



October 2023

Newsletter



Welcome to the October newsletter. Despite the warm start to the month, autumn has now definitely arrived. Each term flies by, but it does not seem possible that half term is already upon us. Here is a flavour of what we have been doing in school throughout the month.

Open Morning

This morning we hosted an Open Morning aimed at the new Reception starters for next September. The children and their families were given a tour of the school by our Y6 children and then spent some time in Class 1. Refreshments were also provided by the Friends. If you know of anyone who missed the Open Morning, please get them to contact the school to arrange a visit.

Harvest Assembly

On 18th October, we held our Harvest Assembly in St Mary's Church, Denver. The School Council led some readings and prayers, and all the children were involved with sharing harvest themed songs, with some lovely solo performances. Reverend Nigel Moat gave an address and challenged Mr Cawley and Mr Lawrence to a competition to see who could eat a jammy dodger biscuit the quickest – well done Mr Lawrence for rising to this challenge and winning! It was lovely to see so many parents, carers and grandparents in the church – thank you for coming along to join us in our celebrations.

Harvest Celebrations

A huge thank you for the many donations we received as part of our Harvest celebrations. These will be taken to the Downham Market Foodbank where they will be gratefully received by many local families. Here is a photo of the School Council with some of your donations.



SEND Coffee Morning

On Wednesday 18th October, we held a SEND coffee morning in school. Sarah Downes from Norfolk Family Hub attended and had lots of useful information to share about the what the Hub can offer families. We are hoping more parents/carers will join us for our next coffee morning planned for December.

For more information about Family Hubs in Norfolk, please visit <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/family-hubs>

Shoe Box Appeal

Thank you for the many donations we have received for the Rotary Shoebox Scheme. There is still time for items, or even full shoeboxes, to be brought into school. These will be collected in the week after half term. For more information about the scheme and lists of suggested items, please visit www.rotaryshoebox.org

Swan Youth Project Assembly

Louise Ramsey from the Swan Youth Project delivered an assembly on wellbeing and mental health to the school on Thursday 19th October. She talked to the children about strategies to help them to overcome butterflies in their tummies around stressful times.



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 has been kindness. Each class has produced a kindness banner in which they have shared small acts of kindness from others. Here is Class 3's kindness banner.



Living for the Future Competition

On Friday 13th October, Class 4 took part in the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's 'Living for the Future' competition. They were tasked with creating a 'green' idea for their town and they had to make a prototype out of recyclable materials to showcase this. In groups, the children took part in a range of activities which were graded out of 5. The winners were the team with the best overall score at the end of the competition.

This is the outline of the competition that the organisers provided:

The main aim of Living For The Future is for students to create a "green" idea for their town and to make a prototype out of recyclable materials to showcase this. They will work in groups with their peers to create the best ideas possible. Students will participate in a showcase displaying the ideas from the whole year group in their school where one winner from the year will be chosen. The winners will then need to create a short video or 'trailer' of their idea and submit this by email by the 13th of November. The county-wide final will be held virtually on the 24th of November - all schools and the full year group are welcome to join to see their school's ideas displayed and even catch a glimpse of themselves on screen!

The day began with the class learning about entrepreneurship, the skills and attributes that make some people able to have success. The children were asked to consider finding people with different skills and attributes to themselves when forming a group so that the range of talent was more diverse.

To practise being able to be innovative the children were set a practise task of thinking of an idea that would have helped a stone age person thinking about how it would be funded and how it would be beneficial. Next, it was on to the task itself. The children had to think of an environmental issue affecting their local town (such as energy, waste and transport) and develop this into a problem statement.

The problem statement was the basis for planning and designing an idea to remedy the problem which was eco-friendly and sustainable. This led onto an afternoon of practical activities to assemble, then explain and demonstrate the idea with a prototype. This resulted in some great inventions which are now on display in the main corridor.

The final task was pitching in the style of Dragon's Den. The winning team was The Green Ride. Here are some of the end products:



Class 1 Learning Café

On Tuesday 17th October, Class 1 held their first Learning Café of the school year. Learning Cafés are a great opportunity for parents and carers to engage in their child's learning. The session started by sharing the popular book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, with lots of impressive actions from both the children and parents! The children then choose their own animal and created their own animal hunt. It was a lovely session; we look forward to offering further Learning Cafés throughout the year.



