

Delabole Community Primary School Newsletter

June 2020

See this newsletter and more on our school website www.delaboleschool.org

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Term 6

This certainly isn't the start to the Summer Term that we were expecting, however I really hope that through these quite unprecedented times, you have managed to regroup a little and spend some time together as a family. I have never been more grateful for where we live – and thank goodness for the glorious weather. I sincerely hope you have had some time to enjoy it away from the everyday pressures of working and supporting your families from home.

Partial Reopening of School

This week marks the reopening of the school. Whilst there has been so much speculation from the media, we only take our directives from the Department for Education and because of this, some of the information we have been given has been somewhat last minute. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience as we are very aware of the vast amount of messages you have received from us. We really appreciate your support in answering the various questionnaires as this enabled us to organise the numbers within pods to ensure we can open the school in a safe manner. This is an area where we won't compromise.

We Are Stardust

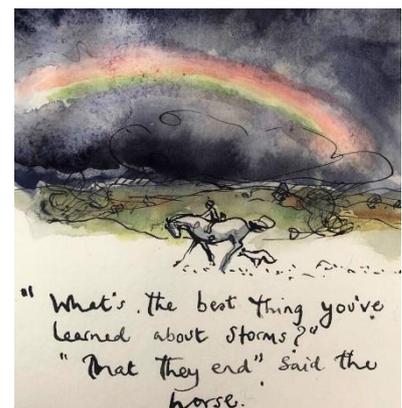
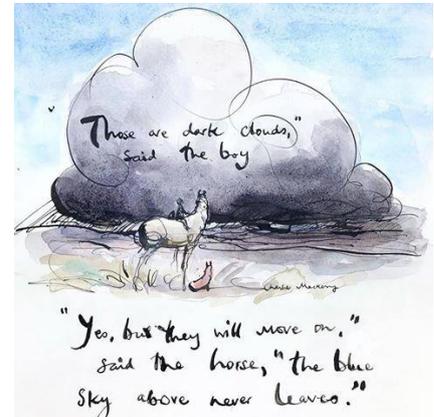
The children in school have settled well and have been enjoying a rich curriculum around the theme of 'We Are All Children Of The Stars' to promote the idea that we are all connected as humans and have a deep belonging to the rest of the universe. We will base our learning on some beautiful texts as always and develop plenty of opportunities for awe and wonder as well as some great investigative opportunities. It has been lovely to see the children arrive bright-eyed and keen to integrate back into school life. It fills us with hope for later in the year.

Whilst the adults in school are working hard for the children in our care, we certainly haven't forgotten our absent friends – the children who are still working hard at home. We as a staff have been grappling with ways in which we can become more connected as a tribe. You will recently have received a message about a new learning platform 'Seesaw' which we urge you to log in to with your child. Ms. Thorpe has created a video on the school website with instructions to help you do this. Our school website can be found at www.delaboleschool.org

Home Learning

This Seesaw platform is a virtual classroom where children will be able to see videos from their teachers who will be using this more and more to set Home Learning challenges. Children will be able to upload their efforts for their teachers to comment and give feedback on. We hope this goes some way to staying connected with the children who are unable to join us in the classroom at present and for them to know they are thought of often and still very much part of the school tribe.

The Home Learning packs will still be available on the school website but we will be moving more towards Seesaw for the children who are able to



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access this. Tasks that teachers set here, will run in parallel to the topics being taught in the classroom. Whilst we know this isn't a substitute to being present in the classroom, we hope that children will enjoy seeing their teachers in this way and will be keen to contribute and share their learning with us. Children in Reception will continue to share their learning on Tapestry.

Connecting Digitally With Our Families

History has often shown us that during times of significant challenge, human ingenuity gathers momentum as we are pushed to find new solutions and different ways of working. The current situation is certainly moving digital communication and online learning forward at a pace. There are challenges to this but equally there are so many opportunities for engagement and delight. We have had such positive feedback on our 'Where The Wild Things Are' storytelling video and have been delighted at the creative response to our Book Cover challenge. The images below are just a flavour of some of the brilliant and ingenious ideas you have shared – and all in celebration of beautiful books! To see more, please visit our Delabole Primary Facebook page. There is still time to contribute if you would like to take part.



