



# September 2023

## Newsletter



Welcome to the September newsletter, the first for the 2023/24 academic year. The first few weeks have flown by, and the children have settled back into school routines again. For our new Reception parents, these newsletters are an opportunity to share with you a flavour of day-to-day school life, celebrate the many exciting opportunities on offer and inform you of forthcoming events.

### **Reception Intake**

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Reception children and their parents/carers to the school. They have settled in extremely well and made an excellent start to their school journey here at Denver. Welcome to the Class of 2023!



### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are always important days for children and this year we wanted to do something special to mark these. Children will be allowed to come to school in non-uniform on their birthday. If their birthday falls on a weekend or within a holiday period, they can wear non-uniform on the following Monday or the day we return to school. Please ensure that children wear sensible footwear. Here is Isabella enjoying wearing non-uniform on her birthday this week.



## **Prayer/Reflection Space Week**

This week has been a prayer/reflection week in which the children have explored prayer and reflection through a variety of engaging activities.

At the beginning of the week the week our Chair of Governors, Carole Reich, led an assembly about prayer and reflection to the whole school. The children then visited 10 different prayer/reflection spaces around school, both inside and out.



On Wednesday, each child thought of one question they would like to ask God and Reverend Nigel visited our Collective Worship to try his best to answer some of these. We created a rainbow of questions which is displayed in our school hall.



The children were all tasked with designing their own prayer/reflection spaces on Thursday. They had some fantastic ideas and we are hoping to create some of these in school and the local community.

We have been so impressed with the children's deep reflections and thoughtful responses throughout the week.

A huge thank you to our Foundation Governors, Carole, Janet and Jo, along with Reverend Nigel for arranging this special week, and for the team of volunteers who came in to lead each prayer spaces.

### **Celebration Assemblies**

Celebration assemblies are always one of the highlights of the school week and it has been lovely to welcome parents and carers into school to celebrate the achievements of all our children. For safeguarding reasons, the back gate will be opened at 2.45pm and closed again at 3pm, therefore if you would like to join us in future weeks, please arrive at the gate before 3pm. We hope to welcome many of you over the coming weeks and months.

### **Summer Reading Bingo Challenge**

A huge congratulations to everyone who engaged in the Summer Reading Bingo Challenge. We were really pleased with the number of children who returned their bingo cards and shared photos of themselves reading in all sorts of different environments. Certificates were awarded in last week's celebration assembly to all those who took part.

### **Music Tuition**

This term, Mr Lawrence is offering music tuition with a range of different instruments in school on Monday mornings. These sessions are paid for directly to Mr Lawrence. If you are interested in your child learning to play an instrument, please contact Mr Lawrence for more information at [kakapoartsLtd@gmail.com](mailto:kakapoartsLtd@gmail.com)

### **PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)**

This year, we are continuing to follow the PATHS programme in school. The children in all classes will have PATHS lessons each week and during this time we will cover many topics including:

- Friendship
- How to recognise and understand feelings
- How to use and improve thinking skills
- Various ways to solve problems etc.

We will continue to have a 'PATHS Child of the Day' in each class. They will have special privileges on that day, and they will bring home a compliments sheet with compliments from adults, their peers and themselves. When your child is 'PATHS Child of the Day', please give them a compliment to add to their sheet when they come home.

### **Meet the Teacher Meetings**

Thank you to those parents who joined our 'Meet the Teacher' meetings; we hope these were useful. Please remember that teachers are available at the end of the school day if you would like to talk to them or can be contacted via email or Class Dojo. Here are the email addresses for our class teachers:

[crackham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:crackham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)  
[acawley@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:acawley@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)



[lpennock@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:lpennock@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)  
[mbonham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:mbonham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)  
[dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)

For their wellbeing, please do not contact them beyond 6pm.

### **Little Wandle Parents Session**

Thank you to those parents who attended the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised information session for parents this week. If you were unable to attend the session and would like more information about our approach to the teaching of phonics, please ask Mr Rackham for the handouts or visit our school website under the tab Parents/Carers, Phonics. The Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised website also has a wealth of information and can be found at <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

### **Pip the Reading Dog**

This year, we have a brand-new member of our school community, Pip the dog. Pip is coming into school every Wednesday afternoon to listen to the children read with his owners, Fran and Michael. Here is Pip in action.



