



December 2025 Newsletter



Welcome to the December newsletter, and the final instalment of 2025! This month has been jam-packed with festive fun; we hope you get a flavour of life in school throughout December when reading this bumper edition.

Decoration Day 2025

It was arts and crafts galore in school on Wednesday 3rd December as the timetable was abandoned for the day for our annual Decoration Day. The glitter came out (and can still be seen even now on some carpets!) and the children spent the day making a variety of wonderful cards, Christmas decorations and baubles for the Friends' Christmas tree for the Christmas Tree Festival in St Mary's Church. Here are some photos of the children's festive creations.



Christmas Fayre

A huge thank you to everyone for attending and supporting this year's Christmas Fayre. Each year the children in Classes 3 and 4 get fully involved by making and then running a variety of stalls to raise funds for the Friends. The stalls were very impressive and imaginative. Most importantly, the children had such great fun running them. Well done to them all - we were so proud! Yet again, it was a huge success and raised over £700!



Christingle 2025

On Monday 1st December, we welcomed the ladies from St Mary's Church into school to help the children make Christingles, an annual tradition. A huge thank you to the ladies for their generosity in giving up their time to help the children, to Morrisons in Downham Market for helping to provide the Christingle items and also to Jo Walton, one of our Foundation Governors, for organising this.



The Christingles were taken to the service at St. Mary's Denver that afternoon. The children led a lovely service of readings, songs and prayer accompanied by Fraser Reich, Mr Lawrence and Chris Young. The School Council explained about the significance of the Christingle and Reverend Nigel gave us an unforgettable sermon about the Christingle while wearing a woolly hat that had parts signifying each element of a Christingle. Thank you to everyone who helped with this event and contributed to the Christingle charity boxes. Your generosity is much appreciated.



Choir Perform at Oakes Court

Members of our school choir visited Oakes Court in Downham Market on Monday 8th December to entertain the residents with an array of Christmas songs and choir favourites. There were some excellent solo performances by Libby and Katherine too. The audience absolutely loved the performance; it was lovely to see them joining in with some of the songs. A huge thank you to Mr Lawrence who put the performance together.



Christmas Tree Festival

St Mary's Church held their first ever Christmas Tree Festival this week and the church looked beautiful with 21 trees decorated by local community organisations, including one by the Friends, using baubles made by the children. Some of the children went to the church to serve soup and refreshments to visitors to the church and they were excellent at being waiters and waitresses.



Letters to Father Christmas

The children in Class 1 wrote letters to Father Christmas and walked down to the post box in Denver to post these. They then continued to the church to visit the Christmas Tree Festival.



The Twelve Days of Christmas

The children in Class 1 created their own version of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' which they performed in front of their Christmas tree. This was filmed and had its debut showing after the Nativity performance.



Christmas Lunch

The children enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch on 17th December prepared by our amazing kitchen staff, Mrs Fenn and Miss Metcalfe. The children enjoyed a lovely atmosphere and had fun pulling the crackers they made with the help of the Friends. Thank you to all involved in making Christmas lunch a special occasion for the children.



Class 1 Christmas Party by Mr Rackham

Whilst the rest of the school went to the panto, Class 1 had the whole school to themselves for their Christmas party. The day began with decorating their own party hats before the games and frivolity started in the hall with games including musical bumps/statues and pass the parcel. We went hunting for the Christmas elves across the school and finished off dressing up as snowmen. Thank you to Mrs Fenn for a fantastic party lunch and to the Friends of Denver for providing the pass the parcel. Do you recognise Frosty the Snowman?



Class 2 Christmas Party by Mr Cawley

Friday 12th December marked Class 2's Christmas Party. With excited children, loud music, chocolate and scented toilet rolls, we were sure to have a ball! The Friends kindly provided the means for us to partake in a variety of fun and engaging games ranging from musical chairs to a chocolate eating contest with a 'maths' twist. The highlight was the snowman-making competition, hence the scented toilet rolls! Much fun was had by all, but in true Class 2 style we ran out of time...did we forego the pass the parcel? No, we simply moved it to another day and let the party commence! Until next year, keep dancing!



Class 3 Christmas Party by Mr Bonham

On the afternoon of 10th December, Class 3 had their Christmas Party. The afternoon started with a game of Pass the Parcel, everybody got a sweet and Raine-Gillian won the final prize. Thank you to The Friends of Denver for the prizes.

