



DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 11 September 2020

Dear Parents,

We hope that all of our families are feeling settled into the new academic year. It has been a pleasure to see all of the children getting back to the enjoyment of learning and interaction, after what has been a prolonged period of time apart. I have also enjoyed speaking individually with each of our new children, who appear to be settling in beautifully. Our first collective worship theme has been 'new beginnings', and we have all been really impressed with the way in which the children have embraced the fledgling academic year – it feels as though they have never been away!

On the note of new beginnings, I would like to formally welcome Miss Holly Matthews, our new Ducklings teacher, to our school community. Miss Matthews has been hard at work throughout the summer, organising the Ducklings learning environment, and preparing everything for the arrival of our newest and youngest children. She has certainly had a terrific impact already – I have visited the Ducklings outdoor spaces a number of times over the past few days to witness them engrossed in an engaging, highly-purposeful environment. They have made such a positive start to their school lives, and so a big thank you to Miss Matthews, Mrs Cameron and the children, for all of their hard work and enthusiasm in making it happen!

The teaching team have been hard at work for the past few weeks, conjuring up new and interesting ways to build upon the many successes of our school last year. One welcome addition is our new 'Behaviour for Learning' system. Using visual trackers in each of our classrooms, children have the opportunity to work their way up through a rainbow of colours by showing exemplary learning behaviours throughout the week – these may include trying new things, being creative, showing resilience when things are tough, or demonstrating independence. A select few each week may reach the 'Gold' standard, which will earn them an immediate house token, a mention in achievement assembly, and a position on our 'Gold Learners' board at the bottom of this newsletter. Well done to all of the children on our inaugural board this week!

Our 'Friends of Debden' (FODs) parent group have also already been busy, in organising another FODS clothing and shoe collection with Bag2School. Bag2School collect good quality textile items for reuse and provide a payment to FODS based on the weight, which of course directly benefits our school. Bags can be brought on Monday 28th September and placed at the front of school (please do not bring bags before this time, as we will put up a gazebo in case of bad weather). All bags should be at school by 9am on Tuesday 29th September, when the collection will take place.

Items that Bag2School accept are shoes (tied together please), clothing, belts, handbags, jewellery, household linen, curtains, bed linen, towels and soft toys. They don't accept duvets and pillows and school uniform. There is a full list here <https://bag2school.com/what-we-collect>

There is going to be a litter pick in Debden Village tomorrow at 9.30 which you are encouraged to join. They are meeting in the village hall car park.

I trust that the class newsletters reached you well last week, and that you feel fully updated with all of the activities and events that your child is partaking in over the course of this half term. I invite you to

pay particularly close attention to the knowledge organisers that we have sent as a part of the start of term communications – these detail all of the subject matter that we will be covering over the course of the term, and will enable you to support your child’s learning from home. We are regularly reviewing things like forest school, swimming and sporting events as the government guidance changes. We will of course endeavour to keep you updated with everything as decisions are made.

On a final note, we have received a few questions regarding whether children should come into school if they have cold symptoms or other illnesses. Our approach to this is informed by the government and NHS guidance – we do not claim to be medical professionals. At present, these are the recommendations: If your child has a minor cold (the symptoms of which differ from those of COVID-19) then yes, they should come into school. Any children with heavier symptoms, for example those with more severe colds, flu, sickness, etc, should be kept at home as they usually would, in the interests of avoiding the spread of these bugs around school. If your child or anyone in your family develops COVID-19 symptoms (listed here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>) they should remain at home and a test should be booked. The full guidance on what to do in each instance can be found in our parent handbook.

The weather is apparently going to be beautiful over the next few days, so I hope that you and your family enjoy a lovely weekend revelling in the last embers of summer!

Mr Hawley

