

Friday 13th September 2023



DUDLEY NEWS

WELCOME BACK

Welcome back to a brand new school year at Dudley! We hope that you all had a good summer and the children enjoyed the time off. We're sure that they are feeling refreshed and excited to start a brand new year group. It has been lovely seeing the children come back so enthusiastically and spending time with their friends and new class teams. We would also like to welcome the children starting with us in Lions and Tigers and we look forward to seeing what adventures the year has in store for them. With the start of a new school year, there are new beginnings to look forward to and of course that also includes new staff. It's lovely to have Mr Searle, Mrs Fox and Miss Hine officially join the team and, just like the children, they are settling in well! The term ahead is already shaping up to be a busy one and I know the staff have been working incredibly hard to ensure that the children have a great start to the year. If you have any concerns as the weeks go by, please come and speak with us, as working together we can achieve the best for every child.

CONTACT DETAILS

We are aware that some families have moved house during the holidays or parents may have changed their telephone numbers. If your contact details have changed please can you advise the academy office so that your child's details can be updated. Thank you.

UNIFORM & PE KIT

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for sending your children to school looking so smart in their academy uniform. The children look very proud to be attending and representing Dudley Infant Academy. However, we have had a number of school jumpers and cardigans go missing this week. Please would you mind double checking that they are named to help us find them. We also ask that children please bring in a named PE kit, thank you.

NUT FREE ENVIRONMENT

Just a reminder that at Dudley we continue to be a nut free environment. This is part of our safeguarding duties as we have children in the academy who have severe nut allergies. Please can we ask that if your child brings in a packed lunch that you check items are nut free and do not contain traces of nuts. This particularly applies to certain types of chocolate spread. Thank you for your continued support with this.

MEDICINES IN SCHOOL

If your child requires an inhaler or other medicine on a regular basis in school, please ensure that you take it to the academy office and complete an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). Staff are unable to administer medicines without this plan in place. If you have any questions relating to this matter, please do speak with Mrs Froude in our academy office.

LUNCH ORDERING

Please do remember to order your child's lunch via Parentpay. This week, we have had a number of children without an order and this has inevitably had an impact on our lunch processes. Please may we also ask that children have been reminded about their lunch choice for the day to avoid any confusion and ensure that children receive the correct option.

END OF DAY COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

Please may we politely request that, should there be a change to collection arrangements for your child at the end of the school day, that you contact the academy office before 2.30pm, to ensure that we have sufficient time to notify class teachers. Whilst we completely understand that there may be unforeseen situations that may mean your child needs collecting before the end of the school day, we would stress that this should be in emergency situations or for pre-arranged medical appointments. It is important that children remain in class until the end of the school day to ensure minimal disruption to their learning. We would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you for supporting the changes made this year to the end of day collection times. We are aware that the playground is very busy at the end of the day and therefore we do please ask that siblings are not running around to ensure that there are no accidents had. Thank you for your support..

POD THANK YOU

During the summer break, members of POD kindly volunteered to give up their time and tidy up our academy garden, making it a wonderful, usable space for the children again. It was a fantastic team effort and we would like to say a big thank you from us all. We are excited to be able to move forward with our plans to make our own Dudley Woodland School, funded by POD. Once again, we would like to say thank you to our academy community who have participated in our fund raising events - this has made our enrichment activities and projects possible. With this in mind, if you would like to join POD (Parents of Dudley), please do come along to our AGM on Friday 20th September at 9am (see poster in today's newsletter).



GOLD AWARDS & CELEBRATIONS

Each week, on a Friday afternoon, we hold our Gold Award and celebratory assembly. We are so proud of the children here at Dudley and this is a wonderful opportunity to recognise their achievements and celebrate the behaviour and values they uphold each and every day. If your child is receiving an award, a member of our office team will contact you on the Friday before. We of course completely appreciate that taking time off from work and other commitments you have may be a challenge, but we do hope that you will be able to join us. The assembly will start at 3pm and last for approximately 20 minutes. We look forward to sharing the celebrations with you.