The Great Doorstep Book Drop

Another really successful venture has been our Doorstep Book Drop. All the staff who took part were delighted by the response from the children. The intention was to give children a little reading boost, continue to celebrate our love of books and just 'touch base' with our school community to show that we hold the children in mind.

We would love to continue with this through the coming term but do need families to return all the books to the Book Drop Deposit Box in the Spar shop. We have had some but not all. We do need to ensure that the books can 'lie fallow' before we redistribute them so the absolute deadline is Friday of this week please. Stand by for another surprise delivery over the coming weeks!

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Important Milestones This Coming Term

Transition Arrangements

As we approach the final phase of the school year, we are very aware that our Year 6 pupils especially have had to come to terms with some huge shifts in expectation of what their Summer Term might look like. With the cancellation of the SATs tests, the loss of their residential trip and so many end of term experiences likely to be experienced virtually rather than in a shared space, we feel so sorry that these pupils have lost the opportunity to savour some of those important rites of passage. We would like to reassure parents that there has been the usual professional dialogue between ourselves and the Secondary Schools, with important pupil profiles shared and information about friendship groups which should ensure that your child is carefully placed from September.

We are currently considering how we might shape some memorable transition experiences online that support the children's move to Secondary and celebrate their time in our school, whilst giving them something tangible to mark the moment. We do not have any information about the fuller return of Yr 6 pupils towards the end of term. This depends entirely on government directives and the capacity within school. If and when we do have notification, we will share it with parents so that they can make informed choices. As always, we will put the safety of children and staff first.

Staff Changes from September

School is a place of constant change and our role in leadership is always to manage that change, to seek out opportunities and to constantly look to uphold the highest standards of provision for our pupils. As we begin to plan class organisation for a (hopeful) return to school in September, I would like to inform parents that Mrs Cook will be leaving us at the end of the Summer term to take up a Head of School post at another school. Although she has only been with us for a short time – and under such strange circumstance – she has made such a difference to the delivery of our Read Write Inc reading provision and we owe her so much for that support. I am sure you will wish her all the best for her new job.

We will be in a position to share staffing arrangements for the other classes later this month – and although the children will not be experiencing the usual 'Fly Up' days, we will ensure there is plenty of interaction digitally with their new teachers in preparation for the Autumn Term.

Reporting to Parents

Schools have a statutory responsibility to report to parents on their child's learning as set out by the DfE. However, within the current situation, the government has recently revised its guidance to schools. For that reason, there will be a significant change this year in that schools will not be required to report specifically on attainment. This is because the statutory tests for Yr 2 and Yr 6 children have been dropped. The impact of this is that schools have no formal assessment data validated against national standards.

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Equally, for children in other year groups, because the children completed only three full terms of learning, it would be impossible – and potentially misleading – for staff to comment on whether children have achieved expected standards for their age. Clearly, they will not have been taught the full curriculum and so – for all schools across the country – children will not have had the opportunity to achieve measurable evidence against the end of year standards. This is something that schools are very aware of and will be a major consideration when children reintegrate back into school. For the interim, we have made a commitment to completing a report which captures your child's attitude and efforts as a learner and celebrates some of the knowledge and skills they have developed through the year, as well as reflecting on all the wider personal qualities that they bring to our learning community. It is primarily a Celebration of Learning and aims to encourage your child so that they understand where their strengths lie and where they might need further support and consolidation. It is our intention to circulate these to parents on Friday 10th July. This will enable parents to feedback to us in the final two weeks of term and address any concerns they have for September.

Keeping In Touch

Never before has communication between home and school been so important – especially as we now know that the potential for a full return of all children to school before September is very unlikely. For that reason, teachers will continue to phone families to check in if children are not back in school. Equally, please do not hesitate to contact us in the office if you have any questions or concerns. We are looking forward to the day we can all be together, but in the meantime, stay strong, look after each other and stay in touch.

Best wishes



Sue Cox and the Delabole Team