

Danbury Park Community Primary School

Be wise, be happy, belong!

Newsletter



Website: www.danburypark.essex.sch.uk

1st May 2020

Dear Parents and Children,

Congratulations to the following children who have recently achieved their reading awards:

More news about the Reading Challenge next week!

Certificates will be presented when we return to school.

Keeping in Touch with the Community

I hope you and your families are all well.

As ever there is lots of speculation about when and how schools will reopen – at this time, we still know no more than you! The teachers appreciate all that you are doing at home during this challenging time and we know that the longer it continues, the harder it gets, especially if you are also trying to work from home. Some of our teachers have young families and they too are trying to juggle work and educating their own children! All we want is to give you enough activities and ideas to keep the children occupied. We do not expect you to be teachers and we know that there will be a lot of catching up to do when school returns.

We have been thinking about the people in our community and both Mrs Moulding, Parent Governor, and Mrs Anstee, LSA and Danbury Parish Councillor have been thinking about what school could do to support. We know that there are people self-isolating and shielding and who may be missing contact with others. Whilst the Danbury Coronavirus Volunteer Group is doing a great job looking out for individuals, we thought that it would be a great idea if the children from Danbury Park School made drawings and cards and wrote letters to brighten their day. These could be done on the computer or by hand and then either e-mailed to the school (admin@danburypark.essex.sch.uk) and we would print them off or left at the school office in a dedicated box. The children could do this independently to give you a rest! To safeguard the children we would encourage them to use the school's address if writing a letter and only give their first name and class and also not to give away personal details. A member of staff would check the cards and letters before passing them on to the Volunteer Group for distribution to members of our community. We also have some members of staff and governors self-isolating and I know that they would love to hear from the children. We will encourage the recipients to write back c/o the school and then we will share these personally with the children and in the newsletter.

Mrs Anstee and I are also keen to develop these links between our school and our community further in the future. We have plenty of time to develop our ideas and this is something we would like to work on with the School Council when we return. We hope that after this crisis, we will be more appreciative of others and make time to be more involved in caring for our community. We think that this is an opportunity for something good to come from something so bad.

Please stay safe and support each other.

Mental Health and Well-being

For some children the enormity of this crisis is going to be difficult for them and you as parents to manage. Below are some ideas of how you can support your children.

Top Tips for Parents

Talk to your children about what is happening and reassure them. They need to feel safe and secure in order to learn. And they need plenty of opportunities to talk, listen and play.

Establishing a routine is very important – but don't make it too rigorous. Make it about actions rather than time. Getting up slightly later is ok as long as children get dressed, have breakfast and clean their teeth, for example. And build in plenty of breaks – this is about fulfilling your child's needs and your own. Find something you want to do and build in self-care, downtime and a bit of boredom. It is that element of nothingness which enables creativity.

Have someone to talk to – connect with people. It is more important than ever before: whether on the phone, text, *WhatsApp* or *Facetime*, that connection will keep you sane and grounded – and give you some perspective on things that went well or badly.

Exercise – whatever that looks like, it will make you feel better.

Don't be too hard on yourself. Some days are better than others but try to look at it as a whole. Don't have unrealistic expectations of yourself or others – and give people time when they need it. It is more exhausting being at home and doing stuff online.

Try to change your mind set from thinking about all the things you can't do, to the opportunities that you do have – from tidying that cupboard, reading that book, to painting a mural on the fence. Small, achievable targets give satisfaction – and that is something to consider with homework. Think about the attention span of the child involved – 10 to 15 minutes of Maths is achievable. A prolonged period may not be. Even as adults we only tend to work in 30-minute bursts.

Try to separate the work space from the 'chill' space but remember learning is not just about English and maths – everyday life and its challenges can be a learning experience. Cooking, gardening or playing games for example, are all fun ways to learn – and can be used to develop key skills like reading, tables and division. The biggest learning curve for children can be having to wait for things. Having to plan and think a bit more and finding that not everything can be immediate is a great learning experience. Why not have discussions every so often around what they think they have learnt this week – and encourage children to keep a 'lockdown scrapbook' (perhaps online) to write about their activities? For older children you may just need to be a sounding board – in order to help them crystallize their project work, for example. Remember you don't need to solve their problems – you just have to listen. And encourage your teenagers to have conversations about things like the effect of the crisis on the economy going forward.

<https://courses.aclessex.com/AvailableCoursesList.Asp?COL=NameDisplay&SRT=ASC>

Little Havens

Little Havens would like to offer families the use of their garden if this would help to meet a need in a time of crisis or will help de-escalate a situation that can be improved by spending some time away from the family home.

The government has produced advice for parents on [COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#) and also an information leaflet on [Covid-19 - an easy read - looking after your feelings and body](#) which you may find useful.

Early Years Update

Last week we told you about our plans to rejuvenate the EYFS outdoor and we have been inundated with offers of help and materials. We are now pulling these together into a cohesive plan to create permanent zoned areas related to each of the different areas of learning - as well as places to just have fun and rest.

We would like to say a big thank you to the Dudley family who have offered to build the sandpit, some giant weighing scales and a new role play centre. This will certainly get us well on the way.



Mrs Gooding is working on the sensory garden and we have been promised lots of tyres which we will recycle as planters. So that the children can access this area all year round, we would like to put down some tough weed suppressant membrane and then some gravel. We also want to create additional pathways to the different areas so we want to extend the bark covered paths. If you know of anywhere where we could source these items (at a reasonable price), please let the school office know!

We still have lots of other ideas including creating zones for construction, music and water play and once we have put our plan together, we will be taking you up on your offers. It's not too late to help though, so please let us know if you have a hidden talent.



