



The Deanery Church of England Academy
Peglars Way, Wichelstowe, Swindon SN1 7DA

T: 01793 236611
enquiries@dcea.org.uk
www.dcea.org.uk

Headteacher – Mrs Kelly Osborne-James
26th January 2024

Dear Parents and carers,

I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life'. John 8 verse 12.

Seeing the sunshine this morning brought this hymn by Susan Warner to mind;

Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure **light**,
Like a little candle burning in the night;
In this world of darkness, we must shine –
You in your small corner, and I in mine.

The last line resonated with me as through the last week in particular, I have seen both staff and students shining their light in their respective corners. The staffing team including our invigilators have worked tirelessly to facilitate the mocks in the best way possible despite not having an Exams Officer at this time. The vast majority of students also showed dedication and commitment with an admirable sense of maturity. I consider myself very blessed to have spent such time with them these past two weeks and I look forward to working more visibly with other year groups in the coming terms.

(POAP 6) Weekly monitoring by leaders, continues to have a focus on the quality of teaching in all lessons and in all subjects. Consistency will continue to be a golden thread particularly where new staff are recruited with the emphasis on effective communication and dissemination.

(POAP 6) Currently, teachers are preparing for increased collaborative working with other secondary schools as they engage in external as well as internal moderation activities. This brings many benefits including the sharing of good practice, ensuring judgements/assessment analysis is accurate and our expectations remain high.

(POAP 1 and 2) Knowledge Organisers continue to be a key focus as we look to monitor their impact into term 4. There will be an increasing emphasis on the acquisition, retention and application of vocabulary over the terms. This again, links to the Knowledge Organisers where our skilled staff are identifying the key component knowledge and the key vocabulary needed to unlock students' learning. Vocabulary development in all children as we know from the outset, is fundamental in helping them to access new learning. Where the barrier to language can be removed, students can build their knowledge in a deep and meaningful way to support its retention and retrieval. Such pedagogy once established will positively impact on the outcomes for all our students in the school.

Attendance (POAP 3) - I would like to extend a huge thank you to our year 11's for coming into school on time for their mock exams, it was lovely to meet and greet at the nutrition station – keep up the punctuality for the coming terms!

In line with the government initiative, please ensure that your child is in school daily and on time ready for learning. Should your child be unwell, please consider the extent of illness and whether this warrants a day off. Equally, we would rather see them in a bit later than not at all.

Pastoral - this week over 15000 house points have been issued. Year 7 have done a fantastic job and have been awarded more than 5000 of those. The biggest categories for house points this week have been effort, class work and punctuality to lessons.

We have noticed a trend starting this week with a handful of students (KS4 particularly) that are deciding to congregate together in the toilets for the purpose of missing learning/lessons. Lesson registration processes along with the support of the on-call team quickly identified this. Where children attempt to hide in toilets, we consider it to be a safeguarding concern, and this will be sanctioned with a L4 moving forwards. We ask that parents remind students that toilets should only be used at social times and for their intended purpose.

As part of our drive to raise standards and give our young people a voice about their journey at The Deanery, we would like to hear their views about our Christian Distinctiveness, Collective Worship and RE experiences. Whilst it is not compulsory, it would be great if you could encourage your young person to complete a student voice survey by using this [link](#). This will remain live until the start of term 4.

As I reflect on the last eleven weeks, I wanted to thank you for your patience, understanding and support. I am conscious there are still outstanding emails and meetings to arrange. With mocks now over, these will be one of my top priorities to action before the end of this term. If you are still awaiting an email response, please can you resend to vickey.evans@dcea.org.uk for my attention.

I hope you all have a restful weekend, and please do take care.

Kind regards,

Mrs. Osborne-James