, it really does make a difference. If the first week back has not been 'great' for your child or yourselves, then please let me know – we want everyone's experience at Denmead Junior School to be the best that it can be.

The organisational changes that we have made seem to be working very well at present. The one start and finish time, that is coordinated with the infant school, appears to be working well. As does the start of the day, which allows for children to begin learning as soon as possible and for teachers to be visible out on the playground.

Changes that we have made, which are less visible to you, are the organisation of classes within the school. We have created, by manner of their location, three 'small schools', which have been named after the continents the 4 associated classes are from, hence South America, Asia and Africa. Each year 3's buddy is from the continent that they are in, making this relationship even stronger. It will be much easier, when the time is right, for us to engage in cross-year group activities, keeping within the 'small school'. By strengthening the relationship between mixed age children and especially year 3 and year 6, it soon dispels any negative thoughts that the younger children may have about the older children and allows the older children to be more visible, role models for the younger ones.

We have also introduced an afternoon break as a response to the broader need to allow children greater time outdoors and also in response to the way in which we now organise lunchtimes, which meant that overall time for less structured play remains the same, but this is now spread throughout the day. The feedback from children about this has been VERY positive.

We hope, in the next few weeks, to re-introduce lunches back into the hall, but given the fact that many children have not experienced lunch in the hall and for others, it has been a long time, we will do this carefully and in a planned way giving the children and yourselves advance notice of when this change will take effect.

Our new outdoor learning programme begins next week, with all children being involved in this, every half term, every year. I will communicate more specifically about the programme in future updates, but it really is an exciting aspect of what DJS is now able to offer, moving forward. We would ask, especially as the weather changes, that children are prepared for these afternoons, making sure that they do have a coat and alternative footwear to change into. We are happy to store the children's alternative footwear in school in the cloakroom areas, so that they can change into them whenever they have this time outside. The coat would be brought in on any inclement or cold day anyway, so would not need to be kept in school.

The way that we intend to organise these afternoons is in this way:

Year 5 - Mondays

Year 6 - Tuesdays

Year 3 - Thursdays

Year 4 - Fridays



Over the course of each half-term (approximately 6 weeks), each class within each year group will have two consecutive weeks out in the Forest Garden area with the Outdoor Learning Leader, Miss Halford and her team, learning all manner of things, which incorporate both the national curriculum and beyond. We intend for the children to keep a working log of everything they do out in this area and throughout this programme, which they can share with you when it comes round to parents evenings, in particular.

We are also really keen to provide a comprehensive extra-curricular programme that your children can choose to engage in. You will have received our extra-curricular offer for this half term, which includes two new clubs – Cross Country Club and STEM Club. I am really excited about the overall provision and these two new clubs in particular. We are really keen to promote STEM within our school, both within our curriculum and extra-curricular offer, and this new STEM club is a welcome addition to that vision.

The new cross country club is also very exciting. Depending on numbers, we will be holding a series of ‘trials’ next week, during afternoon breaks, for each year group, with the idea that we will then invite as many as we can to join the after school cross country club on Tuesday after school. We will also be entering a league, which hold their races on Portsdown Hill on a variety of consecutive Fridays in late September and October and then again in the Spring term. If you wish your child to be involved in this club, they would need to be able to commit to both the Tuesdays after school and the Fridays. I have run this club in every school I have been in, and I have seen first-hand how transformational running can be. It can develop character, build fitness, encourage healthier lifestyles and build a greater sense of resilience and achievement in many. It’s also a great leveller in the sense that there is a direct correlation between the effort you put in and the improvements you then make. We will do our best to include as many children who can commit to this club as possible, even if we have to introduce an afternoon break, running club to accommodate those who are keen.

We have other information that we will want to share with you, which we will do so next week and beyond. I hope you will find it beneficial to receive this weekly newsletter. My anecdotal review of other schools communications tells me that not many schools do in fact provide a weekly newsletter, but I believe that regular communication is important both to inform and to create a greater sense of close community and shared experience.

It has been lovely to meet many of you in passing this week. I hope that over the intervening weeks and months, and dare-I-say-it, years, that we will get to know each other very well, and in doing so, we can work together for the benefit of each and every one of your/our children.

Until then, have a great weekend – I am sure your children, regardless of how great a week they have had, will be in tired and in need of a more relaxed couple of days.

See you all on refreshed Monday.

Mr Andy Clarke
Head Teacher

Please note key reminders overleaf >>>



Key information sent out this week:

- Return to school information
- New starter SCOPAY link code letter
- Clubs and activities information
- Year 6 – Admissions for Year 7 letter

School photos: Friday 24th September

For this occasion, if this falls on a PE day for your child, **please send your child in normal smart uniform, but still wearing trainers** so the children can still do some PE.

Key reminders:

- We kindly ask that children do not to use the playground equipment before or after school as this area is unsupervised at these times.
- With the weather so changeable, please do ensure your child brings in a coat.
- Please ensure your child has the correct uniform. Aside from small stud earrings, children should not be wearing jewellery or nail varnish.

Key dates:

*****Please note we have been informed there will be no Hambledon Road patrol crossing at all next week*****

SEPTEMBER:

Monday 13th	Year 6: Admissions process for Year 7 places begins. Closing date is 31 st October
Monday 20th	Yr 5 Bikability – more details to follow for those who registered
Friday 24th	School photos – please see notice above regarding uniform that day
Monday 27th	Lower school Fishbourne Trip for Year 4 classes – <i>details to follow asap</i>
Tuesday 28th	Lower school Fishbourne Trip for Year 3 classes – <i>details to follow asap</i>

INSET DATES:

Fri 22nd Oct (before half term)
Fri 18th Feb (before half term)
Mon 27th June (stand-alone)

RESIDENTIAL DATES:

Y5 Calshot 19-21 Oct 2021 – Payment date beginning of September
Y3 Calshot 6-8 April 2022 – Balance due 10th January 2022
Y6 Tregoyd 4-8 July 2022 – Balance due by end of April 2022

We will in touch as soon as possible re all residential updates

