

Parental Communication & Engagement



☎ 01384 816395 ✉ info@dormston.dudley.sch.uk 🐦 @DormstonSch 🌐 <http://www.dormston.dudley.sch.uk>

Message from Head Teacher

I hope this Bulletin finds you and your family safe and well. Although we were all in lockdown over the Easter break I do hope you were able to enjoy the sunshine and spend some quality time with family. I know my garden has been my life-line and I expect that there are lots of gardens up and down the country that are now very well attended!

The staff are working hard to set the right amount of work for students but as I'm sure you will appreciate setting work for a class of children from a distance is a very difficult task. I received some emails from students worried that they are struggling with the amount, particularly as many households only have one computer or laptop. I want all students to know that as long as they are trying their best we will be very happy. We know that all students are working at different paces and we will ensure when we return to school that every student has a chance to catch up. Our original intention hasn't changed – we will provide work that enables students to maintain subject knowledge and positive study habits; to help provide some consistency and normality during this unsettling time; and importantly, to allow them to keep in touch with our school community. We appreciate your patience and encouragement as we refine the way we are working. Many of us have children learning at home too, and we recognise the challenges that you are facing. I would like to send a huge and heartfelt well done to the students who are managing to complete work, as it requires a great deal of maturity and resilience, and my thanks to you for supporting them so well. Please assure your children that they will not get into any trouble if they can't complete all the work we set for them.

Many parents have been sending us photos of students really getting stuck in to home learning and we love receiving your feedback. I would like to share with you a photo sent to me from Mr Jones in our Science department. One of our fantastic students had continued with some of the experiments taught in our 'Peaky Blinders' extra-curricular club and wanted to show off the results.

DIY Lava Lamps

You will need:

- Vegetable/sunflower oil
- Vinegar
- Food colouring
- Bicarbonate of soda
- Tall glass or bottle
- Spoon
- Small cup

1. Add three spoons of bicarbonate of soda into the tall glass or bottle.

2. Fill two thirds of the container with oil – but don't mix!

3. In the small cup, add some vinegar and several drops of food colouring.

4. Slowly add drops of your coloured vinegar into your oil/bicarb mixture and watch your lava lamp come to life!

Why not try adding different colours to your lava lamp?

THE SCIENCE

Oil and vinegar do not have the same density. The heavier something is for its size, the more dense it is. Vinegar is more dense than this type of oil – that's why it sinks to the bottom of the container.

Once the vinegar touches the bottom of the container, it reacts with the bicarb. This chemical reaction creates bubbling carbon dioxide which rises – these are the bubbles you see within the container.

@MrsBprSTEM



Please keep on sending in your photos of Dormston students demonstrating our core values; Effort, Knowledge, Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.

Don't forget to look out for my Head Teacher's Weekly Blog on our website under Parents > Head Teacher's Weekly Blog.



Head Teacher

Emails/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.

- Head Teacher's Weekly Blog - Friday 3 April 2020 (on website only under Parents > Head Teacher's Weekly Blog).
- Head Teacher's Weekly Blog - Friday 24 April 2020 (on website only under Parents > Head Teacher's Weekly Blog);
- HoH Keeping in Touch Email to Students (includes Weekly PowerPoint) - Monday 20 April 2020;
- Form Tutor Fortnightly Keeping in Touch Email to Students - Monday 20 April 2020;
- Year 7 - 10 Curriculum Briefing - Wednesday 22 April 2020;
- Year 11 Update Letter - Wednesday 22 April 2020;
- Year 9 & 10 New York Trip Update Letter - Wednesday 22 April 2020;
- Year 9 & 10 DofE Update Letter - Wednesday 22 April 2020;
- Year 11 Prom Update Letter - Friday 24 April 2020.

General Reminders/Updates

Free School Meal Vouchers Update

As per the government guidelines we will now be issuing vouchers for FSM students via the online system Edenred. Parents/carers will receive an email each week from Edenred with a link to activate a voucher from a supermarket of choice from; Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons, Waitrose, Marks and Spencer's or Tesco. Any parents/carers who do not have an email address will receive a vouchers for Asda through the post. The vouchers are valued at £15 per child, per week. These will be issued until further notice. If you are having any difficulties with these please refer to the help page on Edenred in the first instance https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DfE_FreeSchoolMeals_ParentCarerFAQs.pdf, If you are still struggling please contact pgamble@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

ParentPay Refunds Update

Due to the significant increase in refund requests due to cancelled trips, ParentPay introduced a new refund procedure to ensure sufficient funds were in place before schools could process their refunds. ParentPay have experienced problems in locating the funds which were transferred to them, which has delayed the process. Only in the last couple of days have we started to receive some notifications of funds being located/processed to our account. As soon as the money has been settled, the system will enable us to process the refunds back to your ParentPay account. Once again, we completely understand the importance of these refunds in current circumstances and apologise for these unforeseen delays.

Parent/Pupil Reading Group Update

Our chosen book this year was 'A Monster Calls' by Patrick Ness. We were due to a meet up to discuss the book and watch the film version. Luckily the film was recently shown on BBC One and is now available to watch on iplayer: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000h4jj> Please watch it if you get the chance!