



04.11.2022

## Autumn 2 Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you managed to enjoy the half term break, and make the most of the few warm and sunny days we were fortunate to benefit from.

Thank you for those of you able to attend parents evenings during the last week of half term. It was great to have so many people attend. Looking at the numbers of you booking virtual meetings this time, I think we will reduce the number of virtual slots we offer at the Spring term sessions, with more face to face appointments. This in the first time since Covid began that the majority of parents and carers chose to book in person meetings, so we will adapt this moving forwards.

Thank you too, to those of you who completed the Autumn Term Parent and Carer Survey. We ended up with just under 25% of families responding to the survey and I will feedback responses later in this newsletter.

It was lovely to also welcome 225 parents and carers into school for our first parent café since late 2019! It's always very busy getting everyone checked off safely and in school, but a huge thank you for your patience—we've thought of a couple of ways to streamline this further for next time.

If you do have any questions or queries, please do contact the school office who will pass these on to the staff who will get back to you. You can contact the office via our Iris Reach (MyEd) messaging app, via email using [office@derehamjunior.dneat.org](mailto:office@derehamjunior.dneat.org) or via telephone 01362 693876. Please only pop in if it is really needed, as it helps to avoid long queues at the start at end of the day at the office.

### School Uniform—Thank you

Many thanks to all of the families who have donated unwanted uniform. There are far too many to mention individually, but a HUGE **thank you** nonetheless! As a result of your generosity, we currently have a number of second-hand items that are available to those that find themselves short of uniform and not in a position to buy any items at this time.

We are still accepting donations, so if you do have anything to donate, please do pop in to the office or send them in with your child. Once again, many thanks to all who have helped.

Most of our stock is cardigans and sweatshirts and we have lots of black sweatshirts/hoodies for PE days. We do have other items, but these are far more limited.

If you find yourself in this position, please speak to someone from reception or drop us a message on MyEd Parent app and we will see what we can do.

### Attendance

We know the importance of children attending school regularly and on time and as such have high expectations of pupil attendance. Our whole school target is 97% and although this is aspirational, it really is achievable. Our gates **close** at 8.55am as this is when registers are taken. If you see us closing the gate when you drive in, this is not to be difficult, but if the children come in through the gate late, they don't make it in to class, so staff mark them as absent, and as they haven't been in via the office, the office don't know they are here and teachers think they have come in via the office. It's probably easiest if you aim for your child to be through the gate by about 8.50am.



### Parent and Carer Survey—Autumn 2022

We had just 82 responses to this survey, which is just 25% of our families, but a big thank you to those who found the time to complete this. It really doesn't take very long and we are genuinely interested in your feedback. Overall, those who responded seemed generally happy with the school and I will summarise some information below.

96% of responses felt their children were happy in school and 97% felt their child was safe in school. There were just 3 responses which disagreed with these. If you have any worries about your child being happy, or the safety of your child in school, please do speak with us, if we are aware of problems, we will always work with you to resolve these.

There were 8 negative responses to 'bullying' and how it is dealt with in school. We did host an evening for parents to come and find out more about our behaviour policy and how we support behaviour in our school, but sadly only 5 people attended the session. We have experienced a number of reports of bullying from parents this year where there has been a single fall out or incident in school. This is not bullying. It is potentially poor behaviour and does need addressing, which we are happy to do, but bullying is something which is repeated and over a period of time. Again, if school are not aware of issues, we will struggle to resolve them. You should contact the class teacher in the first instance, but we log all reports and track this very carefully. Bullying can happen in any school, at any time and if we know about the issues, we work hard with children and families to resolve such problems.

There was lots of really positive feedback about strengths of our school—thank you for taking the time to share these with us, it is really good to hear what you think is going well. The most frequent responses were linked to the following: Communication in the school being effective, staff caring about the children, a sense of community/people being friendly and approachable, children being happy, staff resolving problems raised.

In terms of comments about what we could improve on these were varied and harder to find trends.

'More regular communication about how my child is getting on' came up a few times, some parents asking for a communication book or dojo so they know how their child is getting on. We simply couldn't have a book for every child in the school and expect this to be written in every day—the teachers and TAs are working with the children all day. However, we will think about whether there is something further we can do to support this area.

'Have a PTA' - we have tried, since Covid and with no success to build a Friends of Dereham Junior'. This wouldn't involve huge commitments, people could simply do what they could do. However, every time a meeting or plea has been sent out response has been almost nothing. If you would be interested in supporting fundraising and additional events for our children, then please let us know.

'More notice of events' We do now send out a half termly 'dates' calendar to you. This is sent electronically and is on our website. We do try to give notice well in advance to support you in being able to attend or prepare for events.

Extension work for the more able' Our curriculum is progressive and generally work is set so that it increases in challenge and depth as it progresses. As such all children should be stretched and challenged through their learning tasks. If you have any direct concerns, hopefully these were addressed with the class teacher at parents evening.

'Lunch time issues being resolved effectively' we have increased the number of MSAs we have outside and a member of the leadership team, usually Mr Dack is outside for the majority of lunchtimes. This seems to be supporting behaviour, but we will continue to monitor this.

'Open the gates earlier' We open our gates are earlier than most schools, opening our gates at 8.40am. We have a daily breakfast club from 8am each day, that any pupils can book to attend. Contact the office if you need more information.