Class 2 Literacy by Mr Cawley

Mr Grinling lived in a little white cottage with his wife and their cat Hamish. He was the lighthouse keeper... and so the stories began, and the children's imaginations were captured! They have all worked so hard this half term, looking at the unit 'stories with familiar settings'. We have looked at the series of books from Ronda and David Armitage, and the children have planned their own stories based around the characters and the settings; that aside, it's the extra effort that all the children have put into the topic via their homework that has really impressed us! They have really gone the extra mile to absorb themselves into the stories, which has, in turn, enabled them to come up with some brilliant ideas for their own writing. This partnership of home and school has enabled me to create a little celebration display in the library, adding to the fantastic creativity that is already in abundance in that inviting and calming space. Thank you for your involvement as parents, and the time you have given to supporting your children enjoy and succeed in their writing. P.S. The format of homework has been a hit with the children, so I will be continuing it next half term.



Library Artwork

A huge thank you to one of our former pupils, Molly Goulding, for creating some fabulous pieces of artwork to decorate our school library. I'm sure you will agree that these paintings are amazing; thank you Molly for sharing your talent with us.



Teddy Bears' Picnic by Mr Rackham

In literacy recently, Class 1 have been looking at the story 'Where's my Teddy?' by Jez Alborough, following on from a week based on 'Little Bear Lost'. As we had been looking at a lot of teddy bear stories, we decided to discuss our own teddies and hold our own teddy bears' picnic. Plenty of bear snacks were enjoyed with our bears like jam sandwiches and bear crisps. I hope the children enjoyed the day with their bears.



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.

Please remember that, 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.

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

Class 1	97.1%
Class 2	96.4%
Class 3	95.8%
Class 4	98.2%

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

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **97.3%**. Thank you for supporting our drive to improve school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

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.

Outdoor Learning Area Project

I am thrilled to inform you that we have been awarded a grant of £28,500 for our outdoor classroom project through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Infrastructure Funding from the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. This is amazing news, and I would like to thank one of our parents, for her hard work in applying for this on behalf of the school. Last Friday, we had a non-uniform day in school to raise money to contribute to this project. Thank you for your generous donations – we raised an impressive £112.20. The children were shown some designs of what the outdoor classroom might look like, and they voted for their favourite. We are hoping to get started with the project in the new year.

Pip the Reading Dog

Pip the reading dog continues to come in weekly to listen to the children read. He now has his own special 'School Reading Dog' coat which he is proudly showing off in the photos below.



Out of School Hours Communication

Just a reminder that you can contact the school urgently over the half term break, for example with a safeguarding concern, by using the dedicated email address 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.

PE Kit

Please can you ensure that children wear the correct PE uniform on PE days. PE kit should be plain and in school colours, without large logos. Earrings must be removed for PE and not taped over. Thank you for your cooperation.

Denver Supertots

We are hoping to start our Denver Supertots playgroup again after half term. Dates will be shared once these have been confirmed.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Parent consultation evenings will happen after half term on 6th and 8th November. These provide an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress with their class teacher. Appointments will be face to face. Sign-up sheets will be available on the school field from Monday 30th October.

Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley

The end of the first term is always a special time in school, as it marks the end of the warmer weather and the beginning of the colder, darker nights; and what better way to mark this in our outdoor learning session than to toast some bread over an open fire and have a game of conkers?! So many fun things can come from such simple roots; the children had a wonderful time toasting bread, while learning about 'irreversible changes' and playing conkers. It was really lovely to see parents joining in and enjoying the moment too! The weather was kind, and we even had an impromptu fly past, courtesy of RAF Marham! A fitting and satisfying end to our club for this the half term.





Messy Church

This year, the school is running a half-termly Messy Church led by a team which includes some parents, school governors and volunteers from local Churches. Here is a summary of the first session from Heidi Moat:

Our first Messy Church was on a Harvest theme around the Bible story of Ruth. We made mini scarecrows of the kind farmer Boaz who let Ruth gather extra grain in his fields and tiny baskets of joy to remember all the things we are thankful for. The corn-hole throwing game was great fun for children (and adults!) with lots of energy and for those who wanted to do something quieter, there were a range of paper-based puzzles and activities linked to the story. True to its name, the most popular activity was the messiest - making fat-balls for the birds!

