



January 2024

Newsletter



Welcome to the first newsletter of 2024! January can often seem a particularly long month, although it has whizzed by in school, and we, as always, have lots to share in this newsletter.

Technology Day by Mrs Henden

On Tuesday 23rd January, eager learners in Class 4 were joined by Alan Culley, Bryan Bradley and Martin Chilvers from Downham Market Rotary Club for their new Junior Technology Challenge, 'War is Brewing'.

The challenge was to imagine being back in 1540 with the following scenario: Invading forces are approaching, and the King sends a messenger who must return with 300 men as reinforcements within 2 days or be executed. The messenger comes across a piranha infested river with a dilapidated crane in the centre. With a limited number of resources, the messenger must think of ways to successfully get himself and his army across the river.



Small groups used their imagination and the physical resources provided by the Rotary Club to explore and create a portfolio of different ideas. These were scored against the specific criteria outlined at the start of the task. The budding engineers produced some excellent and very inventive ideas.

The technology day was to enrich the children's learning in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects. Rotary Technology Tournaments are one day events involving an unseen challenge to develop team building and communication skills, planning and time management skills, and give them an opportunity to apply their skills. The aim of such events is to inspire students to consider careers in these areas. This was certainly the case at Denver as the children rose to the challenge and had a fantastic and memorable learning experience. The winning team of Alfie, Mia, James and Seren are pictured below.



Children's Mental Health Week

We will soon be engaging in Children's Mental Health Week, which this year is running from 5th - 11th February. This year's theme ***My Voice Matters*** is about empowering young people to use their voices, share what matters to them, and encourage those around them to hear their voices. We are having a special assembly on Monday 5th led by the Swan Youth Project. The School Council and our wellbeing ambassadors are planning to create a dedicated space for wellbeing using the outside shelter and each class will be involved in its creation. Throughout the week we aim for the children to develop the knowledge, skills and values to support their own and others' mental health and wellbeing.



School Pets

Continuing on the theme of wellbeing, the School Council members have expressed a wish for us to have school pets to support their mental health and teach them about responsibility. After much discussion, we finally agreed that guinea pigs would make great school pets. We have already had a parent generously offer to sponsor this project, but we would be really grateful if anyone has a spare hutch or any resources, food etc. that we could make use of. We will also need some willing volunteers to help look after our new school members during holiday periods. If you are able to support us with this project, please get in touch. Thank you for your support.

New Year's Resolution

At the beginning of term, we discussed in collective worship what our whole school new year's resolution should be for 2024. The children made some very good suggestions and we finally decided on: to have faith in ourselves and always seek to look for the positives in life.

Christian Value

Our Christian value for this half term is justice and we have spent a lot of time discussing how we can be fairer in our words and actions.

Big Garden Bird Watch

The Big Garden Birdwatch is the UK's biggest citizen science wildlife survey. Organised by the RSPB, it helps us understand how our garden birds are doing right now. It took place last weekend and Juniper in Class 2 took part, recording how many birds she saw and submitting her results. Well done Juniper for being a super birdwatcher and contributing to this very important research.



8 Billion Ideas Competition

You may remember from a previous newsletter that a group of children from Class 4 were 3rd in a local eco initiative. Here they are with their winning £10 vouchers which will be presented to them in this week's celebration assembly.



Weather

Although we have hopefully seen the worst of the winter weather, February can sometimes be an unpredictable month, so we wanted to remind you of our procedures for extreme weather. We always do our utmost to keep the school open, however, it may occasionally be necessary to close the school in really bad weather as several members of staff travel long distances across Norfolk and beyond. If this is the case, regular announcements will be made on Radio Norfolk and Greatest Hits Radio (West Norfolk) soon after 7am. Details will also be posted on the Norfolk County Council school closure list at: www.schoolclosures.norfolk.gov.uk as well as our Twitter and Facebook pages.