A big well done to our Gold Award winners this week and to Class Rhino, who were awarded the Behaviour Trophy. We look forward to the children from Class Lion and Class Tiger joining us soon.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

You will be aware that several times this year I have written to you regarding pupil attendance at school. There has been a significant drive from the Government, the Local Authority and our Trust this year following attendance rates within schools declining since the country came out of the pandemic. Before the pandemic the national average for pupil attendance in primary schools was 96% and this academic year is likely to end with it being at 94%. For Dudley Infant Academy, our end of year average will be 94%. We are pleased that we will be in line with the national average but there are still improvements to be made in this key area of school life.

As educators of children, here at Dudley Infant Academy we truly believe that pupils can only take full advantage of their education if they attend school regularly and punctually. Pupils need to attend school as much as possible to benefit from the education that they are entitled to. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Evidence shows that many children with poor attendance tend to have lower attainment in both primary and secondary school phases of their education.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- act early to address patterns of absence
- parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- ensure all pupils to be punctual to their lessons

From September 2024 there is once again a renewed focus about pupil attendance and schools, academies and local authorities will be adhering to the Department for Education's statutory guidance entitled 'Working together to improve school attendance'. This document was published in February 2024 and applies from August 2024. The link for this is below should you be interested in reading its content. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf)

[Working together to improve school attendance applies from 19 August 2024 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf)

In recent weeks we have been provided with information from the local authority in relation to the steps we have to adhere to should a pupil's attendance decline or become a concern. So that parents and carers are aware of the processes we have to follow, you will find a flowchart at the end of this information, which details the various steps that we are required to put in place. It should be noted that there is an expectation for intervention to commence at an early stage (Emerging Risk). Academy leaders continually monitor children's attendance from the beginning of the academic year. Being absent for medical conditions is taken into careful consideration when monitoring individual children's attendance records. We are also sensitive to particular family circumstances and any challenges that parents and carers may be faced with. We take our responsibility for ensuring that all children receive a high-quality education very seriously and want to support families who may be finding it difficult to get their child to school regularly.

Arriving late to school

Children's punctuality will also be a focus from September. Children arriving late to school impacts upon their learning experiences and the learning experiences of other children. The Academy gates currently open at 8.45. All children are expected to be in class ready to start learning by 8.55am. Registers close at 9.00am. Arrival after this time will be recorded in the register as late. All parents and carers arriving late with their children after 8.55am will need to enter through the Academy office, the time and reason for being late must then be recorded on our Inventory system. If a child is frequently late, parents and carers will be invited to a meeting with a member of Senior Leadership Team to discuss steps that can be taken to reduce lateness.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Illness

Please telephone or email the Academy on the first day of illness. If no notification is received initially, it will be recorded as unauthorised. The academy will then follow the processes expected of us and will make contact to establish the reason for absence. Please use the link below that includes useful information in relation to whether your child should attend school.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Whilst the Academy appreciates young children are often unwell, attendance levels are monitored regularly. Where there is a pattern of absence, this will be explored with parents and carers initially through discussions and any assistance will be offered where needed. In cases of excessive absence due to illness, the Principal has the right to request a medical certificate be provided.

Medical appointments

If possible, doctor's, medical or dentist's appointments should be made outside of the Academy day. However, it is recognised that sometimes the dates and times of medical appointments are determined by medical professionals and may take place during the academy day. In all cases of medical appointments, please ensure the Academy is informed in advance of any scheduled medical absence, and where possible evidence of this is provided to the academy. This could be in the form of appointment cards, letters or online bookings.

Withdrawal from Learning/holiday in term time

You may recall that I wrote to you in June regarding requests for absences during term time. This year the academy has received an unprecedented number of requests for absence during term. The majority of these were for family holidays and a high number have been requested during term 6. Twenty percent of our cohort were withdrawn from learning due to attending a family holiday this year. We need your support in ensuring that planned leave is not taken in school time so that your child has the very best opportunity to succeed. The DfE only allows a Principal the discretion to authorise an absence if they believe that there are exceptional or unavoidable circumstances.

Taking a pupil on leave during term time interrupts teaching and learning and can disrupt educational progress. Before completing the Withdrawal from Learning form, parents and carers are asked to consider the effect on their child's continuity of education. There are up to 190 statutory school days in one year and up to 175 days (weekends and school holidays) available to use for holidays. Your child may miss out on valuable group work with peers or miss key topics and themes that cannot be repeated. This could lead to gaps in learning. It may also be disruptive for other pupils in lessons when your child needs extra help to catch up.