### **Tapestry**

We are continuing to use Tapestry again this year, an online learning journal for children in EYFS. Tapestry is widely used across the country and will provide parents with regular feedback about their child's progress.

### **Christian Values**

Each half term, we focus on a different Christian value and this value permeates through the curriculum and our Collective Worship. Our Christian value for the first half of the autumn term is thankfulness, which links in nicely with our forthcoming harvest celebrations.

### **Christian Vision**

Our Christian vision is 'Let your light shine' (Matthew 5:16) and the children recently all contributed to a whole school glass project to showcase this. We are looking forward to seeing what the final version looks like when it is returned to school.

### **Times Tables Rockstars**

Please remember that the children continue to have access to Times Tables Rockstars. We would encourage them to use this resource: a sound understanding of times table facts is essential in becoming a successful mathematician.

### **Shoe Box Appeal**

Each year, we support the Rotary Shoebox Scheme to spread a little happiness to those less fortunate than ourselves in many different countries across Central and Eastern Europe. We would be extremely grateful if the children could donate an item which could be included in a shoebox or fill a whole shoebox if they are able to before half term. Items do not need to be brand new, although should be of good quality. These can be placed in the blue bin at the top of the school field. Howard from the Downham Market Rotary Club is coming into school next week to talk to the children about the appeal. For more information about the scheme and lists of suggested items, please visit [www.rotaryshoebox.org](http://www.rotaryshoebox.org)

### **Foodbank Donations**

As part of our Harvest celebrations, we would like to again support the Downham Market Foodbank. If you are able to donate an item(s) to the foodbank, please drop them at the school gate on the morning of our Harvest Festival which is being held at St Mary's Church, Denver, on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 2.15pm. Some members of the School Council will deliver the items to the foodbank. Thank you for your support.

### **Outdoor Learning Area Project**

To build on our outdoor learning offer, we are looking to develop an outdoor learning area, including an outdoor classroom on our school field. With the help of one of the parents, a grant application has been submitted and we are hoping to hear the outcome of this after half term. To help raise money to support this application, the School Council are organising a non-uniform day on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October. More details to follow soon.

### **Attendance Focus**

We are continually working hard to improve school attendance due to the impact that absence from school can have on learning. As part of this work, each newsletter throughout the year has had an attendance focus.

We recently sent out a letter from the Local Authority regarding school attendance. In line with the expectations set out in '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)', fixed penalty notices will be issued if the criteria set out in that letter is met. The letter can be found on our school website.

To promote good attendance, we celebrate the class with the highest attendance each month. September's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	94.1%
Class 2	91.1%
Class 3	90.9%
Class 4	94.6%

Well done to Class 4 for having the highest attendance for the month of September!

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **92.5%**. Thank you for supporting our drive to improve school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

### **Out of School Hours Communication**

Just a reminder that you can contact the school urgently, for example with a safeguarding concern, by using the dedicated email address [worried@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:worried@denver.norfolk.sch.uk). If you are worried about something, please do contact the school via this method and a member of staff will get back to you as soon as possible.

### **Headlice**

We have been informed of a number of cases of head lice in school over the last few weeks. Please check your child's hair regularly and if necessary, ensure it is treated. Long hair should be tied up as this helps prevent the spread of head lice.

### **Allergies**

We have several children with nut allergies in school, therefore it is important that lunchboxes do not contain peanut butter or nut products. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Snacks**

Children in Classes 1 and 2 receive a free piece of fruit as their snack each day. Children in Classes 3 and 4 can bring in a healthy snack from home should they wish to.

### **Water Bottles**

It is important that the children are hydrated throughout the day, as being fully hydrated means that they will be able to think faster, be more focussed, and have greater clarity of thought. Please ensure that your child brings a water bottle to school each day containing water only, thank you.

### **Uniform**

Please can you ensure that all uniform, including coats, is named so that lost items can be returned to their owners. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Wellbeing**

We continue to prioritise wellbeing for both pupils and staff in school. We recently appointed our new Wellbeing Ambassadors, Amber and Lauren, onto our School Council and they will be working hard this year to champion positive mental health for the children and adults in school.

