



DEDWORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Newsletter

11th September 2020

Headteacher's News

A very warm welcome back to school and the start of a new academic year. I have to say how wonderful it is to have all our pupils back in school after a very long five months at home. Our school has felt lonely; our corridors far too quiet; our classrooms empty and our staff have missed the hustle and bustle of Dedworth School life. This week it has definitely sprung back into action and meeting all five hundred of our pupils in their shiny shoes and new uniforms has been an absolute pleasure. I have had such a warm and inviting welcome to DMS and already feel very proud to be part of this very special school. I thank every single one of you for this.

As you may have seen at pick up or drop off, it has been amazing to see our pupils engage in their new way of meeting and greeting. As stated in my welcome letter, I have introduced a 'good morning' and 'good afternoon' in sign language to replace the traditional handshake across the campus and to see our very young children at DGFS and all our pupils here giving it a real go and addressing staff in this way has been fantastic – it is contagious. Seeing them smile and giggle whilst they get used to this adds to the already new buzz of energy around the school and I have to say, I stand back and smile. Lovely way to start and end my school day!

Sadly, in the current situation, I have not been able to meet the children in the traditional way by addressing them all in an assembly. As you are aware, there are to be no social gatherings, but I have had many conversations during their breaktimes and also visited as many classrooms as I can. I really look forward to being able to speak to them all properly and am currently working on various ways of conducting a virtual assembly for them. Their transition back into school has felt exceptionally smooth with their soft start or finish to the day focusing on their social and emotional learning whilst in lessons the teachers are ensuring they have planned a responsive curriculum to enable all children to feel engaged and catch up in time on any work they have missed. All learning gaps will be addressed in time and I am sure it won't be long before progress is evident in all their lessons. Their happiness in school is of utmost importance to me and I firmly believe that if a child is happy in school they will learn!

Our year group bubbles have been working well and they have all adapted well to staying in their designated area of school. We have had hand sanitiser stations installed around the school at every entrance and exit as well as specific gels for each classroom and again, we have been impressed with the children's maturity and understanding. We have had to adapt a lot of our routines and thank you all for your patience and understanding. The grab bags are working well at lunchtime and despite the small change to the timings, our staggered start and ends to the day are improving daily. We will continue to update our site and procedures in line with government guidance and ask you to enforce this too by reminding your children of how to keep themselves safe during these unprecedented times.

Aside from Covid-19, I must thank you all for the warm and inviting welcomes to Dedworth. I have to say I have had a fantastic start to the school year and have really enjoyed my first two weeks. Presenting to staff in those first few Inset days feels a long time ago now but setting out the vision and what that journey will entail is really important to me as I firmly believe our school is at the heart of Windsor community. Our pupils enjoy school and we want to make them proud too. Most pupils are looking smart in their uniforms and this is something we will monitor also in school. We appreciate some of you have had issues with your ordering and we are delighted that Goyals in Maidenhead

has agreed to stock all DMS school and PE uniform and is also designing a DMS hoodie and jogging bottoms for us as well to keep them warm on PE days. Seema, manager of Goyals, offers excellent service in her shop in Maidenhead and also takes online ordering so we will keep you updated on this.

Being respectful and kind in school is always so important, even more so in the present time when we have all endured very different experiences in lockdown. We remind children about being kind as this is one of our values – therefore can we also politely remind you all about being vigilant and patient in the mornings and afternoons when dropping and collecting your son/daughter. We have had a few neighbours complain this week about parking across their driveways and also in local roads blocking peoples' homes. This is not what we want for our school. We appreciate these times are very busy so please do adhere to the timings your son/daughter has been given as this should allow less crowds and more room for everyone at these busy periods. We thank you in advance for your co-operation.

I will be writing a newsletter every fortnight and I look forward to updating you next time with more events and successes. I will be introducing Hot Chocolate Friday next week for pupils who have been nominated for going over and above what we expect – this will be a Friday afternoon treat where they will receive an invite to come to my office for 20 mins and enjoy a hot chocolate and a chat. They will also get a personalised letter home informing you of the reason they were nominated and I will publicise names in my newsletter too.

Wishing you all a restful and safe weekend and I look forward to welcoming pupils back on Monday morning at their allocated time.

With very best wishes,
Mrs N Chandler
Executive Headteacher

Covid-19

We have been asked by Children's Services at RBWM to emphasise the importance of not sending children in to school who display Covid-19 symptoms (temperature, new cough or loss of sense of taste or smell) and request a test but more importantly do not send children to school prior receiving a negative test result. More information can be found on the NHS website here: [NHS information](#). Once they feel better and the test is negative, we will welcome them back into school. This is also the same if a member of the family is displaying symptoms and has to take a test. Please keep your child at home until you know the result is negative. We have workpacks ready and can guide you on the work that needs completing at home.

Meanwhile, the government has launched a new public information campaign ahead of the winter to highlight how everyone can help to stop the spread of coronavirus. The 'Hands, Face, Space' campaign urges the public to continue to wash their hands, cover their face and make space to control infection rates and avoid a second peak. Information can be found [HERE](#)

(You may need to press Ctrl and click on the links to open them.)

Any film/video experts out there?

I am on the look out for anyone who could help us produce a promotional video of Dedworth Middle School? With us not being able to welcome visitors into school this year or hold Open Evening events, I would like a short video that includes footage of the school as well as some speeches from staff and pupils walking around. Can anyone help? If you think you may be able to, or know someone, please email the school office office@dedworthmiddleschool.co.uk for attention of Mrs Kelly Mealing and we will get back to you. Thank you.

Year 7 & 8 Cycling to School

Year 7 and 8 pupils will be allowed to cycle to school from Monday as long as their bike is in a roadworthy condition and they wear a helmet. Year 8's are to use the bike sheds and year 7's are to store their bikes by the railings behind the Tech block. Bikes should be locked up and left at the owner's own risk.

PE News

We have had some enquiries as to what PE kit is to be worn when the pupils come into school. All pupils should wear their short or long sleeve top (or both if it is very cold), shorts for boys and skort for girls, white socks and trainers. They do not need football boots for their lessons this term. When the weather gets colder pupils may wear blue or black tracksuit bottoms over the top of their shorts or skort. No jewellery is to be worn in PE lessons and earrings need to be removed or taped over. If a religious bangle can not be removed please can you provide a blue sweatband to wear over the top.

We are aiming to start sports clubs the week beginning 21st September; a letter explaining how clubs work and a list of clubs will be sent out next week.

Many thanks
Dedworth Middle School PE Dept

Applying for free school meals is fast and easy.

For some people the stigma attached to applying for Free School Meals is overwhelming and can stop them making that application which could potentially save them over £400 a year. To help eliminate this we have recently signed up to a new service which allows parents/carers to apply online. You are advised straight away if you are eligible and the school is notified by email. No forms, phone calls or providing hard to find evidence! If you think you may be eligible for free school meals, you can apply from the privacy of your own home by logging onto:

www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/mwschools

If you need some help to do this contact Mrs Lindsay on 01753 376166

Off-site Clubs and Half term Activities

A new after-school multi sport club called Kids OFF The Blocks has just started at TVAC and will be running sessions on a Monday during term time starting on the 7th of September for ages 8-10 It will be for 14 weeks during the autumn term.

If you would like to book for Kids OFF The Blocks after school clubs here is the link, <https://datchetonleisure.formstack.com/forms/kotbafterschool>

They are also running an October half term multi activity camp from Monday 26th - Friday 30th October 2020 from 9am-3pm every day. They will still be following the guidelines if you would like information please contact them on kidsactivities@deleisure.com.