



Daresbury Primary School

News

Autumn 2



Principal's Comment

Welcome back – we have all made it through the first half term and I am so proud of the children and families in school. Our attendance has been very good overall and so far we are bucking a lot of trends in schools linked to the ongoing impact of COVID-19. I don't want to test my luck by saying any more at this point!!! A huge thank you to parents for adapting to our staggered starts and ends to the day. Apart from a few hiccups this has worked well and we are keeping the numbers of adults down on our school site. Thank you for sticking to the drop off and pick up times – it is essential that we continue to do this as we move into lockdown once again. Please do not bring your child early (unless this has been agreed) and try to 'drop and go' if your child is in KS1 and can I ask those with children in KS2 to, wherever possible, send your child onto the school site unaccompanied – this will really help to reduce numbers of adults needing to cross or wait on site.

I do need to remind parents however that all children in KS1 – so that is Classes 1, 2 and 3 – should still be accompanied to and collected from their classrooms by an adult. We have a legal duty to ensure we hand over these children into the care of an adult at the end of the school day. As I mentioned in my Seesaw message to classes 2, 4 and 6 earlier this week, we did seem to have had some confusion about morning drop offs which I needed to clarify for those classes with a 9am start time. This start time has not changed. Those children should still be dropped off at 9am so that we can avoid having too many adults on site at 8:45am, As has been the case since September, only those with siblings in a class where the start time is 8:45am can be brought in early and sent into class where they will be given an activity to complete independently until the rest of the class come in at 9am. The only other change I have made this week to try and ease the number of adults waiting around on the playground is that as the children in classes 2, 4 and 6 arrive they should go straight into class rather than waiting to line up. Please do not arrive early to drop off your child before their designated start time – staff are still setting up their classrooms and preparing for the day. If you all decide to come early you are also causing us a problem with the number of adults on site as the 8:45am drop off is still happening. Hope this clarifies things as I know we have had some parents starting to come much earlier and also other panicking that they are now late! It is 9am as always for classes 2, 4 and 6

As may be expected over the first half term we have had several families where children have needed to self isolate whilst waiting for test results and our Home Learning offer has worked well with all children actively engaging with the online activities daily. So far we have not needed to test out our remote learning for a whole class bubble and am keeping everything crossed that this continues. However, I am confident that what we have in place would mean that should this be needed we could move seamlessly to this. I really do thank my staff for all their hard work and efforts in ensuring that they continue to keep Daresbury Primary School a safe and happy place for your children despite all the restrictions. The children have adapted well and have adjusted well to the new normal! As I said in my message just after lockdown was announced, we will continue to be here for you and your children with a smile on our faces, ensuring that school is a secure and happy environment for everyone.

As a school which tries hard to actively promote our values of being Kind, Safe and Ready most of you will know how much charity work we normally do. At this time we have to restrict what can be done safely for everyone which has been hard. We are keen to continue our work in this area and I know Mrs Zuger and the School Council have already shared information on Seesaw and Tapestry about their plans for our first event. I am aware that a letter has come home via email too about our Children in Need celebration which has had to be arranged slightly differently this year as with everything at the moment. Friday, 13th November, will see us celebrating Children in Need. Thank you in advance for all your support and helping us to have this go ahead safely in school 😊



Wednesday 11th November is Remembrance Day and sadly we cannot have our usual poppies for sale in school, although staff will be marking the occasion in each class. For any parents wishing to contribute to the Royal British Legion collection we will organize a bucket collection at morning drop off which we can then safely quarantine and pass on to our local organization. Our two Y6 School council reps, Toby and Hannah, will hopefully have also laid a poppy wreath at the cenotaph at All Saints Church in the village by the time you read this.



I have also agreed a way that Halton Haven can still send in their Christmas Beanies at some point too and will share information about how this will work nearer the time – I know parents are aware of how difficult many charities are finding it financially at this time too. I was delighted to see so many families responding positively on Seesaw and Tapestry to our suggestions about the reverse advent calendar and collecting food to share with your local foodbank - Daresbury Primary families really are kind and help us to model consideration for others both at home and in school so thank you 😊

Teachers are starting now to plan our Christmas activities and performances, which despite COVID-19 we intend to go ahead with and share performances online. We will let parents know as soon as we can regarding costumes and other important information for parents. I am sure all performances will be fabulous, even though at this stage we are all feeling a little anxious about how this will work!