Space Lunch

On Thursday 18th January, the children enjoyed a special space themed lunch, kindly prepared by Mrs Fenn and Miss Metcalfe. To help add to the atmosphere at lunchtime, Class 1 built a rocket which is now proudly displayed in their classroom as their topic for this term is space.



New Projector

A huge thank you to The Friends for purchasing a new projector for the school to enable us to show videos in collective worship. We used the new projector in our Tuesday collective worship this week and it worked very well, although sitting facing the other way in the hall will take some getting used to! We will now be able to phase out using the OHP and hopefully make it easier to see the words to the hymns!



Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

The **Big Norfolk Holiday Fun** holiday activity scheme is back again for the Easter holidays. Free places are available for children who are eligible for means-tested free school meals. For more information, please visit [Big Norfolk Holiday Fun - Active Norfolk](#)

Outdoor Learning Club Update by Mr Cawley

The first outdoor learning club was a very chilly session! Leading into den building later in the term, we were learning the basic knots to hold two pieces of rope together, as well as an easy-to-undo lashing. What better way of learning how to tie a knot, than to be a knot! The children really enjoyed climbing over and under each other to replicate the instruction 'right over left and under, left over right and under'. Once this visual was mastered, we progressed to using string to make a chain of knotted loveliness! We finished the session with a lashing, which taught the children that there are other ways to fix things which makes it easier to undo. The children had an excellent time, in a very cold hour; the one day we needed gloves we couldn't wear them!



Office News

Absence

If your child will not be in school for any reason, it is really important that you let us know as soon as you can, preferably before our attendance register is taken at 9am. Even if you have passed on a verbal message at morning drop off, please also let the school office know so that they can mark the register accordingly and pass the information on to the relevant class. You can do this by emailing absence@denver.norfolk.sch.uk (preferably) or ringing us on 01366 383272. Please leave a message on our voicemail if it is before the school office opens. If your child has diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they should be absent from school for 48 hours from the last bout of sickness.

Holidays

Please remember that holidays during term time **will not be authorised** and may be considered for a Fixed Penalty Notice should the criteria be met (**9 sessions or 4.5 school days of unauthorised absence within a 6 school week period**). An absence request should be completed **before** any holidays are taken and can be accessed by requesting a link from the school office. It is important that we are made aware of children taking holidays before they are taken, rather than once children are on holiday as is sometimes the case.

School Lunches

If your child is in KS2, not eligible for free school meals, but would like to have a school lunch, **please send online payment in advance and at least by the Friday morning of the week in which they were taken**. This avoids the build-up of money owing and reduces time spent chasing for payment. Lunches are currently £2.35 each.

If you are struggling to pay for school lunches but would like your child to have one at lunch time, you may be entitled to claim for free school meals. To check if you are eligible, please click the following link and follow instructions: [Free school meals - Norfolk County Council](#)

Sandwich Option

From February half-term, we will be trialling a new system to encourage children to try our delicious hot school lunches. Every day we will be offering a main hot meal or a jacket potato option, but the sandwich option will now **only be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays**. The menu will remain the same.

Correspondence and Communication

Please can we ask that you check emails and Class Dojo regularly to ensure that you are aware of important messages such as clubs being cancelled etc. Thank you for your co-operation.

Out of Hours Communication

Out of school hours you can contact the school urgently, 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.

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. January's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	96.5%
Class 2	95.6%
Class 3	97.0%
Class 4	95.9%

Well done again to Class 3 for having the highest attendance for the month of January.

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **96.2%**. Thank you for continuing to support our drive to improve school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

Jewellery

Please can we remind you that jewellery, apart from a watch and stud earrings, should not be worn to school. Necklaces, rings and bracelets should not be worn. Thank you for your support with this.

