



21st October 2022

Dear Parents/Carer

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

We have had an excellent start to the year, and around the school, there is a feeling of purpose and motivation.

We have already achieved several successes across various areas and hope that, this coming year, we can even exceed all we achieved last year. We were delighted to see the results of our pupils at the end of the year and have exciting plans to support even more children, throughout the school day and beyond. We continue to offer extra-curricular clubs and activities, with minimal, if any, costs passed on to parents/carers. Our staff volunteer a great deal of their own time to support the children and the school.

We have selected our Pupil Ambassadors and School Councillors and they are already making significant contributions. Our 'Super Interpreters' are proving just how 'Super' they are, and so many children continue to strive to be the best they can be. There are so many positives across the school, which makes the following all the more difficult to write.

I have always tried hard to keep my letters home short and concise wherever I can. Sadly, I find myself, for only the second time since starting at Delapre Primary School 14 years ago, needing to address some concerning events and explain, to you as parents and carers, what schools are presently facing.

Many of you are going through some of the toughest times we have had to endure. Children's Mental Health continues to be a concern, as does the cost of living, safeguarding and many more issues. The school also faces these problems, along with the families we work with.

For headteachers, there is a genuine uncertainty as to how schools will be funded and how we can maintain our current structures. I have never, in all my time, heard so much talk, amongst the unions, about the need to strike. Schools have had their budgets cut dramatically. The staff pay increases that have been suggested, will have to be found from an already depleted pot, and will have serious repercussions for schools across the country. This is a devastating time, one in which we are seeing many amazing Teaching Assistants and Teachers looking to leave their profession. This truly impacts so many lives.

For our staff, it is your children, and their amazing parents, who, in uncertain times, make a positive difference.

Even with all this going on I need to, sadly, address a growing concern that is finally breaking some members of the Delapre Staff.

Times are difficult, and we increasingly witness a society where blaming others has become commonplace, and where it is easy to sit behind a keyboard or smartphone and fire off complaints, threats, or negative comments through email, by telephone or social media. There is often little thought given to the workload being managed; or the offence; or hurt that such comments and threats can cause to staff.



Even though this letter concerns an exceedingly small number of parents, the impact is significant and the damage often impossible to repair. Already this year, a few staff have had to endure unacceptable rants, verbal abuse, and intimidating behaviour. We are generally thick-skinned and resilient, but we are also human. I will not provide details of any specific incidents, but will give a flavour:

- Front-line staff on reception verbally abused by parents
- Staff sworn at
- Intentionally intimidating behaviour aimed at staff

For the first time, some of our staff are fearful about talking to specific parents because of their attitude, aggression, rudeness, or unreasonable behaviour. **This is unacceptable.**

As I said earlier, **most** of our parents are supportive and will be shocked reading this. I genuinely believe that every single one of you has the best interests of your child at heart.

Just because our staff work in public service does not mean they should accept questioning of their judgment or professionalism; criticism; or abuse. Everything we achieve is done because we support each other and work as a team.

As a result of the most recent events, I have had to produce a new policy that will appear on our new website (Violent and Abusive Behaviour Policy). This will make it absolutely clear to the small number of parents that do not appear to understand that:

- Abuse against our staff will not be tolerated.
- We will no longer respond to abusive emails
- We will end abusive conversations
- Legal advice will be sought and acted upon (including banning parents/carers and informing the police)

We are an organisation which deals with people and therefore not every issue is straightforward. Our decisions are never taken lightly, and you may not always agree with them. Sometimes though, what your child tells you may be wrong, or you may not have the complete picture. Please do not jump to conclusions. No school has the time to have email conversations, lengthy meetings, and telephone calls. Most of my Leadership Team teach and have many different commitments and responsibilities throughout the day, on top of the fact that we have over 600 pupils to support. Please consider if your contact is worth taking them away from working with the children.

You have every right to consider alternative schools if you are not happy, but I would rather you trust us to do our jobs (*we do know what we are doing*) and remember we are human beings who work incredibly hard and care deeply.

To our supportive parents:

- **Thank you** to those who stand up to the negativity, and challenge those who criticise or spread misinformation on social media
- **Thank you** to those who talk to us in a polite and friendly manner; and respect and accept the decisions we make, however difficult
- **Thank you** to those who are appreciative of the work of our staff. This means a lot to them, and it motivates all of us to help you. I have said, many times before, that we do make mistakes. When we do, I can assure you they are simply that - mistakes. There is no malicious intent or hidden agenda. We will apologise when we make them and seek to do better next time.

Thank you all for your support and trust and for taking the time to read this. I realise this is a lengthy communication and, for many of you, completely unexpected.

