



The Deanery Church of England Academy  
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Headteacher – Mrs Kelly Osborne-James

1<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

‘Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing’.

1 Thessalonians 5 :11

The Deanery staffing team continues to grow and the good practice-sharing and expertise in the various faculties is exciting.

Weeks are passing by quickly and teachers with the support of their faculty leaders/SLT and Mr McDonald, Deputy Head for Curriculum strive to achieve high quality and consistent learning across the school.

(POAP 1) From the December data drop, teachers are using analysis to target and focus learning. Where students are behind, teachers are identifying the learning gaps that need to be filled. Homework continues to play a key role in embedding and deepening learning. Please continue to support your child in completing the tasks set and where they experience difficulty, and encourage them to approach their teachers for additional advice/guidance.

(POAP 1 and 6) Increasingly, teachers are providing adequate time for practice to embed students’ knowledge, understanding and skills securely. SLT members have carried out Learning Walks this week looking at the use of Knowledge Organisers in lessons. Generally, we continue to see improved levels of engagement and focus in lessons which in turn means we can demand more of our students, supporting them to achieve.

#### **Pastoral – (POAP 6)**

This week we welcomed in parents of our Year 11 students for their parents evening. This was another successful evening where staff were able to share the progress students are making and support them in moving forwards towards their final GCSEs later in the year. Also, this week over 12000 house points have been awarded, with year 7 topping the leaderboard with over 3800 and a ratio of 96% positive: negative.

We would like to remind students and parents of the importance of punctuality to all lessons as well as for the start of the school day. Students who are more than 3 minutes late to lessons without a note from a member of staff will be issued a Level 2 behaviour point.

The start of all lessons are activities to develop key skills or knowledge recalls. It is vitally important that all students access these but also do not disrupt the learning of others by coming to lessons late. Your continued support with this is much appreciated.

### **Attendance - (POAP 3)**

We are pleased to report a continued average of 89% attendance across the school. Whilst marginally behind the national average, it is significantly higher than at the start of the academic year. We would like to thank those students, parents and carers for supporting us and valuing attendance.

The attendance team attend regular meetings and training events with Swindon Borough Council, and this week they shared some interesting figures which I wanted to share with you. We know that some illness or events are unavoidable, however, seeing percentages as weeks, days and lessons, really does highlight the impact of poor attendance.

Less than 90% attendance equates to 4 weeks off per year  
Less than 80% attendance equates to 1 day off per week  
Less than 70% attendance equates to 57 days off per year  
Less than 60% attendance equates to 450 lessons missed per year  
Less than 50% attendance equates to 20 weeks off per year  
Less than 40% attendance equates to 114 days off per year  
Less than 30% attendance equates to 133 days off per year  
Less than 20% attendance equates to 4 days off per week  
Less than 10% attendance equates to 1,000 lessons per year  
(source: Swindon Borough council approximate)

Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza recently found that just 5 per cent of children who missed over half of school days in 2020-21 and 2021-22 went on to get a grade 4 or above in five GCSEs including English and maths.

*Attendance is Key to learning – lets work together to improve your child's outcomes*

### **PE Update - (POAP 4)**

The boys football season is up and running now with all year groups participating in local Champions League and Europa League style formats. This week has seen a number of 'B' team festivals to allow more students to access competitive sport and represent the school. Girls basketball is to start from next week and a number of fixtures have been arranged for Y7, U14 (combined Y8&9) and U16 (combined Y10&11).

This is just a gentle reminder to parents that if your child has an injury or illness that prevents them from physically performing in a PE lesson, a note or email to the school is required to excuse them. It is PE department policy that they are still to change into PE kit to be an active member of the lesson by participating in a non-physical role, such as a coach or official. It is important that the uniform for PE is consistent amongst all in the lesson,

especially if the weather changes and results in clothing becoming wet. If they are unable to change due to injury, this needs to be written in the note. Students were informed of this at the start of the academic year so should all be aware.

### **Term dates for 2024/2025**

The term dates for 2024-2025 are now on our website [here](#). These may be subject to change once the school is moved to a different Trust in September. I will continue to keep you up to date.

Thank you for your continued support to myself as headteacher and The Deanery staffing team.

Kind regards,

Mrs. Osborne-James