One of the annual events we have held at Christmas has been photographs of the children which Mr Longstaff has taken and sold to fundraise for school and provide some useful Christmas gifts for friends and relatives too. I am delighted that we have found a way to sort this safely and COVID secure, particularly as at the moment we have been unable to have our individual school photographs taken this year. We have arranged for individual photos to be taken in school (parents can choose whether they would prefer a school uniform photo or a Christmas Jumper photo) on the following dates:

Monday 23rd November – KS1 photos

Tuesday 24th November – KS2 photos

Parents will then have a week to order online with no money needing to come into school etc. In order to help this process parents can already pre register via the following link

<https://apertureimage.gotphoto.co.uk/login>

and the access code = MadHatter18695

We have also put a QR code on display in the main office window which some parents may prefer to use



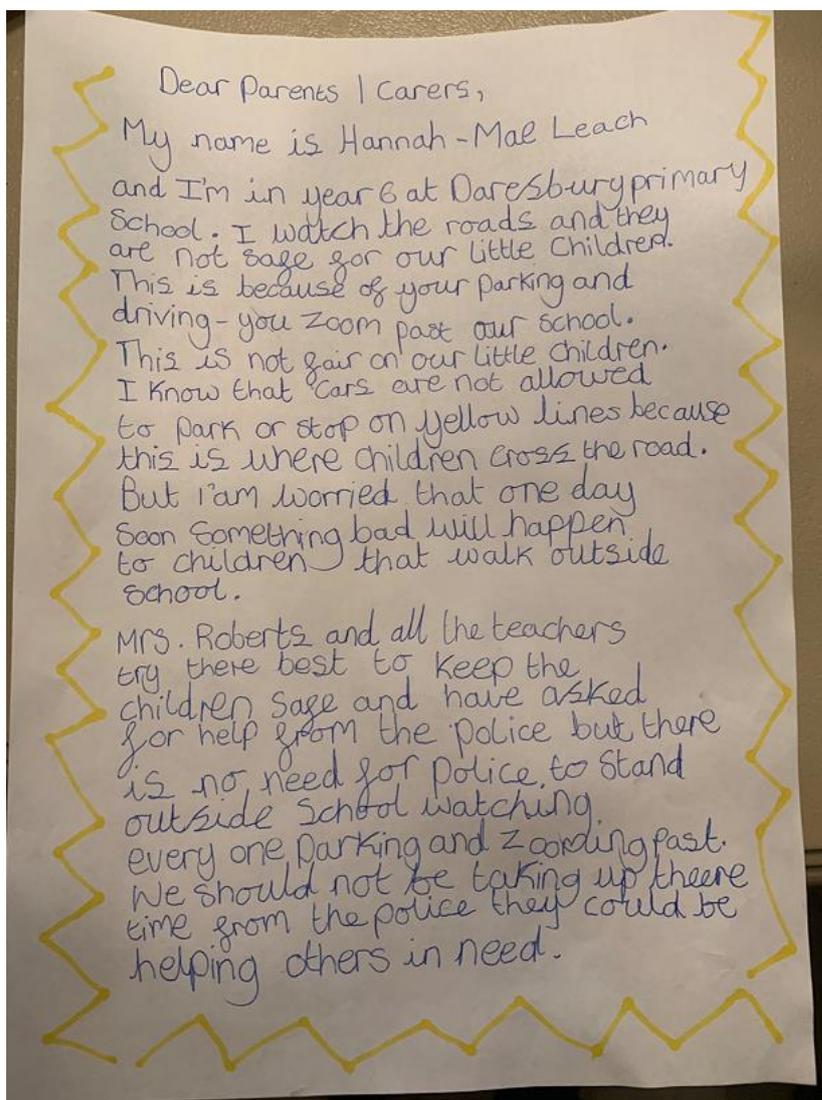
Please check the diary dates for times and information about other events coming up in school too as the lead up to Christmas is packed full and we are trying to ensure things which would normally happen can still go ahead, albeit in a slightly different format. Thank you for your understanding as we approach what is probably the busiest time of the school year and can I remind all parents to check Seesaw and Tapestry really regularly as this will be the prime means of letting you know about things happening in school.

