



DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 15 May 2020

Dear Parents

The children continue to amaze us with their home learning efforts! Please find attached our second virtual achievement assembly, presenting some of the highlights from this week. We're just sorry that we can't showcase all of the fantastic things they have been getting up to – the presentation would be too large to send! Please do show this to the children, and send them a big well done from all of us.

We are thrilled to hear that the children enjoyed watching our staff video, which was uploaded earlier in the week. We wanted to put this together to show the children that we are really missing them and thinking about them every day. If you haven't seen it yet, you can find it on either our Facebook page or our website. I am reliably informed that it has gone viral, reaching almost 500 people – quite an achievement for a school as small as ours! Thank you to all of the staff for getting involved in the video, and a special thank you to Mrs Pargeter for her technical wizardry in putting it together.

It was a pleasure to speak to many of you on the phone this week; to hear how the children are getting along, and to listen to your experiences with home schooling. Thank you for all of the positive feedback and your informed comments – I have passed the notes from our conversations onto the teaching team. I spoke to around half of our families, so if I haven't been in touch with you yet, expect a phone call over the coming week!

The government continues to gradually release guidance regarding the planned opening of primary schools, for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, from the 1st June. As we communicated earlier in the week, the current parent information regarding this can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/reopening-schools-and-other-educational-settings-from-1-june>

As I am sure you can appreciate, the planning that needs to go into this is substantial, and new information continues to come to light every day (a further, refined guidance document for school leaders was published just yesterday). As a staff team, we are continuing to liaise with the local authority, the Saffron Alliance of primary schools, our academy trust and our own school community, to ensure that we adopt the approach that is right for Debden. We want to ensure that we have considered every aspect of health, safety and wellbeing (for all members of our school community) as well as the practical considerations (i.e. how we simultaneously provide the best education for both the children at home and in school) before finalising our plans.

We would really appreciate your help with this process, by completing the questionnaire that we sent earlier in the week, by midday on Monday 18th May. This will help us to tailor our approach based on the rough number of children we can expect in the school. Many thanks to those of you who have already sent this in. Of course, we will continue to communicate with you in a timely manner regarding any developments.

On a final note, I wanted to give a shout out to Mrs Bailey this week. Throughout the lockdown period, she has been tirelessly coordinating staff training, facilitating home learning for her class, providing support to learners with additional needs, and also looking after her own children at home - she really must work harder. In all seriousness, thank you Mrs Bailey. We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated staff team at Debden.

I hope that you and your family have a wonderful weekend.

Kind Regards

Matt Hawley

Head of School