



# DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 1 May 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your families continue to be safe and well - despite the recent shift in the weather!

Whilst there is now talk of some of the lockdown measures being eased, we are yet to hear of any news regarding how this will affect schools. As soon as we do hear anything, please rest assured that we will communicate with you promptly.

In the meantime, the teachers continue to be mightily impressed by the effort and talent of all children engaging in the home learning activities. We have been particularly delighted with some of the informative, imaginative diary entries that the children are composing. A huge thank you to all of the parents who continue to support their children's learning from home – I know that many of you are also trying to juggle your own occupations and households! Although I know that maintaining engagement (and, at times, understanding the learning!) is testing, please be certain that you are making a difference.

We are continuing to develop the home learning provision. From next week onwards, the teachers will be awarding virtual 'house tokens' for excellent effort and 'above and beyond' learning, which will be tallied up across the week (as we would do in school). Then, each Friday, I shall be attaching 'assembly slides' to my newsletter communication, which will showcase some of the particularly impressive learning examples, and will (drumroll) reveal the house points winners!

A few parents have also commented that it would be nice if the class could somehow 'come together' via a Zoom/Teams meeting. We think that this is a fantastic idea; however we want to be sure that all safeguarding precautions/obligations are considered, and are therefore looking into the safest way of doing this. Please watch this space.

Despite the school being closed at the moment, a skeleton team of staff members have been required to come into the school building from time-to-time, for a number of different purposes. These include handling new admissions, keeping plants watered, gardening and liaising with families where necessary. Thank you to these people, who include Mrs Arundell, Mrs Dale, Mr Brown, Mrs Bailey, Mrs Cameron, Mrs Dixon and Mrs Hayden, for continuing to ensure that we have a school that is ready to come back to!

In other news, I'd like to extend a big thank you to Mrs Dale and her husband, Tony, who were first on the scene to reports that one of our oil tanks was broken. Because of their quick response and initiative, in addition to the hard work of Mrs Dyster (our Trust HR/premises manager), what could have been a real problem was minimised. This does provide us with a great opportunity to upgrade this facility, and so there will be some work taking place on this section of the playground (outside my office) for some weeks. If the children do return to school in the near future, this will of course have some implications for drop-off/playtimes, but we will discuss this with everybody should the need arise.

Finally, for some really positive news. As many of you will have been aware, the number of children on roll at the school had fallen somewhat in recent years. One of our main targets from this year has been

to ensure that the school is 'thriving' and to increase the number of children – a challenge made more difficult by the inspectorate visit after only a few weeks! I am therefore delighted to announce that we will be expecting our largest cohort of new children for many years in September. The good word about everything that our school community is achieving is clearly spreading... I have no doubt that our supportive parent body has had a large role to play in that, so thank you!

I hope that you all have a great weekend.

Kind Regards

Matt Hawley

Head of School