At this time, you may be tidying your houses and gardens, please hold on to any toys that you think we could use but also fabrics and craft materials. We are particularly looking for some fabric (maybe old curtains) to recover some little chairs in the infant library area and some herbs and plants for the sensory garden.

Each week we will keep you updated with our progress!

Poetry Competition

From last week you may remember that Mrs Anstee, one of our Learning Support Assistants, who works across the school, and is a member of Danbury Parish Council, is a published author. She has shared her work with children in school and she regularly contributes to the local *Danbury Contact* magazine.

She sent them one of her poems to try to brighten these days. The magazine printed her poem and have now launched their own poetry competition. We thought that the children, and perhaps parents, might like to get involved. It could be about the current situation but could also reflect a special interest, place or nature.

If you do send *Danbury Contact* (details below) a poem, please also send it to your children's class teacher and then we will print them off and compile a book of poems written during this time.

Editors: Jessica Walton and Mary Huntington; Treasurer: Alan Hegner. Contact via danburycontact@gmail.com and danburycontact.treasurer@gmail.com respectively. Church representatives: David Whiteing (URC) ; John Thompson (Mission); Sean O'Byrne (RC); Caroline Lambert (St. John's).
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Mrs Anstee kindly gave permission for us to print another of her beautiful poems to inspire you

When I'm Happy

By Mrs Anstee

When I'm happy,
Extremely, exceedingly, extraordinarily
happy,
I could tickle the teacher ☺ spin a pizza,
Smile at a spider ☺ tap dance with a tiger,
Splash in puddles ☺ snuggle quick cuddles,
Make friends with foe ☺ paint the world a
rainbow,
Cartwheel the moon ☺ rattle spoons in tune,
Perform hand jives ☺ slap high fives,
Swing through trees ☺ paint faces on knees,
Float on a cloud ☺ whistle too loud,
Reach for a star ☺ banish problems far,
When I'm happy,
Extremely, exceedingly, extraordinarily
happy,
Happy, happy, happy, happy... I could...
Hang from a wall bar ☺ and twang my air
guitar!

© Mrs Anstee

Essex Library Services

We have been asked to pass on the following message which we hope will be useful in helping with reading:

Essex Library Services are bringing our popular rhymetimes, story times and crafts online with videos featuring our library stars from across Essex. Families can enjoy sharing stories, join in with actions and sing along to favourite nursery rhymes, and be inspired to build, craft and create. We'll share these children's videos on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) throughout the week. You'll find links to any [rhymetime and story time](#) or any [craft time](#) you may have missed on our website. For more information [read the full story on our website](#).

Waste Management Project

Although schools are not functioning as normal at this moment in time, we are still liaising with Essex County Council regarding our project to make the school more energy efficient and sustainable.

This week contractors arrived on site to start the next phase of installing gas into the school, decommissioning the old oil fuelled boiler and getting the new boiler in place.

We also have contractors coming in next week to carry out a survey of the roof to establish the feasibility of installing solar panels. This is part of a wider scale project funded through ECC.

Mr Lawday, the school caretaker, is spending his time carrying out outstanding maintenance including clearing out the drains to improve the efficiency of the new system, although let's hope that we do not have the prolonged rains again that we had in February and March, which caused so many problem nationwide!

When the children return, we can then look again at our use of plastic in school and how we can make more use of recycling.

Safeguarding

The THINKUKNOW website has been updated with more support for families. As the children are probably using more technology and going online more frequently, it is important that parents regularly talk about how children should keep themselves safe and what to do if they feel unhappy about anything.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>



Now that we have launched Google Classrooms, please remind the children about the Acceptable Use Agreement that is signed when children start Danbury Park School. A copy is included at the bottom of this newsletter. Please note that this is scheduled for review and update this term.

Let's work together to keep the children safe!

Danbury Food Bank

We have been informed that there is now a Food Bank operating in Danbury organised jointly by The Mission and the Danbury Coronavirus Volunteer group. The Food Bank is available to anyone who is currently struggling and families do not need any “official” referral. Donations have generously been made by local residents and businesses.

Anyone can use this facility and it will be in the strictest confidence. Just phone the Danbury Coronavirus Volunteer Helpline, who will pass on details to the Food Bank on 07395 904761 or 07752 261274.

Yours sincerely

Carol Gooding
Headteacher

Danbury Park Community Primary School

Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement and eSafety Rules

ICT including the internet, e-mail and mobile technologies, etc has become an important part of learning in our school. We expect all children to be safe and responsible when using any ICT.

If you have any concerns or would like some explanation please contact the Headteacher. This Acceptable Use Agreement is a summary of our eSafety Policy which is available from the School.

- 🔒 I will only use ICT in school for school purposes.
- 🔒 I will only use my class e-mail address or my own school e-mail address when e-mailing.
- 🔒 I will only open e-mail attachments from people I know, or who my teacher has approved.
- 🔒 I will not tell other people my ICT passwords.
- 🔒 I will only open/delete my own files.
- 🔒 I will make sure that all ICT contact with other children and adults is responsible, polite and sensible.
- 🔒 I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be unpleasant or nasty. If I accidentally find anything like this I will tell my teacher immediately.
- 🔒 I will not give out my own details such as my name, phone number or home address.
- 🔒 I will not arrange to meet someone unless this is part of a school project approved by my teacher and a responsible adult comes with me.
- 🔒 I will be responsible for my behaviour when using ICT because I know that these rules are to keep me safe.
- 🔒 I know that my use of ICT can be checked and that my parent/carer contacted if a member of school staff is concerned about my eSafety.