Denver Youth Group

Just a reminder of the forthcoming events for Denver Youth Group:

- 5th February – Valentine Cooking and Craft
- 13th March – Walpole Skaters (6.30-8.30pm)
- 25th March – Indoor Tournaments
- 15th April – Norfolk Owls
- 29th April – Indoor/Outdoor Games
- 13th May – Treasure Hunt
- 20th May – Rock Climbing Wall
- 8th July – AGM

Collector Cards

Please can we remind you that collector cards, such as Pokémon, should not be brought into school as some can be very valuable and children get very upset when these are lost. Thank you for your support with this.

News from The Friends

The Friends have some fantastic events coming up for all the children to enjoy this term - some that even the parents/carers can get involved in if they would like!

Crazy hair day: Following on from the success of last year's Crazy Hair Day, The Friends have organised for the children (staff and parents can join in too!) to come to school with weird, wacky, crazy hair on Thursday 15th February. There will be a suggested donation of £1 which will go towards all the activities and events in school supported by The Friends.

Pupil disco: The Friends are in the process of organising the next school disco in Denver Village Hall and will send an email shortly with more details. It is always an event that the children enjoy and they have the opportunity to have a dance and natter with their friends outside of school.

Friends Logo Design: The Friends are hoping that the children will design a bright, colourful logo for them that can be used at events and on their fundraising letters. Please let their imaginations run wild and design something that captures all that The Friends do. These need to be returned to the School Office by Friday 1st March and templates will be sent out shortly.

Movie Night: With the purchase of the projector for the school by The Friends a whole new realm of possibilities opens up to have movie nights for the children. We are currently looking to organise a KS1 movie evening and a KS2 movie evening this term. If you have any suggestions of films that your child would love to see, please drop us an email (friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk)

Easter Egg Hunt and Afternoon Tea: On the last afternoon of term The Friends will be having an afternoon tea in the School Hall alongside an Easter raffle. The Easter Bunny has also promised that s/he will arrange an Easter Egg Hunt in and around school for the parents/carers and pupils to enjoy. We really hope that you are able to join us.

Yard Sale: Whilst this is just in to next term, Denver Yard Sale will be taking place on Sunday 21st April. More details to follow on how to book your stall etc.

The Friends are always looking for volunteers or new ideas of events that they can organise for the children and their families. If you would like to help or have an idea please email friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk . Thank you!

Sports News

Bikeability

Last week, a group of children from Class 3 took part in Bikeability Level 1 training. This is off road training which teaches the children how to maintain their bikes and how to ride safely. Well done to Katie, Osian, Octavia, Indi, Matthew L, Evie, Isabella, Rowan and Isla for achieving their Level 1 certificates. Later in the term, a group of children from Class 4 will be taking part in Level 2 training which is mostly based on the roads.

Gymnastics Taster Session

On 19th January, Premier Sport led some gymnastics taster sessions for Classes 1, 2 and 3 to enrich their current learning in PE. They children really enjoyed taking part and here are some of them in action.



Swimming Lessons

Throughout the spring term, the children in Class 4 are visiting Downham Market Alive for weekly swimming sessions. They are currently working on stroke technique and later in the term they will be learning life-saving skills.

Active Kids

On 18th January, the children in Y1 visited Lynnsport for the second of the Active Kids festivals. They took part in a number of exciting activities and thoroughly enjoyed themselves!



Forthcoming Events

Safer Internet Day – 6th February

Next Tuesday, 6th February, is Safer Internet Day. Each Class will explore ways in which they can keep themselves safe on the internet in their computing lessons during the week.

Valentine Messy Church – 12th February

The next Messy Church will be held in the school hall on Monday 12th February, 3.30 - 5pm. The session will have a Valentine theme. We hope to see many of you there.

Cluster Tag Rugby Festival – 12th February

The cluster tag rugby festival is taking place on 12th February. A group of children from Class 4 will be representing the school. Good luck Denver!

Class 1 Learning Café – 13th February

Class 1's next Learning Café is being held on Tuesday 13th February at the later time of 2-3pm. This session will have a dragon theme. Parents/carers will be able to take the children home once this session has finished. The children are really looking forward to sharing their learning with their parents.