When deciding whether to authorise term-time leave, the academy will consider:

- the pupils age
- the time and duration of the leave
- the pupil's record of attendance, including any previous term-time absences
- whether there are exceptional circumstances relating to the request

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL *Continued*

Broadly speaking, exceptional circumstances could include;

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of a family member
- rehabilitation from a physical or emotional matter that is supported with medical evidence

Please be advised that in line with Local Authority expectations, term time holiday requests will not be authorised and a fixed penalty notice could be requested.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be increasing and further details can be found by using the following link: <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2024/02/29/fines-for-parents-for-taking-children-out-of-school-what-you-need-to-know/>

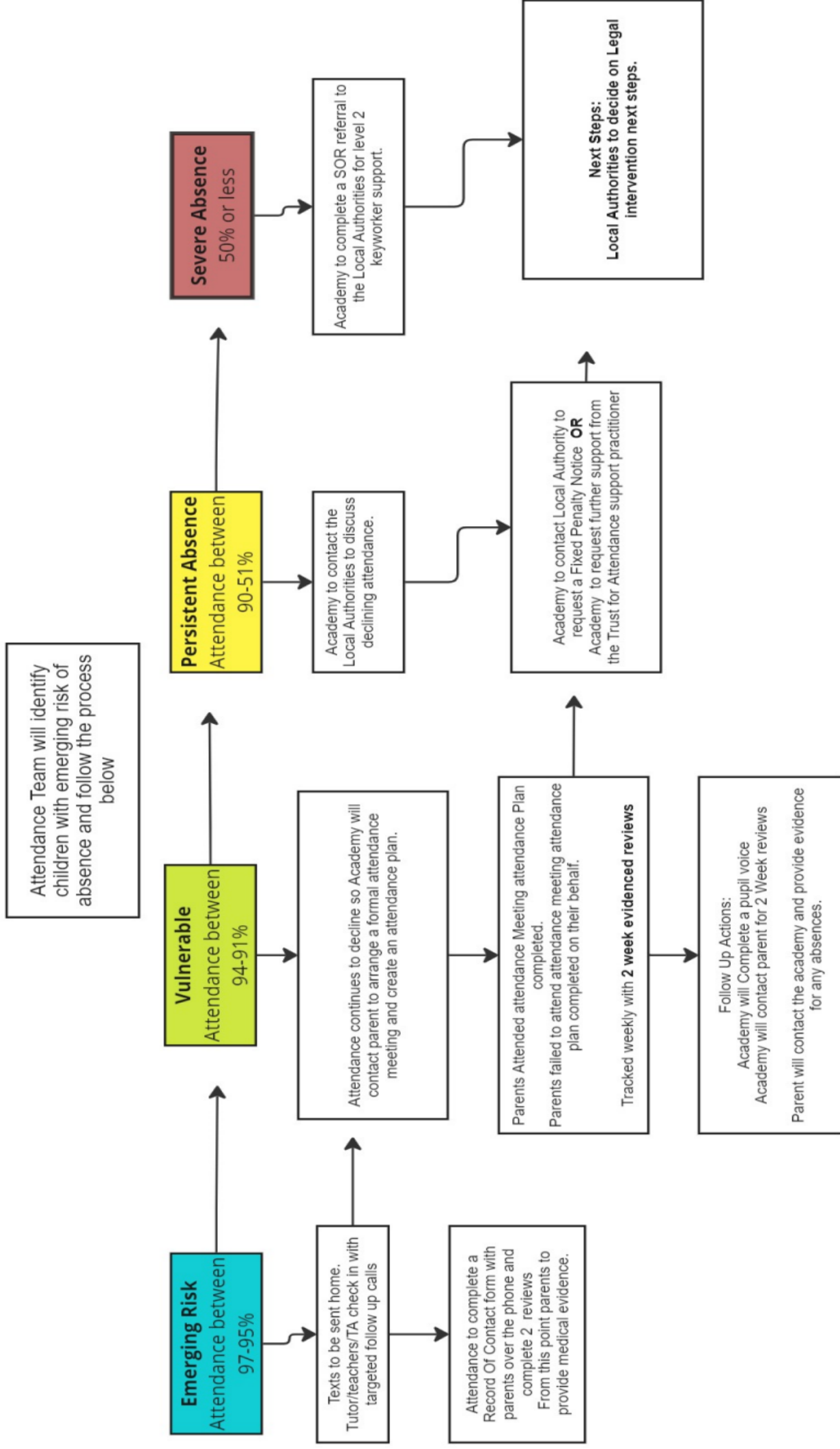
The updates detailed in 'Working together to improve school attendance' mean that our Academy's Attendance Policy will require some changes. This will happen over the summer period and we will issue a link to the revised version upon our return in September.

