



Dear Parents and Carers,

Our usual learning Newsletter will be sent out at the end of September and I did not want to over shadow it with lots of other information. This Newsletter will cover the following:

- Absences/ Holidays
- Parent Code of conduct/ parent communication
- Trust updates
- Building work updates

I hope I manage to cover most things, however if there is anything you feel you need more information on then please send an email to the office who will forward this to me.

Mrs J Dediccoat



Absences

All absences need to be reported to the office as soon as possible. This can be via e-mail, telephone or in person.

We will also follow up any absences that have not been reported by 10.00am. Many thanks for your co-operation with this.

Academy Update

South Suffolk Learning Trust have changed their name to reflect the new schools who are now part of their trust. They have renamed themselves 'Penrose Learning Trust' and we will continue to work with them this term. We have formed a strong partnership, working collaboratively across 4 other Primary schools and 4 High schools. It has felt such a supportive structure to work within, especially as our values align so strongly. We will be holding an open evening this half term where Sarah Skinner (the CEO) and Angela Gage will be present to answer any questions and share more information.

Building Work

As many of you may well have noticed, we are currently in the middle of substantial building work!

This began just before the summer and is due to finish September 2024. Currently, we have three projects running at the same time. Our roof is being replaced, some of the ceilings are being taken down and replaced and all of our internal doors are being replaced. This has meant that some parts of the school have been closed, pupils have had to change routines and we have had some noise disruption.

Hopefully, all being well, this work will be finished by Christmas. The next phase is due to start in January 2024- this is the most exciting part. We are having a brand new purpose built sports building (to replace the dome) constructed so that we can have a guaranteed space for PE/ wrap around care and lettings.

Parent Communication

At Dale Hall we welcome open parent communication as we know this is a crucial element when developing trust. There will be times when things may not go to plan, or we make mistakes and we welcome honest feedback. We will try as best we can to reassure you and work with you to give your child the very best possible start and journey through Primary school life. All we ask is that all communication is both timely and respectful- that your tone is always polite and friendly. I have attached our parent code of conduct as well as the communication document for your reference. Many thanks.

Holidays



I really wanted to explain the process of taking your children out of school to go on holiday and the consequences for both the school and yourselves if you decide to do this. I fully appreciate (and so does anyone who works in a school) that prices are hugely inflated during the school holidays. Having always been restricted by this as teachers, we know how frustrating this can be and sometimes it makes it impossible to even attempt a holiday.

I also know how hugely beneficial family holidays can be, particularly as the last few years have been extremely challenging. Experiencing new things and going to new places is both educational and developmental. If you then consider how much school children have missed through Covid and then more recently the teacher strikes, it is easy to see how you may feel that missing days at school is not detrimental to your child's progress.

HOWEVER

The Department for education states that Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in **exceptional circumstances** and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

As the Headteacher of Dale Hall Primary School I have to uphold these statements, regardless of my personal beliefs, thoughts or wishes. I have to justify absences to the local authority and to Ofsted. Last year we had a record number of parents request time away for a family holiday. I am only able to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays are not classed as this. If your leave goes over 5 days then you will be referred to the local authority who may decide to implement a fine. If this is repeated year on year- then you will always be referred and more than likely given a fine.

PLEASE NOTE:

The school **does not** receive the money from the fines imposed. That is retained by the local authority.

I have attached the guidance from the DFE with regards to attendance and hopefully it will answer any further questions you may have.

If you think you need to request leave of absence for your child then you have to complete a form available from the school office. We aim to get back to you within two weeks. If your child's absence does not qualify as 'exceptional circumstances' then this will be marked as unauthorised. If you have requested more than 5 school days and the absence is not classed as exceptional circumstances then you will be referred to the local authority who may choose to impose a fine.

Please remember that with every decision we make it is always our intention to improve your child's educational journey.