Food and drinks are always served at the start of each session - a mix of healthy options and treats. The atmosphere was relaxed with some adults and children leaving early and others arriving a bit later than the advertised times. Everyone was made welcome and had a good time together. We have room for more to come along so please come and join us next time. We have some super Christmassy crafts planned and baked potatoes.

The next Messy Church session will take place on Monday 4th December from 3.30-5pm in the school. The theme will be Advent. All children need to have an adult with them as the focus is always on enjoying doing things together. Younger children can come too as well as children from other schools. There is no charge for Messy Church and no pressure to give a donation. However, if you'd like to give something to help us cover costs, you are welcome to do so.

Update from The Friends

The Friends held their AGM on Monday 2nd October and it was lovely to welcome new parents to the group. Many thanks to everyone for attending and to those parents who volunteered to take on roles on the committee.

The Friends have several exciting events planned between now and Christmas including:

- **Monster / Firework disco** at Denver Village Hall from 5.30 – 7pm on Wednesday 1st November
- **Bag2school collection** on Wednesday 15th November – this initiative raises funds for schools through textile recycling. Simply place unwanted items into the bag provided this week in your bookbags and bring to the front of school before 9am on Wednesday 15th November. These will then be collected and the school will receive a donation for the items received. For more information on what items Bag2school collect, please visit <https://bag2school.com/what-we-collect>
- **Christmas Fayre** on Thursday 30th November – this years event will combine the very popular stalls designed and run by Classes 3 and 4 with teas, coffees and cakes served by The Friends in the School Hall and their incredible raffle – including their amazing luxury Christmas Hamper. This is always a fantastic event and one that the children really enjoy working on and playing an important role in helping The Friends fundraising efforts. If any parents / carers have any items that they are happy to donate for the raffle then The Friends will be collecting items w/c 20th November. Thank you!
- **Christmas cracker making** – week commencing 4th December, members of The Friends will be coming into school to make Christmas crackers with the children to have with their school Christmas lunch. This was an activity that the children enjoyed last year – especially making their party hats! Please do start collecting kitchen roll cardboard tubes for the children to use.
- **Name the Polar Bear** – in the last couple of weeks in school The Friends will give the children an opportunity to name a gorgeous cuddly toy polar bear for a suggested donation of £1.00. This fluffy friend is then the child's to keep and love. S/he does have a little teddy friend who will also go to a loving new home as a runner up gift.

In the New Year, The Friends are hoping to organise a Valentine's Disco, a bingo evening, crazy hair day in school and much more! If you would like to join, please do come along to our meetings. They always welcome new faces and new ideas.

Forthcoming Events

U11 Tag Rugby Match – 3rd November

We have re-arranged the postponed tag rugby match against Downham Prep for 3rd November.

Odd Socks Day – 13th November

To mark the start of Anti-Bullying week (13th -17th November), we are again taking part in Odd Socks Day on Monday 13th November. The children will be asked to come to school wearing odd socks to show that we stand against any forms of bullying.

Mixed Football League – 16th November

A group of children from Class 4 will be taking part in the Mixed Football League Tournament on Thursday 16th November.

Girls' Football League – 17th November

The following day is the Girls' Football League Tournament, again for a team in Class 4.

Children in Need – 17th November

The School Council have decided that they would like to support Children in Need again this year. They are organising a non-uniform day and asking the children to wear bright colours or spots for a suggested donation of £1. Mrs Fenn has kindly offered to bake biscuits which will be sold for 50p each.

Christmas Fayre – 30th November

As mentioned in the Friends' update, we are organising a Christmas Fayre which will be held on Thursday 30th November. The children in KS2 will be making games for the children to play. There will also be a book fair. More details to follow soon.

Messy Church – 4th December

The next Messy Church session will take place on 4th December from 3.30-5pm in the school hall. The theme will be Advent.

Christingle Service – 8th December

We are having a Christingle Service on 8th December at 9.30am in St Mary's Church, Denver. The children will make Christingles, kindly supported by the ladies from St Mary's Church.