I hope it is the last one of this type.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Portrey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

H Portrey
Headteacher

DELAPRE

PRIMARY SCHOOL

October 2022
Autumn Term

Term 2 - Upcoming dates

Fri 21st October SCHOOL CLOSURES - End of Term 1
Non-Uniform Day (School Fundraiser)

School closes at usual time
3pm EYFS KS1 / 3:10pm KS2

Mon 31st October SCHOOL OPENS for Term 2

Tues 1st November
Charity Film Night Fundraiser - Cynthia Spencer Hospice

Thurs 3rd November (for one week)
Book Fair in School

Fri 4th November & Tues 8th November
School Photographs - Whole School/Siblings

Tues 8th November & Thurs 10th November
Parents Evenings

Weds 9th November
Cross County Competition at Abington Park - Y4, 5 & 6

Mon 14th November
Odd Socks Day for Anti-Bullying Week



TERM 2 DATES

School opens
**Monday 31st
October 2022**

School closes
early at 2pm
**Friday 9th
December
2022**

School closes
**Friday 16th
December
2022**

School opens
to pupils
**Wednesday 4th
January 2023**



Term 2 - Upcoming dates

Continued ...

Fri 18th November

Children In Need 2022 - more details to follow

Tues 22nd & Weds 23rd November

Flu Vaccinations - all pupils

Fri 25th November

Football / Sports Mufti Day - Friends of Delapre Primary
(Donations for Christmas Fayre - details to follow)

Thursday 8th December

Musical Performance Evening at Delapre Primary School
(further details to follow)

Friday 9th December

SCHOOL CLOSSES TODAY AT 2PM FOR ALL PUPILS

Christmas Fayre - Friends of Delapre Primary School
Fundraiser

Weds 14th December

Year 6 Cake Sale - Residential Fundraiser

Fri 16th December SCHOOL CLOSSES end of Term 2

Fresh Start Christmas Dinner for those pupils who
receive Free School Meals

Christmas Mufti Day (School
fundraiser)

School closes at usual time
3pm EYFS KS1
3:10pm KS2

Weds 4th January 2023

SCHOOL OPENS to children for Term 3



IMPORTANT INFO

**Halloween &
Bonfire Night
Safety
information
attached
Pages 4-7**

**School
Uniform
Policy
Update 2022
Pages 8-12**





SAFETY MATTERS:

The Halloween and Bonfire Night edition



Welcome to our seasonal safety newsletter which is designed to help keep families safe across Northamptonshire as they celebrate Halloween and Bonfire Night. We want you all to have lots of fun, but please don't forget about safety as you get swept along with the excitement of the season. Here are our top tips...



Don't let fire creep up on you this Halloween



Candles and flames

Candles can be popular for use in pumpkins and homes at Halloween, but unfortunately, candles also cause many fires and can be a hazard to families and properties. Opt for artificial candles instead. They are safer and also emit the same glow for those creepy decorations.



Careful with costumes!

Are you or your family planning on dressing up for Halloween this year?

Remember, whether shop-bought or homemade, costumes can catch fire and cause burns. The two most important things to remember are:

- Costumes should be kept well away from any candles or matches. Again, think about using artificial candles
- If the worst does happen and the clothing of either you or another person catches fire, remember the phrase '**STOP, DROP and ROLL**'



STOP!



DROP!



ROLL!

Safe trick or treating

If members of your family are planning on 'trick or treating' this Halloween please make sure:

- Younger children are always supervised
- If you have older children make sure you know where they are, who they are with and remind them to act responsibly
- You behave responsibly and do not try to deliberately frighten or intimidate people
- Stick to areas you know and respect people who have a 'no trick or treating' sign displayed on their property
- You are careful when crossing roads as some masks and costumes can restrict vision



Help your Bonfire Night go with a bang! (but a safe one)

At Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service and Northamptonshire Police, we would always say its best attend an organised fireworks display, but for those who are planning to use them at home, there are tips to remember to avoid accident or injury.

Using fireworks... some tips

Firstly, it sounds simple, but read the instructions on your fireworks. Light them at arm's length using a safety firework lighter or fuse wick. Everyone should stand well clear and never return to a lit firework. It's best to keep a bucket of water handy too. Fireworks should always be handled by adults.

Sparklers are not suitable for children under five. Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.

Last tip - It can be a frightening time for pets, so keep furry and non-furry companions safe indoors and be mindful of the effects on pets in your neighbourhood.

Fireworks: knowing the law

Unfortunately, people sometimes use this time of year to misuse fireworks. Fireworks may be beautiful to watch but they can also cause devastating injuries to people and damage to property if they are used in the wrong way. Never throw them or store them unsafely, such as in a pocket.

The laws state:

- You can't buy fireworks if you're under 18
- Fireworks cannot be set off between 11pm and 7am, except for Bonfire Night, when the cut off is midnight. On New Year's Eve, Diwali and Chinese New Year, the cut off is 1am
- You must not set off or throw fireworks (including sparklers) in the street or other public places
- You should only buy fireworks from registered dealers or licensed shops
- You can be fined an unlimited amount and imprisoned for up to six months for selling or using fireworks illegally. You could also get an on-the-spot fine of £90

Bonfires - the safe way

Fireworks may often be the main feature of a seasonal display, but bonfires are also a major attraction.

