

COLLABORATION WITHIN CPD SCHOOLS FEDERATION

The challenges all schools are experiencing currently makes collaborations between schools more and more attractive as they look to make efficiency savings. One of the main benefits of being part of the Federation is how we can look internally for these efficiencies across our schools. Since September two of our schools have been more formally linked as we aim to identify Dersingham and Calverton as 'one school on different sites'. Whilst each school remains individual in its own right, a strong collaboration between the two schools means better alignment and staff working across the two schools.



Having one Headteacher over two schools means decisions can be more easily made to benefit all stakeholders. It takes some adjusting to think about the schools differently but I am convinced it will become more and more common. The appointment of senior leaders across the two schools has started off well and will be beneficial as we embed the practices of the collaboration. There are skilled staff in both schools and we need to identify how best to share this in the coming months. Central Park is able to still provide more strategic and / or specialised support as and when needed.

We are also able to draw on the experiences of an Ofsted Inspector in Lando Du Plooy and this helps all the schools have the edge on the latest frameworks for inspection, as well as being able to call upon network connections to help our schools. Recent visits to our schools have had positive outcomes where good practice is recognised and actions on how to improve have been shared.

ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCES



As a Federation of schools we passionately believe that children need to be provided with a broad and balanced curriculum. Whilst we push for the highest standards possible in English and Maths we recognise the rest of the curriculum is equally as important. The next step is to provide an 'extra-curriculum' whereby what we teach is enriched by the different experiences we are able to offer.

This year we aim to get back to the position pre-pandemic where education visits are a frequent part of our school year; we invite visitors into the schools in the form of other professionals, workshops and guest speakers; we build up links with local organisations, and those further afield, and we provide children with experiences they may not get if the school did not provide them.

Across the Federation in recent weeks we have had children attend residential settings, including those overseas; children have attended a variety of after-school clubs and dance instructors working with children. This is just the start of our ambition for all schools this year. We want children to be happy at school and we know that providing these experiences goes some way in meeting that expectation. We will always keep any costs to a minimum, and know during these hard economic times every pound is important, but continued support when required by you as parents is much appreciated.

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES

Alongside these enrichment activities we know that many children across the schools need extra support to achieve the best they can in English and Maths. At the moment, schools are getting small grants from the Government to help children to 'catch up'.



As a result there will be targeted before and after school academic sessions for children to have small group input from staff. If your child is asked to attend any of these 'catch up' classes it is because we feel your child would benefit from being in these groups. We know it might seem a bit of a long day if children have to be in early or stay late in school but your support in getting them in for these sessions will mean a lifetime gain for them.



YOGABUGS

Each school has signed up to a programme called YogaBugs which is designed to help with improving everyone's mental well-being. There are parental log-ins for you to be able to access these materials from home as well. Do ask leaders at the school if you want more information on this. They can pass on the details.



IMPACT OF GLOBAL ECONOMY

I do not need to tell you that in the UK there are some serious economic challenges. Everyone is being hit hard in the pocket by the cost of living spiralling to levels not seen in decades. Due to some decisions by the Government, public sector pay is declining in real terms and schools are struggling to make budgets balance and, as a result, Unions representing the different sectors of school staff are going to ballot on strike action. As parents it is important to know that to be heard by the Government staff are going to have to make some difficult decisions and national industrial action in schools seems almost inevitable. I do not mean to scaremonger but the Spring Term could be difficult if action is taken. Calverton recently experienced some industrial



action and it is children who ultimately suffer. The last thing anyone really wants.

TERM DATES FOR NEXT YEAR

Last week the Governors approved the school term dates for 2023/24. I know it seems early to be talking about next year but schools should agree the dates now so that they can be published on school websites. There you will be able to see the dates for the whole of the year but I share that next year school starts on **Tuesday 5th September 2023** for

| September 2023 | | | | | | |
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Tuesday 5th Sep 2023

pupils. The summer holidays tend to be a time when families try and go away for longer periods of time. I hope this advance notice helps you with any preparation you may be thinking about for next year.

SAFEGUARDING

You know that one of our most important jobs in school is to safeguard your children. We need to make the school as safe as possible—make safeguarding effective. Part of our role is teaching children how to keep safe themselves, especially online. Our schools have invested in software that has strict filters in place and identifies when anyone is trying to search for inappropriate terms. Whilst we have this in our schools you may not have the same level of security at home. **Get to know the safety and privacy settings**—Explore the safety and privacy settings on any app, to decide which are right to use for your child.

One thing we find in schools is that children are good at saying the right thing. In relation to being online, we often hear children saying how they can keep safe online but then they do not follow these tips when they are home.



Social media is a terrific tool when used appropriately. However, primary aged children are too young to be on most of them. Facebook, Twitter, Tik Tok, Instagram and Snapchat are officially for aged 13+.

Age ratings and features - Get to know the age ratings of the apps that your child uses. Many have a minimum age of 13 years old to be able to sign up, but you should check the age rating of individual apps to make sure. Don't forget that you know your child best, and you might decide that they need to be a little bit older before it's suitable for them.



HALF TERM HOLIDAYS—AUTUMN ACTIVITIES

In many ways it almost unbelievable that we have reached half term. The past few weeks seem to have flown by. On the other hand, so much has happened since the start of term the summer holidays seem ages ago. Newham is once again putting on a range of fun and exciting activities during the half-term holidays for children of all ages (including those who are vulnerable) to enjoy. Most of the activities are free, some at subsidised prices as you can see in their brochure advertised on Newham's website. The link is here:

<https://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5172/autumn-activities-brochure-2022-v1>

We wish you all a safe and fantastic Autumn School break.

Darren Williams, Executive Headteacher

