



DOWSON PRIMARY ACADEMY

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9th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year and welcome back to the Spring Term. Although quite mild at the moment, please ensure your children have appropriate coats, hats and gloves etc. according to the weather to make sure they are dry and warm at playtimes. Remember that they can wear a plain navy tracksuit (or one with the Dowson logo from either of our suppliers) as part of their p.e. kit for outdoors. Please label everything with their names too – lost property continues to overflow!

The start of term welcomes our new Assistant Headteacher, responsible for Special Educational Needs and Pastoral Care, Rachel Douse. The children met Mrs Douse in assembly this morning and are looking forward to seeing her in their classrooms and showing off their learning. You'll be able to say a warm hello to Mrs Douse on the playgrounds in the mornings and some of you will of course meet her regarding your children over the coming weeks.

You may have noticed that the draft term dates for the academic year 2023-24 have been published and can be found on the school website here. Please note that these are always subject to change before being finalised in the summer term. May I remind everyone that holidays in term time are not authorised. Our term dates also note the weeks that are set by the Government for National Tests – SATs in Year 6, Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 and Multiplication Check in Year 4. Please take particular note of these to ensure your child is not absent during these periods of time.

We sent out a leaflet before Christmas to support families with utilising parental controls for You Tube on new devices that may have arrived on Christmas day. In the world of e-safety, it is hard to keep up with the advances in technology and the latest trends as a parent, so I would like to take the opportunity to remind you that the leaflet we sent, and a range of other helpful resources for parents to keep their children safe online, can be found on our website here.

We know that parents have questions about Tik Tok. Despite only emerging in 2016, Tik Tok is now the fastest-growing social media platform around. As a result, understanding how it works and how to use it safely really matters for families. I said in the summer at our transition meetings, we do not want to preach about what you should allow your children to have or not have. However, we do urge you to continually check your child's devices to ensure they are behaving in a safe and respectful way on line. Parentzone is a great place to find a plethora of resources to support you with this. Their article written in collaboration with Tik Tok might help you. You can find it here.

We are currently building up our use of twitter to showcase our school curriculum and pupil's learning with the wider world! This is replacing our school year group blogs on the website. A letter will come to you in the coming days to explain how we will use it and how you can get involved and view and share your children's work. We will be sending a new permissions form out next week, to incorporate this. Let's get tweeting!

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas; as always though, if there is anything you want to tell us or that we can support you with, please let us know.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs K Thornburn
Principal