Crazy Hair Day – 15th February

Following its popularity last year, Crazy Hair Day is returning on Thursday 15th February. We are looking forward to seeing the children's crazy hair creations, and hopefully the staff's too!

OMNES Games – 16th February

The next OMNES games, Speed Stacking, is being held on Friday 16th February. A group of children from Class 2 and Class 3 will be visiting Lynnsport for this event.

Bikeability – 4th - 7th March

As mentioned earlier, Bikeability Level 2 will be offered to children in Class 4 during this week.

Dance Festival – 6th March

The Dance Club are busy rehearsing their dance which they will perform at King's Lynn's Corn Exchange on 6th March. I have had a sneak peek at their rehearsals, and it is looking very good so far! A huge thank you to Miss de Vanche for running this club to prepare the children.

World Book Day – 7th March

We will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 7th March. We have a number of exciting activities planned and will once again be asking that the children come to school dressed as a favourite book character. We are also inviting parents into school from 3pm to read with your child/ren. More details will follow nearer the event.

Parent Consultations – 4th and 6th March

We will be offering face-to-face parent consultations on the 4th and 6th March. More details about how to book appointments will be sent out soon.

Big Walk and Wheel Week – 11th - 15th March

During this week, we will be encouraging the children to walk, scoot or cycle to school. We hope to see our cycle shelter full!

British Science Week – 11th - 15th March

It is also British Science Week this week and Mrs Henden, our science lead, is busy organising a range of fun challenges for the children to take part in.

Cluster Netball Tournament – 19th March

The cluster netball tournament for children in Y5/6 takes place in March. Go netballers!

Cluster Football Tournament – 22nd March

On Friday 22nd March, we will be sending 2 teams of Y5/6 children to the cluster football tournament at Hillcrest. The teams performed really well at the last tournament and I'm sure they will strive to do equally as well this time.

OMNES Games – 16th February

Also on this day is another OMNES games, this time New Age Kurling. This is great opportunity for some children in Class 2 and Class 3 to try out a different event.

Easter Service – 27th March

We are planning to have an Easter service in St Mary's Church on the last day of the spring term, time yet to be confirmed.

And finally...

School is always a very busy place with lots going on. If you feel able to help us with any of our forthcoming activities, please approach me as we are always looking to expand our team of excellent volunteers. Please also remember that we are a listening school, and you can always approach us with any concerns or ideas you may have. I hope you all enjoy February half term when it arrives.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2023/2024

Spring Term

February 2024	5 th – 11 th		Children’s Mental Health Week
	6 th	Tue	Safer Internet Day
	12 th	Mon	Tag Rugby Festival – Y5/6
	12 th	Mon	Messy Church
	13 th	Tue	Class 1 Learning Café
	15 th	Thu	Crazy Hair Day
	16 th	Fri	OMNES Games Speedstacking
	19 th -23 rd		School closed for half term
	26 th	Mon	Children return to school
March 2024	4 th -7 th		Bikeability Level 2 Class 4
	4 th	Mon	Parent Consultation Evening
	6 th	Wed	Dance Festival
	6 th	Wed	Parent Consultation Evening
	7 th	Thu	World Book Day
	11 th -15 th		British Science Week
	11 th -15 th		Big Walk and Wheel Week
	19 th	Tue	Cluster Netball Tournament Y5/6
	22 nd	Fri	OMNES Games New Age Kurling
	22 nd	Fri	Cluster Football Tournament
	27 th	Wed	YR Vision and Hearing Checks
	27 th	Wed	Easter Service at St Mary’s Church
	27 th	Wed	Last day of spring term
	28 th	Thu	Professional Development Day
April 2024	15 th	Mon	Children return to school

Summer Term

May 2024	6 th	Mon	School closed for Bank Holiday
	13 th - 17 th		KS2 SATs Tests
	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