### **SEND Coffee Morning**

We are having a SEND coffee morning on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 9am. This is an opportunity for our parents/carers of children with SEND to meet and share their experiences. We will also aim to signpost resources and support networks and give parents/carers the opportunity to ask any questions they might have about SEND.

### **Denver Supertots**

Due to the popularity of our Denver Supertots playgroup, we will be offering weekly sessions this year. We are just waiting for the necessary safeguarding checks to be completed for the students from DMA and then we will communicate dates for these sessions.

### **Parent Consultation Evenings**

Parent consultation evenings will happen after half term on 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November. These provide an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress with their class teacher. Appointments will be face to face. More details will follow before half term.

### **School Council**

We recently held elections to appoint this year's School Council members and so many of the children were keen to be involved and submitted applications. The School Council has representatives from all classes, and they meet every half term to discuss relevant issues and be the voice of their peers. Here is a photo of this year's School Council.



### **Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley**

Our Outdoor learning club at Denver has grown in popularity this year, so I need to welcome our second teacher to the club, Mr Rackham! We would like to say a big hello to all our new children, and some new helpers too!

We have had a busy couple of sessions in our Outdoor Learning club to begin what has been a warm start to the autumn term. We have been looking at the environment around our field and thinking about the changes that autumn brings. So far, we have concentrated on a couple of 'scavenger hunts'. The first required the children to find things beginning with the letters in their name (children with long names, or letters such as 'x' in their name were really grateful to their parents!). The second concentrated on the colours of autumn.

Over the next few weeks, we have lots of autumnal fun planned, and look forward to seeing everyone each Wednesday.







### **Messy Church**

In association with our vicar and his wife, Rev'd Nigel Moat and Heidi Moat, we will be starting a Messy Church group once a half term on a Monday after school in the school hall till 5:00pm. The first session is taking place next Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October. We hope to see many of you there.

### **Office News**

Apologies for the amount of emails we have sent out since the start of the new school year. Unfortunately, there is so much important information we need to pass on, especially for our new families, and this is our regular communication route. To limit the amount of communication we need to send out, please can we ask that you:

- regularly check your inbox for emails from us
- read the information properly to avoid any unnecessary queries
- make a note of any relevant diary dates
- respond to any relevant emails and consents promptly so that we do not have to send further email reminders and clog up your inbox!

Our monthly newsletters and school website also include useful information together with dates for your diaries.



### **Drinks**

Our new daily break-time drinks arrangement to help us be a cashless school is working well. Here is break-time drinks payment schedule for this school year.

<b>Half term</b>	<b>Payment amount</b>	<b>Payment by 9am on:</b>
Autumn 2 (30/10 – 20/12/23)	£7.60	Thurs 12/10/23
Spring 1 (04/01 – 16/02/24)	£6.40	Thurs 07/12/23
Spring 2 (26/02 – 27/03/24)	£4.60	Thurs 08/02/24
Summer 1 (15/04 – 24/05/24)	£5.80	Thurs 14/03/24
Summer 2 (03/06 – 19/07/24)	£7.00	Thurs 16/05/24

If your child would like to have a daily break-time drink of apple juice, orange juice or milk, please make online payments for the amount requested **ONLY**, stating 'drinks' and the initial and surname of the child, by 9am on the cut-off date. This enables us to quickly and efficiently reconcile relevant payments. Regretfully, **there will be no extension to these dates** - any payment received after the deadline will not be included for that half term and will automatically be carried forward to the following half term.

### **Update from The Friends**

The Friends of Denver School held their AGM on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September and it was wonderful to welcome some new parents to the group. Our elected committee members for this year are Amanda Dawson as Chairperson, Sarah Pettit as Vice-Chairperson and Julia Covell as Treasurer. Naomi Peach will be shadowing Julia this year with a view to taking on the role of Treasurer from September 2024. Thank you for offering to take on these roles. We are still looking for a Secretary whose main roles are to use their excellent communication and organisational skills to arrange meetings, take minutes and keep records. More information can be found here <https://www.pta.co.uk/running-a-pta/managing-a-pta/pta-committee-roles-and-responsibilities/>. If you were unable to attend our AGM but would like to get involved, please do come along to our next meeting scheduled for 3pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October or email [friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)

The Friends will be sending out an email shortly detailing a timetable of planned events for this term including a Monster / Firework disco and our annual Christmas Fayre.

