

# Deal Parochial Church of England (Aided) Primary School

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Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

We have already nearly reached the end of term one and it has flown by. I want to congratulate everyone and say thank you for how well we have resumed, re-connected and re-united in our school community.

In particular, I want to thank all our Year 3 pupils and families who have unfortunately suffered through the imposed self-isolation rules. I appreciate how disruptive this time has been for not only the children's education but also to your own busy lives. Thank you for working with us. Believe me, when I tell you that closing a class bubble was the last thing we wanted. Your children's learning and well-being is at the centre of everything we do here. If we could change things, we would. I am sorry that the disruption has created challenges and upset to families.

We welcome Year 3 staff pupils back to school on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is only for one day, but we really want to see you and hope that you will re-join us on the last day of term. The good news is that we have had no further positive test results reported. So far, so good!

## **Remote Learning**

Thank you to those of you who completed the recent questionnaire. As a staff, we are listening to your requests for additional, live teaching as part of the remote learning we offer. This is taking us completely out of our comfort zone or trained ways of working, and so it is taking time for this to be put in place. There are a number of safeguarding constraints, as well as technical challenges that we are working to overcome.

I have arranged a remote teacher training session to take place on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November that will hopefully train teachers up in how to use further aspects of technology and enable greater provision for online teaching and lessons. Mrs Porteous and Mrs Abbott have also equipped themselves with delivering Powerpoint lessons with their recorded teaching. Teachers are planning their teaching and learning adding the government national on line teaching school called Oak Academy. This enables our planning to immediately link with recorded live teaching lessons that match our own learning objectives. This is a huge development and begins to address our concerns that children are learning relevant next steps rather than just carrying out over learning and reinforcement activities.

I am sure that you all appreciate that new ways of working always take time to set up, trial and embed, but we are determined and focused on achieving this.



## Reports



With this in mind, families will be receiving a short written “well-being snapshot” on how your child has settled into school this term following the prolonged time off school.

At the end of Term 1, we would usually invite you to a “meet the teacher” informal meeting. As you can understand this is not allowed to take place due to COVID restrictions. In an attempt to overcome this gap in communication, we have designed a brief reflection of the term with the focus on well-being and how children have settled. We have included a section for the children to voice their own feelings, worries and learning targets, which I welcome as a means for us all to listen and respond to our pupils. I think the children have enjoyed taking time to record their voice; I certainly have enjoyed reading them. We encourage children to speak out and tell us anything on their minds and I would just like to reassure you that if a child has expressed a worry we have followed it up immediately, but it remains on the report for you to see and talk to your child about also.

We will send out the well-being snapshots on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October. As usual, these letters will need to be collected by an adult and the class teacher or TA, dismissing the class; will have a class tick list to confirm collection. If your child is absent or walking home on their own (Y 6 only), then please come and collect it from the school office at a convenient time. Thank you.

Please be reassured that this is just one way we thought might help keep open our lines of communication with you, as your partnership is so greatly valued and hugely important to the success of your child’s progress and happiness. I hope that if you have any concerns that you would contact the class teacher via email or talk to me at the school gate, or telephone me. This pandemic has created so many barriers and challenges for us to overcome but through your supportive feedback and your encouragement, we are trying to be creative and find new ways to overcome any difficulties. Thank you for your patience and support.



## Harvest Thanksgiving

Last week Year 2 led our collective worship that we stream live throughout the school. We thought about where food comes from, and how we all change and grow, and how important it is to look after the world. Some classes had the opportunity to walk to our local link church St Georges’ in the town. A Thank you to Vicar Chris and Ben for being so welcoming and allowing the children to read their prayers, for talking to them and allowing them to explore the church and ask questions. This was a great opportunity for the children to become relaxed and familiar with one of our local churches. We had hoped for Yr 2 and Yr 5 to walk to St Leonards also last week, but on the day, the rain was just too WET! We hope to re arrange the visits, as well as taking other classes to visit St Andrew’s Church.





We would like to invite our families to give a Harvest offering to our local Food Bank this year. Mr Knight and I will be at the gate with the Food Bank bin every day this week – so please bring something any day to contribute to local families who are in need at the moment. Please see on the list below, items they need in particular at the moment: -

***We are particularly short of***

- |                    |                |           |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|
| * Tinned veg       | * Tinned fruit | * Custard |
| * Instant mash     | * Cuppa soup   | * Shampoo |
| * Instant desserts | * Rice pudding |           |

***We are also looking for***

- |                    |                   |                      |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| ✓ Cold tinned meat | ✓ Tinned fish     | ✓ Rice               |
| ✓ Tinned potatoes  | ✓ Tinned tomatoes | ✓ Ketchup            |
| ✓ UHT milk         | ✓ Squash          | ✓ Household cleaning |



**Keeping warm**

One of the guidelines for reducing risk of spreading COVID 19 is to keep rooms well ventilated. Teachers are keeping classroom windows open. As it gets colder and winter wraps itself around us, please ensure that your child wears their school uniform green fleece or jumper underneath their coats. This helps everyone remain comfortable in class. Obviously, we will need to close windows if the temperature drops too low! Common sense rules! Teachers have also asked me to remind you to ensure that all jumpers and fleeces have your child's name in them. So many get lost, mixed up or unclaimed.



**P.E. Days**

Please look on the white notice board or on the class teacher termly newsletter for the new day of your child's P.E. lesson. We are continuing with the request that children should wear their P.E. kit into school on their P.E. day. The class rota changes every term so that it fits around other school arrangements and provision.



**Pupil Photographs**

Please remember that Kittle Photographers will be in school on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> in order to take individual pupil photographs. Children should be smartly dressed, wearing their school uniform, hair neat and tidy etc so that they look their best. We have arranged a further date for Kittle photographers to come on November 5<sup>th</sup> to photograph Year 3 and any pupils who may be absent this week.





**Fire safety talks – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.**

Kent Education Fire safety will be presenting age appropriate fire safety talks to each class over the course of this last day of term. They are usually quite lively, and good fun for the children to meet a real fire fighter!

**Work placements. Term 2**

We welcome two trainee teachers who will be joining the school as part of their official teacher training degree qualifications. Mr Dedman will be joining the EYFS class and Miss Todd will be joining Yr1 class. They have a number of single day visits and some block practices over the course of the spring term. They will be observing the teaching and learning and supporting the class teacher in some tasks.

**Teacher Training dates.**

Every school has 5 days that we must close to pupils for staff development and school improvement.

This school is closed for teacher training and development days on:

Tuesday 1<sup>ST</sup> September 2020

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

***Please note that this means our pupils finish this Thursday and are not back to school until Tuesday 2nd November.***

This is pending any further announcements about circuit breakers and lock downs from the government. I have not been provided with any information about this but the daily speculation suggests that this could be a possibility. You know as much I do.

**Time for reflection**

**END OF TERM PRAYER**

We thank you Lord, for this term.

For the challenges, the successes, and the mistakes from which we have learnt.

Be with us as we spend our time with family and friends.

Give us strength and courage to do what is right; to be witnesses of our faith.

Help us to be a practical Christian these holidays, to appreciate what others do for us, to give time and effort to help others, to be peacemakers in our family.

Keep us safe in our activities; give us good rest and good fun.

Bring us back refreshed and ready for a new term.

We thank you for our classmates, teachers, parents and a community that cares for us.

May we always be conscious of you in our lives.

Amen

