

Parental Communication & Engagement



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Message from Head Teacher

Usually our Year 7 Welcome to Dormston evening would have taken place this week. However, like many of our events this needed to take place virtually. The video for this however is now on our Website under **Year Strategies > Year 7**. [Please click on this hyperlink for the Year 7 video.](#) Apologies this was uploaded slightly later than advertised we had technical difficulties uploading the video which caused a slight delay.

The changes we have made to the revised school day have improved circulation around the school. Students are getting use to the new systems in place and we are very proud of the maturity that all our students have shown during this time. Could I kindly request that you discuss with your child why these changes are necessary in school and reassure them that all the measures are there to keep them safe. We are requesting that all students wear face masks when they enter the school and when they are moving through corridors unless there is a medical reason why this is not possible. The face mask will protect them and other members of our school community.

This week Years 8, 9 & 10 all had socially distanced assemblies in the Theatre where the focus was ensuring that we all try to be the best version of ourselves and consider the lessons we have learnt during lockdown. The community spirit that was so prevalent throughout lockdown is certainly something that I would like to embrace in our school community.

Our Reading Tests started this week and once results have been collated they will be available for students and for us to monitor reading improvement and provide additional support where required. We always encourage children to read as much as possible because we know this improves their progress and attainment but we also want our students to have a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Our Year 11 Revision Sessions have also started this week. The majority of the Revision Sessions will be face to face with just a few sessions taking place on Microsoft Teams. The uptake for our Year 10 RE Revision was excellent demonstrating the commitment our students have to their learning.

Head Teacher

Letters Sent Out Recently

ALL letters are now emailed home, hard copies are ONLY provided for 'Reply Slip' Letters. *Selected student only letters are given out to your child by hand or are posted directly home. The criterion for 'selected student only' opportunities are based on various factors depending on the trip and its focus. Unfortunately, we are unable to allow every student the opportunity to be involved with every activity which we understand sometimes causes disappointment. If you require more details about the selection process for any opportunity please contact the event organiser.

- Year 7 Welcome to Dormston Letter;
- Welcome to Year 8 Letter;
- Welcome to Year 9 Letter;
- Year 9 & 10 RE Revision Text Book Letter;
- Year 10 RE Revision Session Letter;
- Year 10 English Literature Revision Texts Letter;
- Welcome to Year 10 Letter;
- Welcome to Year 11 Letter.

Events

EVENTS

- **Moving to Year 8 Virtual Parents' Evening - Tuesday 15 September 2020** - the video for this will be uploaded to our website under **Year Strategies > Year 8** on or very shortly after Tuesday 15 September 2020;
- **Moving to Year 9 Virtual Parents' Evening - Tuesday 15 September 2020** - the video for this will be uploaded to our website under **Year Strategies > Year 9** on or very shortly after Tuesday 15 September 2020.

General Reminders/Update

- **Year 8 HPV Vaccinations (dose 1) - Friday 2 October 2020**
An email has been sent out on Thursday regarding the above injections, with an on-line Vaccination Consent Form attached, if you are unable to complete this form on-line, then please email jjones@dormston.sch.uk who will pass a Vaccination Consent Form to your child or post a consent form home.
- **Year 7 GO4Schools Access**
Year 7 students will hopefully be getting access to Go4Schools during W/C 28 September 2020. The reason for this delay is because before they can gain access to GO4Schools we need them to be given guidance on how to use the school network and also how to access their school email. This is a bit more difficult than normal due to restricted access to Computer Rooms due to our new H&S procedures that are in place. Parents/Carers will receive a communication shortly after this has happened explaining how to log-in. Those Year 7 parents/carers who already have siblings in school may already be able to see their Year 7 child showing up on GO4Schools. Homework for Year 7 should not currently be being set on GO4Schools and staff have recently been reminded of this.
- **Reading Test**
Students in all Years are sitting tests to determine their reading age. Year 7 are using Suffolk Reading Tests, while Years 8 to 11 are using Literacy Assessment Online. Once results have been collated they will be available for students and for us to monitor reading improvement and provide additional support where required.