### **Forthcoming Events**

#### **Tag Rugby/Netball Matches – 6<sup>th</sup> October**

The children in Class 3 will be taking part in tag rugby and netball matches against Downham Preparatory School on 6<sup>th</sup> October. These will be development sessions to help the children learn the rules and gain some competitive experience.

#### **Cluster Cross Country – 10<sup>th</sup> October**

We will be sending a group of children from KS2 to the cluster cross country competition at Hillcrest Primary School on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October. Good luck to all our runners!

### **U11 Tag Rugby Match – 6<sup>th</sup> October**

We have arranged another tag rugby match against Downham Prep for 11<sup>th</sup> October, but this time for some children in Class 4.

### **Class 1 Learning Café – 17<sup>th</sup> October**

We will be inviting Class 1 parents into school on the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> October for a Learning Café. A story will be shared and then parents will take part in a related activity with their child.

### **Harvest Assembly – 18<sup>th</sup> October**

We are having a Harvest assembly at St Mary's Church, Denver on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October at 2.15pm. All are welcome to attend.

### **Cluster Football Tournament – 20<sup>th</sup> October**

A group of children from Class 4 will be representing the school at the Cluster Football tournament on the afternoon of 20<sup>th</sup> October. Good luck to the team!

### **OMNES Dodgeball – 20<sup>th</sup> October**

Some children in Classes 2 and 3 will take part in an OMNES (meaning 'For All') dodgeball tournament on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

## **Sports News**

### **Bike to School Week**

This week we marked National Bike to School Week by asking the children to bike or scoot to school. We were pleased to see lots of bikes and scooters in our cycle shelter; one family even biked from West Dereham.



### **Active Kids**

The first of the Active Kids festivals for children in Y1 took place yesterday at Lynnsport. The children enjoyed taking part in a variety of activities and they are looking forward to the two other sessions which will take place in the spring and summer terms.





### **Sporting Stars**

#### **Aspiring Lioness**

Lauren in Class 3 has been selected by Norwich City FC and Peterborough United to join their girls U8's football academies, and she has started her training this month. Well done Lauren – she is on her way to becoming a little lioness.



#### **Cricket Success**

Congratulations to Finley in Class 4 who was awarded the Best Batter trophy for the U11 team at Stow Cricket Club earlier this month. He had scored the most runs for the team this season. A super achievement, well done Finley!





### And finally...

We are looking to expand our team of volunteers to help in school with a variety of different tasks e.g. listening to readers, helping out on visits, helping to run clubs etc. If you have any time you can spare and are interested in volunteering, please do let me know.

### Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

#### 2023/2024

##### Autumn Term

October 2023	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Mon	Messy Church
	6 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	U9 Tag Rugby/Netball Matches
	10 <sup>th</sup>	Tue	Cluster Cross Country
	11 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	U11 Tag Rugby Match
	13 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	Non-Uniform Day – Outdoor Classroom
	17 <sup>th</sup>	Tue	Class 1 Learning Café
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	SEND Coffee Morning
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	Harvest Festival
	20 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	Cluster Football
	20 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	OMNES Dodgeball
	23 <sup>rd</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup>		School closed for half term
	30 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	Children return to school
	31 <sup>st</sup>	Tue	School Photographs
November 2023	6 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	Parent Consultation Evening
	8 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	Parent Consultation Evening
	30 <sup>th</sup>	Thu	Christmas Fayre
December 2023	8 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	Christingle Service
	15 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	Pantomime Visit
	18 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	Carol Service
	20 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	Last day of autumn term

##### Spring Term

January 2024	4 <sup>th</sup>	Thu	Children return to school
February 2024	19 <sup>th</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup>		School closed for half term
	26 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	Children return to school
March 2024	27 <sup>th</sup>	Wed	Last day of spring term
April 2024	15 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	Children return to school

##### Summer Term

May 2024	6 <sup>th</sup>	Mon	School closed for Bank Holiday
	27 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup>		School closed for half term
June 2023	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Mon	Children return to school
July 2023	19 <sup>th</sup>	Fri	Last day of summer term