

25th January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

We aim to maintain regular contact with everyone in the DEC community in a variety of ways during this period of school closure to provide updates and key information. We hope you find these weekly updates useful in addition to the contact you are receiving from your child's form tutor and other pastoral staff. We also look forward to publishing our first remote learning newsletter later this week.

Outstanding efforts in live lessons

The hard work, commitment and positive contributions we have seen in live lessons, and through work submissions has been superb. To ensure pupils are recognised and rewarded, teachers have continued to follow the praise system in live lessons. So far, in the first two weeks of lessons, there have been a total of 2838 positive events entered, totalling 14190 points. On average, each pupil has been awarded 17 points each. This is a fantastic achievement – a huge well done to pupils.

Conduct in Live Lessons

Pupils in almost all instances have been superb in live lessons, showing great effort and participation as you'll have read above from our positives data.

In our previous letter we set out our system for removing a pupil from live lessons if their conduct falls short of school expectations, causing detriment or disruption to others' learning. Sadly, last week, one pupil received a one-week removal from live lessons for a poor choice which had a negative effect on the learning of others. Please be assured that we will use appropriate systems to ensure conduct in lessons always enables teaching and learning to be effective so that pupils can make the best possible progress in live lessons.

Supporting wellbeing

Thank you to all parents/carers who have provided feedback on our MS Forms questionnaire. The feedback has been invaluable in helping us to see the many things we are succeeding with. We are conscious that as live lessons continue towards February half term, we want to ensure pupils have the opportunity to set aside time to broaden their knowledge, take deliberate steps to maintain their physical and mental health, as well as to engage in wider curriculum opportunities to supplement their academic lessons.

To this end, on Thursday 28th January, pupils will take part in Wellbeing Day where normal lessons will pause to make way for a range of excellent wider curriculum, wellbeing and enrichment activities. The plan for the day will be set out in a more detailed letter tomorrow.

Non-attendance and minibuses pick up

As we have now completed two full weeks of live lessons with all pupils, we have carefully tracked attendance. We are delighted with the vast majority who attend lessons every day and as a result are making good progress. Where a pupil has not attended regularly, contact has been made and support put in place to increase participation. For pupils who continue to have poor attendance despite this support, from Tuesday 26th January the school minibuses will collect selected pupils each morning for them to be brought into school to complete their lessons under the supervision of a member of staff. This will commence with Year 11 pupils, and other year groups will follow. We will do everything we can to ensure all pupils continue to receive taught lessons and make progress during this period of school closure in order to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on their education.



On-site food offer

For the small number of pupil who attend face to face provision in school, please be advised that from Tuesday 26th January, there will no longer be the option to purchase food from the school canteen. Pupils who are attending lessons onsite must bring a packed lunch with them each day.

Year 9 Options Process

At this time of year, we would normally be working with Year 9 pupils in lessons and assemblies to prepare them to choose their GCSE/ BTEC options for Year 10 onwards. We are moving the package online this year to enable pupils to complete the Options Process virtually. The main event will take place alongside Year 9 virtual parents' evening on Thursday 11th February 2021.

Leading up to the main event, information will be released to enable Year 9 pupils to begin thinking about the options subjects they may want to study, together with important careers information to help them in their research and decision making.

6th Form Interviews for Year 11 Pupils

Now that we have reached the application deadline for 6th form admissions in September 2021, we are pleased to announce that we are starting the next stage in the process: interviews.

Interviews this year will be held virtually on MS Teams. Details of appointments and preparation work will be sent to applicants cover the coming week.

We look forward to interview Year 11 applicants and firming up offers for Year 12 pathways from September as our successful 6th form continues to grow.

Autumn Term Progress Reports

Work is almost complete for processing data and pupil progress reports from the Autumn Term. We look forward to publishing progress reports for all year groups from the first week of February. These reports will detail progress, effort, behaviour and homework grading from each subject your child studies.

We hope you find these updates informative and valuable.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mr M. Dunn
Head Teacher