▪ **Visiting the School Site**

We are really sorry but at the moment we are currently not allowing parents/carers general admittance into School Reception. Any visits that do take place are strictly by appointment only and are at the discretion of the Head Teacher. We are undertaking the vast majority of our meetings with parents/carers via telephone and are only inviting parents/carers into school if absolutely necessary. We recommend that parents do not therefore attempt to visit School Reception to avoid a wasted journey and disappointment as we can only speak to you via the intercom. If you have a query or concern please contact the school via telephone on 01384 816395 or email us at info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk. Alternatively, you can email your child's Head of House as follows:

- avon@dormston.dudley.sch.uk
- derwent@dormston.dudley.sch.uk
- severn@dormston.dudley.sch.uk
- trent@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

We appreciate that our school phones lines are often very busy and that this can be frustrating. When the main school number is engaged your call is now automatically diverted and picked up by a second phone line which is manned throughout the day. You will only be directed to the answerphone if both lines are already in use. If you are ringing to report your child's absence please use our dedicated Absence Line (Option 1) rather than going through to Main Reception. Our answerphone messages are checked constantly and we will endeavour to pass any messages on promptly.

▪ **Pupil Message Service & Passing on Equipment**

Due to the current Year Zones that are in operation we no longer have a Pupil Message Service running as usual. Could we therefore ask that students come to school fully prepared and aware of any afterschool arrangements. We are only able to pass on urgent messages at this time. Please also note that due to the current restrictions we are not passing on ANY equipment at this time.

▪ **Student Emotional Welfare - COVID-19**

We just wanted to reassure parents/carers that there is lots of work going on in school at the moment to reassure and support students who feel worried or concerned due to COVID-19. Our Heads of House or Deputy Heads of House should be the first point of contact if you or your child has any concerns. Our Behaviour & Welfare Team are also working on a one-to-one basis with any students who are really struggling. Each week we have different themes on the Weekly PowerPoint as well as during our assemblies. This week it has been Mindfulness & Well-being. On our school website in the School Update - COVID-19 Section we also have some well-being advice. [How to support your child if they are feeling anxious about Coronavirus](#). Parents/carers may find it useful to look at this if they are concerned about their child.

▪ **Ski Trip 2021 - CANCELLED**

Unfortunately, because of the current pandemic the Ski Trip for 2021 has now been cancelled. Parents/carers should not make any more payments and refunds will follow as soon as possible.

- **Class of 2020 PROM - CANCELLED**

Unfortunately, due to the most recent Government restrictions regarding social distancing we are having to make the decision to cancel the Prom planned for Friday 9th October 2020. As we cannot predict when these restrictions will be lifted, we will not be rescheduling this event but will be issuing full refunds for the tickets.

We will now begin the process of issuing refunds. As students have been off rolled from our ParentPay system refunds will be issued in the form of cheques. Please confirm your payee details by emailing churst@dormston.dudley.sch.uk by Friday 18th September 2020, if we do not receive confirmation we will issue cheques to the main contact on your child's records.

We would like to thank you for your patience whilst we make the necessary arrangements for these refunds. A letter has been sent out to those parents/carers whose child was attending the Prom today.

- **Cancelled Trips/Events - Refund Arrangements**

We are currently in the process of arranging refunds for a number of cancelled trips/events which include this year's New York Trip, our Year 11 Prom and next year's Ski Trip. We would like to ask that you bear with us during this time, we will process the refunds as quickly as possible. We would like to thank you for your patience whilst we make the necessary arrangements for these refunds.

- **School Menu**

Please be aware that due to COVID-19 restrictions there will be no hot food available to students. We are therefore not following the set 3 weekly menu that is currently on our website. Food options are just 'grab and go'.