



“That they may have life and live it to the full.”

## Ditton CE Juniors Newsletter – February 25<sup>th</sup>

### HEAD LINES

Great to see everyone back after the break. I hope it was good for you all. Mine was terrible and then got worse with no power from Friday morning until Monday!! You should have received a **letter** from Dr Peter Gregory, our Chair of the IEB this morning outlining their progress towards mapping the **school's future** organization and leadership. Peter will be available next week if you have any questions (see letter) or feel free to send to me via the school office.

It was great to begin our plans to open up again by **getting parents in** this week to look at books before the parents' evenings next week. It is our intention to keep moving forwards on this front and we hope to be able to invite you in to worship assemblies soon as a next step. However, we are, for now, asking that you mask up for parents' evenings as there will be higher numbers of adults in school at those times.

### BEHIND THE SCENES

The work going on remains pretty intensive. I'm not totally Dittonized so I hope you will trust me, given all my time elsewhere, when I say that **the team** here have given me their all and matched my expectations. For example, all of the **senior leaders** reported back to Peter and the Interim Executive Board at the end of term and received a great deal of praise. They in turn praised the rest of the staff for the work they do to support this progress. **The IEB** are very experienced governors and they felt we had moved through **several gears** in a very short space of time. We've updated our week by week action plan (I call it our battleplan) to keep up the pace too. We've also reviewed our **behaviour and anti-bullying policies** and they are now **on the website** for you to access. In addition we are continuing to add links and guidance under the **Signposts2Support** pages and there's some good new stuff there regarding **online safety**. There's also things elsewhere under the **Curriculum tab** so do have a look if you have a moment.

Our main focus for our teaching is still on how we review or **recap learning** with our classes and how positively our children are engaging with their learning - their **learning behaviours and attitudes**. Recent visitors have commented very positively on **exemplary behaviour** they saw around school so we have the foundations to ensure every child is switched on to learning. The acid test for us at the moment is to get a **consistency** between us all in every aspect of our work because that drives improvement. That doesn't mean a Vladimir Putin run school but it is the bit that can slip when leadership goes through a lot of changes, so it is our focus this term.

The following children have been nominated by their class teacher for the weekly flourishing awards.

Week ending 11<sup>th</sup> February – 3JC Elliot W, 3KS Tate M, 4LN – Emy L, 4SM – River S, 5KM – Edward D, 5HS – Lawson B, 6AB – Lily D, 6MG – Maybelle Y

Week ending 25<sup>th</sup> February – 3JC – Elliot W, 3KS Ella B, 4LN Cohen W, 4SM Mia C, 5HS James K, 5KM Harry S, 6AB Max E, 6MG James W



I didn't receive many responses to my questions about anything else you want on the website but we will continue to try to add new stuff. There's a good start there with information around **Special Needs**, in response to your comments, so check that out if you have concerns. After I've explored it with teachers I want to share my views on the **key values** we teach in each year group and see what you think. I think it will really strengthen our ambitions and expectations for our pocket-sized people here but I'll invite feedback on that soon.



FEEDBACK

## BIG QUESTIONS

As part of our drive to build up **parental engagement** we would like to hear from you regarding clubs. Basically, if you have knowledge of them, how do you think the re-start has gone and do let us know whether there are other clubs you would like us to explore. Send any thoughts that you think we might find useful to [schooloffice@ditton-jun.kent.sch.uk](mailto:schooloffice@ditton-jun.kent.sch.uk). Or drop a note in. I anonymise your responses. Your thoughts are part of our solutions!



Couple of things to flag up. With regard to online safety, and believe me, having had four teenagers I've struggled, we would like to remind parents that most social media sites have minimum age limits. For example, no-one under the age of 16 is technically now meant to be on WhatsApp. Many of us tend to use it for our own families but we would suggest that groups set up between primary school children, without any adult involvement, should not be encouraged by parents. We often have to manage unkindness arising from such groups but there are also obvious risks of people you don't know communicating with your children.

### More thoughts from staff here:

*To me Having life and Living it to the full as a Teacher means passing on the baton in a relay race. The runner before me and the one to follow carry the same value as me.*

*To me Having life and Living it to the full means to find enjoyment in everything you do. Love and cherish friends and family. Always try new things and give 100% to every opportunity.*

*To me Having life and Living it to the full means to maximise all opportunities and experiences; being able to show resilience and perseverance; enjoying life with others you meet along the journey of your life.*

**Jesus said - "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." (John 10:10)**



Richard Sutton-Smith