I hope the above information has been useful and do please contact the academy should you have any questions.

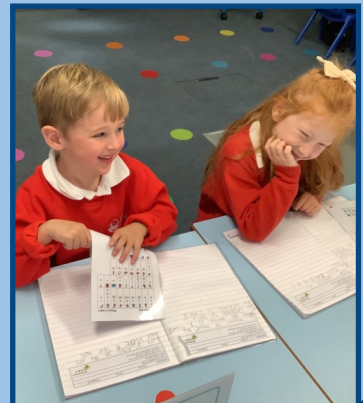
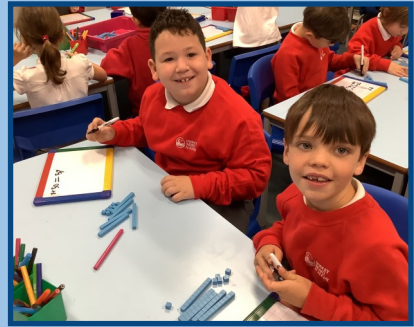
As we head towards the new academic year, please support your child's education by ensuring that they attend school as much as possible.

Mr Maclean

Absence Management Flowchart 2024



FIRST WEEK AT DUDLEY



A Message from David Marks, Chair of the Local Governing Body

My name is David Marks. As Chair of the Local Governing Body (LGB) for Dudley Infant Academy, I want to tell you a little about the LGB and invite you to consider applying to become a member.

The Academy is essentially governed by the Board of Trustees of the University of Brighton Academies Trust. However, some of the functions of the Board of Trustees are delegated to the LGB. The LGB has an important role to play as the “eyes and ears of the Board of Trustees”. We are a link to the local community. Our role is to look critically at the governance of the Academy, and to challenge anything as we consider appropriate.

The LGB meets four times a year, and reports back to the Board of Trustees following those meetings. At each of our meetings we receive a report from the Principal, who updates us on pupil progress and the general state of the Academy. We are also updated on Community Engagement.

The members of the LGB are designated what we call “link roles”. Each term they carry out a “link visit” and they report back to the LGB following that visit. Currently, we have two link roles, one for Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing and the other for Behaviour. We would like to be able to assign more link roles. For example, Attendance and Curriculum are two other areas we could cover.

To give you an idea of the type of recommendations that arise following a link visit, I have reproduced below some proposals that flowed from the last link visit on Mental Health and Wellbeing:

“SEND coffee mornings are held once a term, one of which has a focus on mental health and wellbeing. The coffee mornings were used to consult with parents on the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. Attendance seems to be low. It’s not clear why and it may be that either parents are already able to engage with staff through other opportunities, or that the timing is not suitable for most parents. I have recommended that a parent survey be conducted to see if low attendance at coffee mornings is because parents don’t feel the need to attend, or if they would attend if held at a different time. Additionally, a parent survey needs to be held to survey parents’ views on pupil mental health and wellbeing.

The school newsletter has been used to inform parents about how to raise wellbeing and mental health concerns. There is an opportunity to build on this with posters on the school site, highlighting who to contact for mental health and wellbeing concerns, as is done for safeguarding.

Home activities are provided on an ad-hoc basis. There are home resources for PSHE provided through the Jigsaw programme. The school does signpost parents to activities and resources that can be accessed at home, for example mindfulness videos on YouTube. These are generally signposted where concerns are raised, but could be promoted more generally to reinforce the importance of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing through the school newsletter.”

If you are interested in applying to take part in the governance of the Academy by being a member of the LGB, please email Emily Gross: e.gross@brightonacademiustrust.org.uk and request an application form.

