



“Enriching generations to serve and flourish.”

Ditton CE Junior School Newsletter – 5th February 2021

This short weekly newsletter aims to maintain a contact for you with school. I can see that our use of Class Dojo and Kidblog is also allowing you that contact which is great. I will write after half term about our actions in response to the last parent survey and a new one will go out later in term 4. Sometime in March we hope to go live with our new improved website too!

We are sending out an update on requests for places for **Critical workers’ children and vulnerable children**. We remain focused on ensuring safety for our staff and children in school. As a consequence of that, at times now, your child may not be on a desk/table alone in the classroom. They will be facing forwards but could be next to others. During the termly fire drill on Wednesday we evacuated our smaller group of children in an extraordinary 1.43 minutes!

Can I say again that we have been **so impressed** with our children’s efforts at home, and you and they deserve great praise. Remember, **live zoom sessions** are for children not for you to quiz the teacher (!), that can be done via year group emails or Dojo.

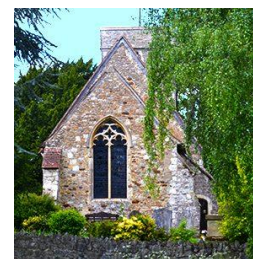


Sadly, one of our excellent teaching assistants, **Mrs McDermott**, is leaving us today. She worked with year 4 this year but is changing career now. From all that I have heard and seen she has been a great support to children and colleagues and a parent here too. I’m sure you will join with us in wishing her every success and we will be keeping in touch. Happy to announce that we have been able to recruit an excellent replacement, **Mrs Thomas**, who has a great range of experience and she will be a great addition to the team at DJS.



This week has been **Children’s Mental Health week** and I want to assure parents that we are always happy to hear from you if you have anxieties about your own children’s emotional health. We may be closed for most children but the work to really set DJS up for greatness and build on its powers has gone on without anyone taking a breath. I can’t list all that work but, with regards to the above, we are looking at introducing new resources to support **resilience and well-being** from next term, and applying for a national award in this area. I am also looking at applying for a **parental partnership award** which will force me/us to keep exploring ways to communicate and relate well to you. In other news we are also reviewing our equipment in school for children and hope to be able to get some new stuff in for next term.

Last thing this week is to draw attention to the fact that I am working with our governing board and staff to re-define **the school’s vision**. I think this will help you, the team and the children to focus on the journey more clearly and I will write to invite your feedback soon. The main changes I propose are to use the bible verse John 10:10 **I have come that they may have life and live it to the full**. I want all the team and the children focused on exploring full lives. In addition I will change the **bible stories** we use to underpin our four key values AND, as one child spotted this week, one of those values has changed from Courage to **Perseverance**. The others are **Responsibility, Respect and Empathy**.



Richard Sutton-Smith