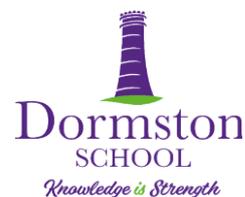


Parental Communication & Engagement



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

Message from Head Teacher

I hope you and your family are all safe, well and happy. I also hope that you managed to enjoy the sunshine over the half term break. Let's hope we get some of the sun back to help us through the summer months as we emerge from lockdown.

As I am sure you can imagine it's a very busy time in school at the moment. The government advice regarding schools re-opening changes weekly and sometimes daily and we are currently finalising plans for the safe and gradual return of our Year 10 students.

If you have a child in Year 10 you will today be receiving a very extensive letter explain how we intend to re-open safely. I would urge you to read the letter carefully so that you can make an informed choice as to whether you send your child back. We will be holding face to face meetings for Year 10 students starting 15 June 2020 and all students who have requested this will receive an appointment day and time early next week. We intend to open the school for Year 10 students to return to some lessons on W/C 29 June 2020. It is very important to note that, following Government guidance, we are only inviting a quarter of the Year 10 population in at a time and school will look and feel very different.

This obviously means that they will not be spending large amounts of time in school but it will provide us with time to review their current learning and help them plan for the weeks ahead. Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 will continue to learn at home completing work set on Go4Schools and in some cases, live lessons that will be timetabled in some subjects. We are in the early days of online lessons so please bear with us as this is all new to us too. I would urge all parents to have a look at the arrangements we are making for Year 10 to give you some idea of what is happening within the school. This letter can be found on the school website shortly.

I do hope the new revised timetable we sent out before half term has eased the pressure on home learning. Whatever schooling you are doing with your children I know so many of you are really doing a fantastic job of keeping children motivated and on track and I think activities like baking, drawing and painting, gardening, car maintenance, painting and decorating to name but a few are often just as beneficial and useful as studying in books and at the computer. It's all about striking the right balance and I really appreciate what you are doing within your households. As I've always said, I just want all students to try their best without putting unnecessary pressure on themselves. All students learn at different rates and we will do our level best to ensure every child makes progress when we eventually get back to normal.

Thank you to all parents for your continued support, patience and the many encouraging emails we have received. It's always nice to hear how our Dormston community is getting on as we really do miss all of our students. (We really can't wait for the day when you can hand your children back to us so we can do our jobs in the classroom!) We will shortly be sending out certificates and our very special core value stripes to some

students who have been showing EFFORT, RESPONSIBILITY and RESILIENCE during lockdown. We have also just picked our winners of the competition to design the front cover of next year's student planners. We had some great entries and I am sure you will be so impressed with our winners' designs when you see them. The two designs chosen really reflect what Dormston is all about!

Have a great week.



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.

- Year 7 - 10 Parent Update Letter - Tuesday 19 May 2020;
- Head Teacher's Weekly Blog - Friday 22 May 2020 (on website only under Parents > Head Teacher's Weekly Blog).
- Year 9 Options Letter - Friday 22 May 2020 (not on website);
- Year 7 -10 Curriculum Briefing - Monday 1 June 2020;
- HoH Keeping in Touch Email to Students (includes Weekly PowerPoint) - Monday 1 June 2020;
- Form Tutor Phone Calls Home - Taking place WC 1 June to WC 8 June 2020;
- New York Trip Update Letter - 2 June 2020;
- Year 11 Letter & Destination Sheet - 2 June 2020;
- Head Teacher's Weekly Blog - Friday 5 June 2020 (on website under Parents > Head Teacher's Weekly Blog).
- Year 10 Return to School Arrangements Letter - 5 June 2020.

General Updates

PLC Book Borrowing Service *NEW

We are aware that it may be difficult for some students to obtain books to read for pleasure. Please can parents and/or students email our PLC Manager Mrs Ellsmore sellsmore@dormston.dudley.sch.uk if this is the case so that she can do her best to get books sent out in the post. Please also encourage your child to email Mrs Ellsmore with any book requests or to ask for suggestions of what to read so that these too can be sent out.

Summer Reading

At the beginning of July we will launch our annual Dormston School PLC Summer Reading Challenge designed to motivate and encourage our students to read as much as they can particularly during the long holiday break when their reading skills can dip so dramatically if they don't.

In addition, The Reading Agency's Summer Reading Challenge, which started this week, may be of interest too. Although aimed primarily for young people aged 4 - 11 years, this engaging and fun reading opportunity is open to all young people who can now join via the link below.

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>

A great start to help 'kick off' summer reading might be with The Literacy Trust who have teamed up with Premier League Primary Stars to bring you their football-themed author of the week... Dan Freedman! To find out more about Dan, the author behind the *Jamie Johnson* football novels, and to **download the first book** in the series completely free please go to the link below.

There is also the chance to enter a very special Premier League challenge.

Incidentally, Dan Freedman was winner of our Dudley Children's Book Award this year with his book 'Unstoppable'. It's a fabulous read for ages 11 upwards and has been hugely popular in school.

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/family-zone/9-12/dan-freedman-football-challenge/>

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Ellsmore who is here to help with everything and anything to do with reading for pleasure.

N.B: Please note that parents/carers are fully responsible for reading the T&C for any of these promotions/downloads/competitions and for signing up with their child so they know exactly what their child might access or be able to post online.

Message from Dudley Performing Arts

Come and join in the fun of the Dudley Performing Arts Virtual Summer Festival by taking part in our vocal montage video. All you need to do is come along to an online rehearsal where our vocal staff will teach you how to sing Rocking All Over the World. You will be accompanied by a full orchestra and backing singers. There will be opportunities to sing solo or if you prefer just be part of the chorus with everyone else. After a few rehearsals we'd like you to film yourself singing your part, and this will be your chance to rock it out and shine. Once all the videos are sent in, the film crew will work their magic and produce a montage film of the song which will be released at our Virtual Festival on the DPA YouTube channel on 5 July 2020.

If you fancy the rock'n roll challenge all you have to do is contact dpa.cs@dudley.gov.uk telling us that you would like to come to the online rehearsal on Wednesday 10 June at 6.00pm.

Prom Update

As you are aware, we have booked Class of 2020 Prom. The date for this is **Friday October 9th 2020** and the venue is Grand Station Wolverhampton. However, as yet we have not sold enough tickets to make this viable. If you would like to join us **please ensure you have bought your ticket by 12th June 2020** via parentpay. A few of you have asked about what will happen if the current restrictions have not been lifted by then. Please be aware, if the event is unable to go ahead due to the social distancing still being in place we will look for a timely postponement. If this is not a viable option and the Prom is unable to proceed we will reimburse monies paid for tickets.

ParentPay Update

We are still waiting for further advice regarding the cancellation of Disneyland Paris in July, however we are now at a point where we can refund any monies paid above the original £50 deposit. ParentPay now has a new refund procedure to ensure sufficient funds are in place before schools can process their refunds. As soon as

the money has been settled, the system will enable us to process the refunds back to your ParentPay account. These will be processed over the next couple of weeks. If you paid for the trip via Paypoint you should have been emailed to confirm payee details so that a cheque refund can be arranged. Please bear with us as we await further information regarding the final refund.

Useful Links

These links may be useful for parents. The Young Minds link also contains a section for parents who have children who are going out without their permission ("What can I do if my child won't stay home?")

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/6-ways-parents-can-support-their-kids-through-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/63289789/living-through-lockdown-a-5-point-plan-to-support-yourself-emotionally>

<https://www.griefrecoverymethod.co.uk/blog/talking-to-children-about-coronavirus/>