



DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 25th June, 2021

Dear Parents,

The final portion of the summer term is always one of the most exciting and busy times of the academic year, and we have had a number of compelling events and activities taking place over the past few weeks:

-We were delighted to raise Cystic Fibrosis awareness last Friday by wearing yellow. The event was partially led by Brewster in the Frogs class, who spoke articulately in assembly about life with CF. You may have seen that he even made it into the paper, along with a couple of his classmates! A big well done to him for his enthusiasm and commitment in raising the profile of CF across the school.

-Many of the Kingfishers children have been completing their 'Bikeability' course this week, and a number of them will be hoping to qualify with their Level 1 and Level 2 awards, enabling them to ride safely in off-road and single lane road environments.

-End of year assessments have been going on across the school, which will inform the attainment and progress judgements that we make in the end of year reports (which will be sent to all parents in July). From the scores that I have seen thus far, it appears that many of the children have made exceptional progress this academic year, which is remarkable considering the circumstances. A big well done to all. I will share some of the headline figures in my next newsletter when we have collated all results.

-A big well done to all the Year 4 children for their hard work in memorising their times tables. Once again, there were some excellent scores in the DfE's Multiplication Check, with children making lots of progress from their initial practice attempts. Thank you, parents for your support with this.

I wanted to devote the second part of the letter to the matter of parental attendance at events. It is of course hugely disappointing that the attendance of parents at school events continues to be restricted by (at times conflicting) guidance at local, regional and national level. Events like the upcoming sports day will simply not be the same without the parents there to cheer their children on. We are desperately sad about this, for both you and the children.

We did deliberate over this decision for some time. We have scrutinised all of the guidance documents issued to schools, including at national, regional and local level. I have also sat on webinars and spoken with advisors, and finally I have communicated with a local collaboration of a large number of primary school heads. The guidance we receive is not clear, and in some places is contradictory, and it leaves schools wide open to criticism and further action in the unlikely event of an outbreak or a parent complaint. The clear message from advisors is to keep the events in-house for this academic year. Based on this, all of the other local Heads in the group stated that they had taken the decision not to invite parents.

Whilst it's not what any of us want, I hope that you can see that we are in a very difficult position and have to operate with the guidelines that we are given.

We are continuing to look at ways in which we can have parents involved with in the end of term events in mid-July. I will communicate these plans with you when they have been finalised – hopefully in the next week or so.

On a final note, we will be holding our in-school transition morning next Friday (25th June). As we are still prohibited from having children move between bubbles, the year groups who are moving up to a new class will be meeting their teachers in some of the large, open spaces across the school, with a number of social distancing measures in place. Here, they will be partaking in some 'getting to know you' activities. I am delighted that our new teachers, Mrs Hatch and Miss Rowe, have confirmed that they will be coming along.

Wishing you all an enjoyable weekend.

Kind Regards

Mr Hawley