SAFEGUARDING

Our academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy has been updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and all staff received training focusing on the updates during our September inset day. Our key safeguarding policies can be found on our academy website and a reminder of our Safeguarding Officers has been added to the final page of today's newsletter.



SAFEGUARDING CONTACT INFORMATION

Designated Safeguarding team (for Dudley
Infant Academy) -
DSL@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk
David Marks (Chair of Local Board)
d.marks@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk



COMMUNICATION

If you have questions or queries for your child's new class teacher, you may contact them via the class email address. However, please do bear in mind that class teachers may not be able to respond immediately. If you have an urgent question, please do telephone the academy office or speak with a member of staff on duty at the start of the school day. If you wish to contact a member of the EYFS team, you can do so via the online platform, Seesaw. Thank you.

Class Panda
email address = classpanda@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk

Class Wolf
email address = classwolf@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk

Class Turtle
email address = classturtle@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk

Class Rhino.
email address = classrhino@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk

DUDLEY DIARY DATES

20th Sept - POD AGM

1st Oct - Individual children's photos

4th Oct - Enhanced Art Day at Dudley

8th Oct - Food & Nutrition workshop (in school)

22nd Oct - Ed Boxall author visit to Dudley

24th Oct - Last day of term

25th Oct - INSET DAY

26th Oct - 3rd Nov - HALF TERM HOLIDAY

4th Nov - INSET DAY

5th Nov - Start of Term 2



Dear Parents and Carers,

What a fantastic week we have had and a great start to the new academic year. The children have returned with a positive and determined attitude and it has been a pleasure to watch them settle in so quickly and happily to their new year groups. We are looking forward to a great year ahead and having the opportunity to work with our Dudley community.

Have a great weekend.

Mr Maclean & Mrs Luke



Annual General Meeting For Parents of Dudley PTA

Please come along and learn more
about POD.

Find out how we support the school and help us
with new ideas and suggestions as we move into
the new year.

We are actively looking for new members and
parents and carers to help vote in the new key
roles of our PTA.



Friday 20th
September @ 9am



Meet in the playground

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Stay informed and get involved

INTRODUCING CASHPOT FOR SCHOOLS

Download and opt-in with Asda Rewards
and we will donate **££s** to schools.

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HERE'S HOW:

- 1** Download the Asda Rewards app and opt-in to Cashpot for Schools.
- 2** Choose your primary school
- 3** Shop in-store across Asda & George, and scan your Asda Rewards app at the checkout.
- 4** Shopping online?
Simply log in to Asda.com using the same details as your Asda Rewards account.
- 5** We'll do the rest!
We donate ££s to your chosen school every time you shop, so they can spend it on exactly what they need.



Selected stores. Minimum spend £2+. Exclusions apply including Asda Express & George.com. Subject to availability. UK 18+. App & Opt in required.
0.5% of the value of a customer's eligible shop is donated. Publicly funded primary schools, must register with Parentkind charity 1072833.
Full T&Cs at asda.com/cashpotforschools. Rewards T&Cs at asda.com/rewards/terms. Ends 30.11.24

NEW! Oral Health webinar

with HALO (Healthy Active Little Ones)
& The Parenting Team



Battles with tooth brushing?



- Our Oral Health session for parents & carers covers:
- ◆ Advice on developing healthy habits for toothbrushing
 - ◆ Guidance on sugary foods
 - ◆ Bespoke support for children with SEND
 - ◆ Ideas to support your child's health and wellbeing

Families attending will receive a FREE toothbrush and toothpaste pack for their child/ children

Upcoming Dates:

Monday 7th October 12:30 to 2:30pm

Tuesday 26th November 6:30pm to 8:30pm

To book your place, email the Parenting Team

EH.0-19parentingteam@eastsussex.gov.uk

Or call: 01424 725800

Dudley Safeguarding Officers



Mr Maclean



Mrs Luke



Mrs Froude



Mrs Sankey



Ms Durban

Academy Safeguarding Team - DSL@dudleyinfantacademy.org.uk
Chair of Local Board - Mr David Marks d.marks@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk
Trustee Safeguarding Link - Ms Rose Durban r.durban@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk