



Dorchester Primary School

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Friday 30th April 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is hard to believe we have been back at school for three weeks already since Easter. The time seems to have flown by and the school is as busy as ever. I thought it timely that I write to update you on a few things as well as send out some reminders.

COVID-19

Although cases have drastically reduced in the city, the virus is very much still amongst us and there are still schools within the city having to close bubbles due to positive cases. With this in mind, this is a timely reminder to remember to follow the protocols we have in place for keeping everybody safe. THANK YOU so much to everybody that has continued to wear face coverings and follow social distancing guides. I hopeful, with your support, that Dorchester does not have to close any more bubbles.

You may have seen in the media about home LFD tests, which all families can get hold of. The advice from medical experts is that these are not suitable for children under 12 years old so please do not use these on our children. If your child has any symptoms of the virus (a new, continuous cough, a high temperature, loss of taste or sense of smell) then they need a PCR test to rule out the virus.

Attendance

Our whole-school attendance since returning from lockdown stands at 95% which is positive news. We do, however, know there is more we can do if we are to hit our target of 97%.

It is important for our children to be in school learning and building social skills alongside their friends. Over the last year, children's education has been affected significantly and we need to use the time we have left in this academic year to address as much of what they have missed as we can.

Our expectation is that children's attendance does not fall below 95% as this then means they are classed as a 'persistent absentee'. The attendance team will be making contact with the parents of children where their attendance is a cause for concern to look at support we may be able to offer. Please engage with these conversations in the best interests of our children.

Jewellery

Despite reminders sent out, we still have children coming into school wearing jewellery not in line with our policy. As a reminder to all, our jewellery policy states that children are able to wear one pair of studded earrings (in the lobe) and a watch only. Bracelets, necklaces, rings and loop earrings should not be worn. This is in line with the policies of the vast majority of schools in the city. If children do come to school wearing jewellery outside of the policy, then staff will ask for them to be removed. Please help us keep children safe by supporting us with this.



Behaviour

We are seeing an increase in behavioural incidents within the school, predominantly at play times and lunchtimes. Many of these are caused by problems starting outside of school – especially involving online gaming. We have high-expectations of behaviour at school and we have to set standards that prepare our children for life beyond school. Where there is persistent poor behaviour from a child, we will ask parents to come in for a meeting to discuss the ways forwards. Please work with us on promoting positive behaviour and ensure you are monitoring your child's use of online platforms and gaming.

Lunch Menu

At the beginning of this term, our school kitchen and staff officially became members of HCAT, moving away from Hull City Council. Since then, we have seen a rapid increase in the number of children staying hot dinners and the feedback on the quality of the lunches provided has been really positive.

Now we have more ownership of the menu, we have been speaking to children about the things that go down well and the things that are less well-liked. As a result, there are some changes to the menu for next week. On Tuesday, instead of chicken wraps, we have changed to chicken goujons and on Wednesday, we have replaced the pasta bolognaise with meatballs. Our new menus can be found on our website under the 'Parents' tab and 'School Lunches'.

On another note, the cost of school lunches for children in years 3 – 6 is £1.50 per day. As a school, we currently have around £400 owed in dinner money. As I am sure you understand, where the school has to cover the cost of meals, this leaves less money to be spent on your children. Please ensure that any outstanding balances are cleared as soon as possible by contacting the school office.

A final reminder that on Monday school is closed due to it being a Bank Holiday. Therefore, we look forward to seeing our children back on Tuesday 4th May.

Have a great weekend and stay safe.

Yours Sincerely,



Stuart Mills
Headteacher