



*"To have life and live it to the full."*  
Ditton Junior Newsletter – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Hello all! It is hard to believe that we are well into the month of May, yet still needing coats for outside. In school, we are working hard together (staff and pupils alike) to ensure that **teaching and learning** at Ditton continues to go from strength to strength. Last week, I looked at maths and English books across the school and was delighted to see how well the children have settled back into school. The fact that the children are accessing the learning at the appropriate level for their year group shows that, despite the scaremongering in the press, our pupils are quickly closing any gaps caused by lockdowns and we are confident they will be fully prepared for the next step in their education, whether that is with us or in Year Seven in their new schools.

As parents, you can take a large amount of credit for these successes. The support you gave to your children during lockdown (and we know it was challenging at times!) has meant that there are far fewer gaps in their learning than anticipated. **Well done and thank you!**

My hope is that one positive by-product of the pandemic is a strengthened relationship with families and more links between learning at home and at school. To that end, today you will be receiving a copy of our new **Homework Policy** which is being phased into school practice. I welcome your comments or questions via email or Class Dojo and thank you in advance for the continued support for your child's learning.



Today we said 'farewell' to the ever-smiling **Mrs Bryant**. We wish her well in her new role with the NHS and will miss her dreadfully. We have been successful in recruiting a new member of our **office team** and will tell you more about them soon. In the meantime, we are lucky to have an excellent temporary school secretary, Mrs Newman who will be happy to help you.

**Forest School** inspired learning has taken off well this week, with Years 3 and 4 enjoying their time learning outdoors. The children have been excited to see the abundance of wildlife that inhabits our grounds. It has been great to see the children carrying on that love of nature and the outdoors in their play at break and lunchtime too. We would love to have a water source in the outdoor area – if anyone has an old **water butt** that they no longer need we would be very grateful for it!



#### **PICK UP AND DROP OFF TIMES**

The **pick-up** system is working very efficiently and so we would like to move towards more normal timings. We do still need two time slots (until government guidance changes) but they can be much closer together.

From Monday timings will be:

**3:10pm – years 3 & 6**

**3:15pm – years 4 & 5**

We would also like to edge towards 'normal' with drop off in the morning too. The window for dropping off your children will be

**8:40am – 8:50am for all year groups.**

The gate will be opened at **8:30am** for pupils that need to be in school at that time. However, the classroom doors will not open until 8:40am. Children who arrive before 8:40am will be **supervised by members of staff** on the playground (in their bubble's area) until the classroom doors open. This will give our teachers and teaching assistants their liaison time back! Because of current restrictions, we cannot allow parents to wait on the playground for these 10 minutes so, if your child needs you to bring them onto the school grounds, you will need to wait until 8:40am when the children on the playground will be going in.

Please be aware that children should not be arriving at the gate before 8:30am as there is no one to supervise them on the pavement by the busy road.

Our values focus for the next couple of weeks is **RESPECT** – more specifically good manners.

*Luke 6:31 And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.*

We have been spotting and recognising children who are showing good manners. We have been modelling greeting each other politely, letting other people through the door and trying really hard to remember to say please and thank you. It was lovely to hear so many children saying 'thank you' to Mrs Bartholomew in the morning when they cross the road! One child said today that "being happy and friendly to others makes you feel happy which spreads and makes everyone happy" or as is written in *Romans 12:10 Love one another warmly as Christian brothers and sisters, and be eager to show respect for one another.*

Miss Debbie Johnson – Interim Headteacher