- Before lighting a bonfire, always check the structure is sound and there are no small children or animals hiding inside
- Position a bonfire away from sheds, fences and trees to avoid flames spreading
- Never use petrol or paraffin to light a fire. A safer way is to use paper and solid firelighters in two or three places to ensure an even burn
- Never burn dangerous rubbish such as foam-filled furniture, rubber, aerosols, tins of paint, pressurised gas cylinders, tyres and bottles
- Have one person responsible for lighting the fire. That person, and any helpers, should wear suitable clothing such as a substantial outer garment made of wool or other low flammable material and strong boots or shoes
- Never leave a bonfire unattended

We hope you found our safety tips interesting and that you remember them when you have your celebrations. From everyone at Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue and Northamptonshire Police, have a happy and safe Halloween and Bonfire Night.



DELAPRE PRIMARY SCHOOL UNIFORM

Delapre prides itself on its reputation and we believe school uniform contributes to that reputation.

All pupils are expected to wear the correct uniform.

OUR UNIFORM SUPPLIER IS UNIFORM DIRECT

If you have any queries, **Uniform Direct** can be contacted on **01522 510016** or via their website www.uniform-direct.com

PLEASE ENSURE ALL SCHOOL UNIFORM IS LABELLED CLEARLY WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

JEWELLERY – Jewellery, (**other than a watch or small stud earrings***), is not allowed, in accordance with our Health & Safety Policy. Earrings which dangle, rings or nose studs are not allowed following previous accidents. **No SMART watches allowed.**

All earrings should be removed on PE days.

To clarify: *small stud earrings should be no larger than half a centimetre in diameter (0.5cm) and they should have no hanging element.

NAIL VARNISH – **Per our Uniform Policy:** Delapre Primary School does not allow pupils to wear make-up or nail varnish in school.

If a pupil turns up in school wearing nail varnish, we will ask parents/carers, or the pupil themselves, to remove the nail varnish that evening. **If nail varnish is not removed by the following day, as requested, we will contact parents/carers by telephone to either come in and remove it ; or give us permission to remove in School.**

HAIR – must be worn in an appropriate style. There should be no extreme styles, including shaved lines or patterns. Hair longer than collar length must be **tied back at all times**. Hair bands, bobbles/scrunchies, clips and any beading must be either yellow or navy only and be of a sensible size. Hair should be one natural colour.

OUTDOOR CLOTHING – a warm, washable coat will be required for outdoor play times and when using the play area. **This must be labelled with your Child's Name.**

SHOES – sensible, flat, black shoes. Smart all black Leather polishable trainers with NO branding/logos and BLACK laces. Plain Black flat Leather Boots. (No fashion shoes, high wedges, sling-backs or open-toed sandals in the summer)





BOYS' UNIFORM

Yellow Polo Shirt

Navy Sweatshirt

with DPS School emblem



Navy Trousers or Shorts

(NOT Black)

Tailored Navy shorts

NO Chinos, NO Jersey



Navy, Grey or Black Socks
(NOT White)



PE KIT BOYS & GIRLS

Navy shorts
White T-Shirt
White Socks
Black Plimsolls



ADDITIONAL PE KIT

Year 1,2 and KS2 – Trainers, Dark Plain Jogging Bottoms

Year 3 and 4 (OPTIONAL) – DPS Rugby Top

Year 5 and 6 (COMPULSORY) – DPS Rugby Top



GIRLS UNIFORM

Yellow Polo Shirt
Navy Sweatshirt
Navy Cardigan
with DPS School emblem



Navy Pinafore
Skirt Dresses and skirts to be KNEE LENGTH
Trousers
Culottes or Shorts
(NOT Black)



Yellow and white gingham summer dress
(PLAYSUITS are NOT a uniform item)



Navy or white socks
Navy tights



ACCESSORIES

BOOK BAG



PE BAG



Book bags (£4) and PE Bags (£3) are available from school, ex-VAT **or** online inc VAT from **Uniform Direct** via www.uniform-direct.com or **01522 510016**

BACKPACK (Y5 & 6 ONLY) A large rucksack is available from school (£12.50), ex-VAT **or** online inc VAT from Uniform Direct for children in **Years 5 & 6 only**



GENERAL INFORMATION:

Polo Shirts, Sweatshirts and Cardigans (all items with the School logo) are available exclusively from the Uniform Direct website www.uniform-direct.com

N.B: for larger sizes of uniform than are shown on the website (above Small Adult 36") please contact **Uniform Direct** on **01522 510016**
or email: **customerservices@uniform-direct.com**

Your uniform order will be delivered directly to your home address, at a flat delivery charge of £3.96. You can combine your order with other families to save on delivery if you so wish, as the £3.96 fee will cover any number of items.

"Non-logo" uniform is not available from school, but can be purchased from most good school uniform shops and many supermarkets or department stores, i.e. Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Next, Asda etc. This includes trousers, skirts, dresses, PE kit and socks. PE Kit is also available from Uniform Direct.

We have a stock of second-hand uniform donated by parents, which is sold at 50p per item and is available from the School Office, however we cannot guarantee which sizes we will have available. If parents have uniform that their children have grown out of, please donate it in a clean and undamaged condition to the School Office for this purpose. All funds raised by these sales go directly back for the benefit of the children in this school. Thank you.