Choir Performance – 11th December

Our school choir have been invited to sing at Oakes Court Residential Home on Monday 11th December at 3.30pm. More details to follow soon.

Pantomime – 15th December

The children in Year 1-6 will be visiting the Maltings, Ely to watch the pantomime, Robin Hood. This is very kindly being funded by the Friends of Denver School. The children in Reception will have a Christmas party in school.

Carol Service – 18th December

Our annual Carol Service will take place in St Mary's Church, Denver on Monday 18th December at 5.45pm

Sports News

Tag Rugby/Netball Matches

The children in Class 3 took part in tag rugby and netball matches against Downham Preparatory School on 6th October. These were development sessions to help the children

learn the rules and gain some competitive experience. They really enjoyed the opportunity. Thank you to Downham Prep for joining us.

Cluster Cross Country

On a warm and sunny autumn morning on 10th October a group of 30 children travelled to Hillcrest Primary for the annual cluster cross country event. These were the children that had achieved a top three finish in their in-school competition held the previous week. The event was well-attended by over 400 children, more than had ever entered before. Year 2 pupils raced 500 metres, Years 3 and 4 raced 1000 metres and Years 5 and 6 raced 1500 metres.

A top ten finish in the event for children in Key Stage 2 gave automatic qualification to the next round, the area finals to be held at Lynnsport Dutton Pavilion on 2nd November.

Congratulations to our qualifiers: Evie Y4, Octavia Y3, Osian Y3, Esther Y4, Chase Y4, Amelia Y5, Max Y5, Ella Y6, Mia Y6 and Emie Y6.

Children in Year 2 were able to compete for the first time at cluster level and we had great success with Libby coming 2nd, Ottilie 3rd and Rebekah 4th along with Jupiter in 3rd for the boys.



Dodgeball Taster

On Monday 16th October Class 3 had a Dodgeball taster session as part of the OMNES games events. Here is a report from Katherine in Y3.

At the Dodgeball taster there were 4 teams, Halloween, Team Harry Potter, Man U and Dodgeball Winners. The first match was Dodgeball Winners versus Halloween. Halloween tried their best but lost. I felt quite sorry for them. The Dodgeball Winners really were what they called themselves. Shawn was very good and we all had a good time.



Fitness Tracker Training

On Friday 6th October, Classes 3 and 4 were joined by Gary Hawkins from West Norfolk School Sports Partnership to begin Fitness Tracker challenges. On this initial visit the children were measured for their abilities in throwing, jumping, agility and flexibility. They then completed an endurance challenge around the Golden Mile track. He was impressed by the high level of skills displayed by many of the children.

Following on from Gary's visit we will be given a record of our current personal bests. Gary will set some training tasks to do that will support us in beating these when he next visits later in the academic year. The children will retake the challenges to see how much they have improved in each of the areas. We look forward to being able to improve our fitness and ability across the range of fundamental movement skills for sports.

Sporting Stars

Gymnastics Success

Rebekah in Class 2 has achieved her Red Level 6 Ribbon in gymnastics – well done Rebekah!



Dance Star

Emie in Class 4 took part in a dance competition in Peterborough and came 1st in the team event and 2nd in duo – excellent work Emie!



And finally...

I hope you all have a lovely half term and a well-deserved rest. Enjoy the break and we look forward to welcoming the children back on Monday 30th October for what is always a very busy half term in the run up to Christmas.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2023/2024

Autumn Term

October 2023	23 rd – 27 th		School closed for half term
	30 th	Mon	Children return to school
	31 st	Tue	School Photographs
November 2023	1 st	Wed	Disco
	6 th	Mon	Parent Consultation Evening
	8 th	Wed	Parent Consultation Evening
	13 th	Mon	Odd Socks Day
	16 th	Thu	Mixed Football League Tournament Y5/6
	17 th	Fri	Girls' Football League Tournament Y5/6
	27 th	Mon	Tag Rugby Tournament Y5/6
December 2023	30 th	Thu	Christmas Fayre
	4 th	Mon	Messy Church
	8 th	Fri	Christingle Service
	11 th	Mon	Choir - Oakes Court Performance
	15 th	Fri	Pantomime Visit
	18 th	Mon	Carol Service
	20 th	Wed	Last day of autumn term

Spring Term

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

Summer Term

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