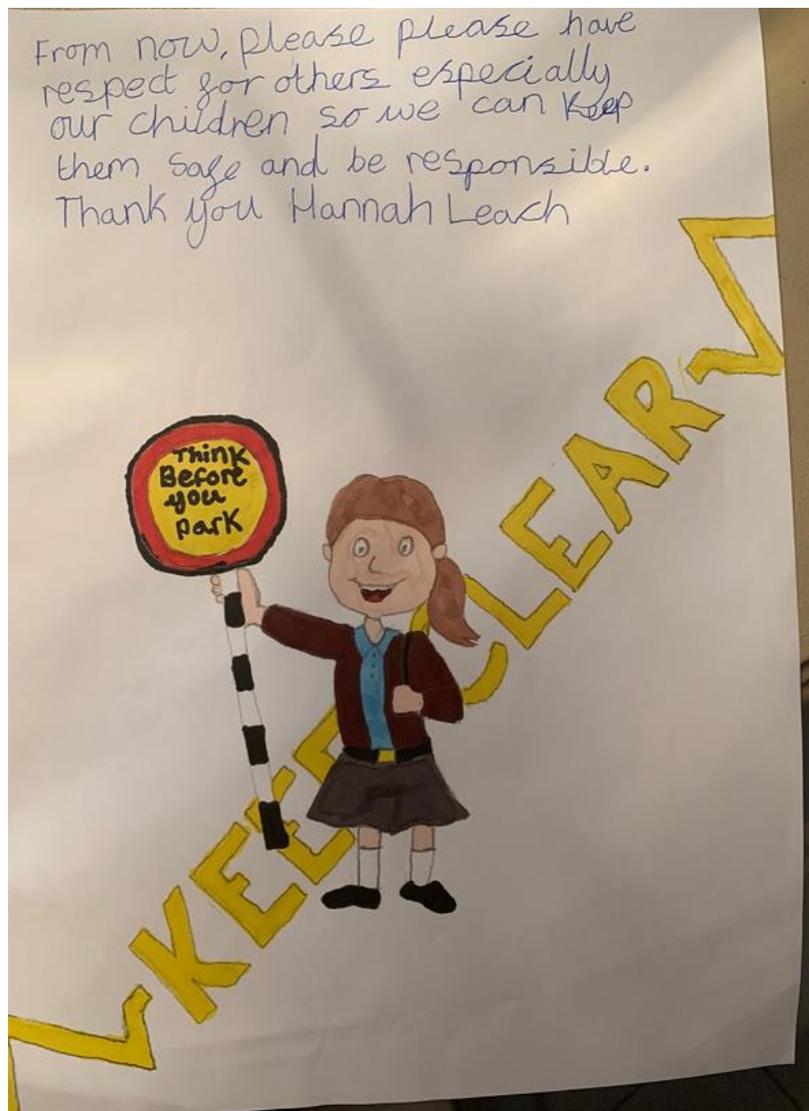
Phones in School

Can I please remind parents that any child bringing a mobile phone in school should have brought a letter in and have obtained permission from Mrs Roberts? We seem to have a few phones creeping into school this week and these are not encouraged or indeed allowed on site! Any that come in should be switched off, handed in to the office and collected at the end of the school day.

Parking

Hannah, one of our Y6 children and a School Council rep has raised some concerns about the parking issues directly with me and produced a heartfelt letter which I wanted to share with you all – I sincerely hope her message will get across in a way that mine seems not to be doing:





As in all schools, parking at the starts and ends of the day continues to be a nightmare. Parents and carers must get fed up of me constantly raising this issue with them but obviously it is essential that we all work together to keep our children safe. As you are aware our PCSOs do regularly attend and will ticket anyone parking illegally and avoid anyone parking in the bus stop, blocking gates and private roads, stopping on the double yellow lines or dropping off on the zigzags. One issue we have had lots of complaints about is children being dropped off either in the disabled bays/on the zigzags or in the bus stop and then parents slowly driving down the road whilst watching their child go up the path and therefore not keeping an eye on the road in front of them.

Please drive carefully and slowly around the school vicinity. Can I also respectfully ask that parents try to observe the voluntary one way system we try to use on Chester Road so that the traffic flows down the road more easily. Please try to make sure you only drive down Chester Rd with the school on your left hand side. This would help to ease the congestion as cars try to pass each other coming up the hill and have to pull into tight spaces or wait for other cars to pass. I am aware also that there have been a couple of occasions where adults have 'lost their tempers' and unfortunately some swearing and aggressive behaviour has come out. Can I ask that all parents try to ensure they set a good example to their children especially when they have them in the car with them!



School Gateway

Please could we ask Parents to keep a close eye on their child's School Gateway account to ensure it remains in credit? We do try to check the accounts weekly and we do allow the accounts to go a little bit overdrawn but it would really assist us, and cut down on the number of individual texts we have to send out, if you could keep a close eye on the account for your child. Unfortunately, if the account goes significantly overdrawn we are not allowed to continue to provide meals for your child until the account is back in credit. Many thanks for your support with this matter.

The School Website – www.daresburyschool.co.uk Please remember to check on here for copies of letters , forms and other valuable information. We are constantly updating this site and adding new information, so please do check it out regularly. A recent addition is the curriculum information now we have moved back to operating a full curriculum this half term – we hope you find this useful.

Medicines in School

Please can I remind parents that the only medicines we can administer are those which have been specifically prescribed for your child **by a doctor** and need administering **4 times** a day. There is a form available on the website which needs completing prior to the medicine coming into school and being stored in the office.



Text/Seesaw/Tapestry Communication

I am aware that we do send out lots of texts and messages via Seesaw/Tapestry but this really helps us cut down the amount of letters we need to send home. I know a phone 'pinging' with texts/alerts can be annoying but can I ask that you do read these carefully. Again, we have lots of calls about things we know we have sent texts/messages and/or emails out about already.

Attendance, Punctuality & Absence

We are really proud of our high levels of attendance and wish to maintain this, and even improve on it. We would ask parents to ensure their children are **always on time** for school and arrive with the rest of their class at their designated start time. We do have a small issue arising again currently with a handful of children arriving slightly late. This can be very disruptive in the classroom and delay registration. Please try to ensure your child is here on time. Just as a point to note, if your child is 5 minutes late each day then across the year they miss just under 16 hours of education! 15 minutes late would mean 47.5 hours missed! Children have Maths, Reading, Spelling and Handwriting activities to do daily during registration and this practice of key skills is essential for good progress. Please ensure your child is in school on time daily. Thank you

All details of Leave of Absence procedures are on the website and requests for holidays will **only** be granted in the exceptional cases listed in the policy. Parents should also remember that children do tend to tell their friends or teachers when they are going away too! In these circumstances the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, even if you ring to say they are ill! School also has now implemented a policy of issuing fines for holidays in term time and I am aware that our new Education Welfare Officer has started to process some of these fines already this year.

Twitter

As you know School has an active Twitter account – so please follow us! Even if you don't have your own Twitter account you can see all our recent tweets via our school link on the home page of our website - Check out our latest news on @Daresburyschool.

PTA update

It's been a hectic first half term and I wanted to give you all an update on our progress so far. Following the AGM in September for the next 12 months the elected executive committee will be; Chair - Rebecca Pritchard, Vice Chair - Julie Sim, Secretary - Abbie Sherwin and Treasurer - Gemma White. Following the AGM the PTA purchased 6 iPads for the school. It is our intention to raise funds to purchase as many iPads and accessories as is possible during this academic year. As you are all more than aware this year poses many challenges for us all and how we can raise money to support our school with limited contact. To support this we have launched our School Lottery. So far we have sold 100 tickets to 58 supporters. The weekly kitty stands at £29. This will increase with more ticket sales, our target is to sell 150 tickets or more if we possibly can. This is a crucial fundraiser for our school and it is the best way to support the school this year. There is also a competition to win a Nintendo Switch bundle if you sign up this month www.yourschoollottery.co.uk search for Daresbury Primary School. Once you've set up your direct debit you will be entered into the draw. There are no limits on the number of tickets you can purchase and also, friends and family can support us too. Please spread the word. **The first draw will take place this Saturday at 8pm** and every week thereafter. Winners will be notified by email. Good luck! Another PTA fundraiser are the Christmas cards. Hopefully each child has brought home their artwork order forms however don't panic we can give you the necessary information if it's got lost. Please contact the office. We are overwhelmed by your support so far with to date 101 mugs and 86 card packs ordered. The DEADLINE to place your orders is Wednesday 11th November. We will endeavour to get these home to you for end November / first few days of December. Items you can purchase are; cards, gift labels, mugs and sacks. The recycle4schools bag collection was a success with 340kg and £150 raised for the school. Hopefully our next one will be in spring 2021, date tbc. We would like to thank the parent who donated a Nintendo Wii to raise funds, we were able to sell it for £50. We also have another parent who runs a business and can give us cash for unwanted vinyl records. If you have any to donate please do not bring to school but contact the PTA on daresburyschoolPTA@gmail.com where we will arrange to safely collect from you. Preloved school uniform sales and donations are ongoing, please contact the office or email us directly if you would like any, all logo items are a suggested minimum donation of £1 per item. Finally; if you are making any online purchases please sign up to www.thegivingmachine.co.uk search for Daresbury Primary School and create an account. This platform then raises money for the school on the back of your purchase and it doesn't cost you anymore! All you have to do is search for the shop you want to purchase from and click on the link to take you to their website. I've raised £5 this month alone without doing much at all. They also have a daily bonus donation we can all claim just by visiting the site each day. So, my apologies for the long update but there has been so much going on. Your support is vital to help us to support the school and their purchases of IT equipment which ultimately benefits all our children. I can't thank you enough, Bec on behalf of the PTA.

Win a Nintendo Switch MEGA BUNDLE

WITH Nintendo Switch Console Neon
Mario Kart Home Circuit DOUBLE PACK (Mario + Luigi)
2 Games: Lego Marvel Heroes 2 and Minecraft
Nintendo Switch case and accessory pack
Mario and Luigi hats

- Help raise essential school funds for IT equipment
- Tickets cost just £1 a week
- Win up to £25,000 nationally
- Local cash prize every week

To start supporting your school, go to:
YourSchoolLottery.co.uk
and search for: **Daresbury Primary School**

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older. Offer ends 19th December 2020. T&Cs apply, see website for details.

Information for Parents

We have a parents' suggestion box on the little table in the entrance area. Please fill in any ideas you may have and add them to the box – it is checked regularly. There is also a comments/suggestion box there for Daresbury Kids Club too.

Please also remember that whilst we cannot currently invite parents into school for our usual Wednesday open classroom slots between 3:15 and 3:45pm to see your child's work and speak to your child's teacher this doesn't mean we aren't available to you via Seesaw/Tapestry. I know many of you do use this as a means of communicating both with your child's teacher and/or Mrs Roberts but we would stress that this is probably the best way to get in touch with any minor concerns or worries at this time. Just be aware that staff don't have time to access this throughout the day when they are teaching so any last minute messages about pick ups etc are still best done by telephone so that we can be sure they are received. Also I would ask that parents are considerate when seeking responses from teachers – they are entitled to their own home lives and I do tell them to switch off their notifications on Seesaw/Tapestry at family times and into the evenings. They will respond but just not immediately 😊

Bug Club

A reminder that all children in Y1 – Y6 have a Bug Club login and can access lots of reading material through this online resource.

Staff News

Sadly at the end of last half term we said goodbye to Mr Beaumont – I know many parents enjoyed the short clip of the children saying goodbye to him on the playground which we uploaded to Seesaw. We are awaiting a temporary replacement, Mr John McDonall, who should be with us later this week and up to Christmas. We are also shortly going to be saying goodbye to Ms Helen Shaw, 1:1 TA as she moves on to a promotion at Murdishaw West. We thank her for all her hard work at Daresbury over the last couple of years and wish her all the very best. We are currently advertising for her replacement and will let you know when this is confirmed. We have also welcomed Mrs Rachel Hold to our team this week as a new 1:1 TA in Reception – we are looking forward to getting to know her more in the coming weeks and know she has already started to settle into the Reception class.

We have amended our dates for parents list which should also accompany this newsletter and will be updated each half term. One thing to please note are the early finish times at Christmas. This is the only time of the year where the school closes at a slightly earlier time than normal.

And finally, even though this seems extremely premature.....



Thank you all for your continued support at this difficult time - stay safe and well – and keep smiling 😊

Mrs Roberts & Staff

If you have any suggestions for future newsletters or other comments to make, please complete this slip and return it to school.