The children then had the opportunity to make Christmas hats which was followed by a session creating small human figures from pipe cleaners and beads. The children were inspired by their characters and by the end of the afternoon were creating hats, houses, mobile phones, pencils and capes for their creations. They were even building instruments for some of their characters and forming a band - The Mohawk Rockers!



Class 4 Christmas Party by Mrs Henden

The Christmas spirit was in full flow in Class 4 on Tuesday 16th December at our class party. Formal lessons were abandoned all afternoon in favour of songs and games. Traditional games were played such as 'Pass the Parcel' and 'Musical Chairs'. The 'Corners Game' proved popular as always.



One game in particular, that caused excitement, was the 'Chocolate Game'. You had to throw a die and if you were successful in scoring a six, you then dressed in a hat, scarf and gloves and while using a knife and fork, attempted to cut up and eat a huge bar of chocolate before anyone else could score a six and take their place. This was a competitive game that revealed who had a strong love of chocolate and/or winning!



Huge thanks from all of the children and staff of Class 4 to the Friends for their support with the making the 'Pass the Parcel' and providing the prizes, and to Mrs Adams who was an excellent helper.

Nativity

The final week of term started with the children in Class 1 and Class 2 performing their nativity, 'What the Donkey Saw' to a hall absolutely packed full of parents, carers and grandparents, the largest audience we have ever had for a nativity! This was an original nativity written by our talented Mr Lawrence. The acting and singing were fantastic, and the children should really feel proud of themselves. Thank you to everyone who joined us to celebrate one of the highlights of the school year, and to Mr Lawrence and the KS1 staff for another amazing production.



Pantomime Visit

Yesterday, the children in Y1-Y6 travelled to the Maltings in Ely to watch a fantastic performance of Jack and the Beanstalk. They all enjoyed themselves, as did the staff. Once again, the pantomime dame chose Mr Cawley to be her boyfriend and he had to wear a t-shirt saying, 'Mum's Buff Boyfriend', much to the amusement of the children! A huge thank you to The Friends of Denver School for funding such a wonderful opportunity for the children through their amazing fundraising throughout the year.



Father Christmas

This morning, we had a very special visitor come to school, none other than Father Christmas himself, who managed to squeeze a visit into his busy schedule. Father Christmas talked to the children about what was on their lists and kindly gave each child a present. Thank you, Father Christmas!



Carol Service

The term ended today with our annual Carol Service at St Mary's Church, Denver. Each class performed a song and Class 4 also entertained us with their 'Different Nativity'. There were readings from the Bible, a performance by the school choir, including some solo pieces. The perfect end to a wonderful festive week!

Farewell to Mrs Batterham

Today we said a fond farewell to Mrs Jackie Batterham, who retired after more than 25 years working at the school as an MSA. Jackie was presented with some lovely gifts and cards to show our appreciation of her service at Denver. We will really miss her at Denver and wish her all the very best in her retirement.

Staff News

After the Christmas break, we are excited to be welcoming Mrs Toni Scott and Mrs Rhian Writer to our staff team as new Teaching Assistants. We look forward to them joining the Denver team.

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 this half has been generosity and we will change to love in the new year.

GenR8 Worship

On Monday 8th December, the GenR8 team visited school to lead a collective worship based on the birth of Jesus.



Pick Up/Drop Off

Please can we ask that children are supervised appropriately when on the playing field at drop off and pick up. There have been some instances of children rushing, which has caused them to bump into other children. There have also been reports of some unkindness amongst the children as they make the transition into the school grounds.

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.

At the beginning of the school year, we 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. Our Attendance policy can also be found on our website under About Us, Attendance.

To promote good attendance, we celebrate the class with the highest attendance each week in our celebration assembly and each month in our newsletters. December's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	97.2%
Class 2	97.3%
Class 3	95.3%
Class 4	95.5%

Well done to Class 2 for having the highest attendance for the month of December!

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **96.2%**, which is below our school target. Please support us in improving school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

Clubs

A huge thank you to everyone who has offered a club this term. All after school clubs will resume in the week commencing 12th January – this will include booster sessions. Our Before School Club and 3:15 Club will run from the beginning of the new term.

Poppy Appeal

To support the Poppy Appeal this year, we sold poppies and associated merchandise in school. As a school, we collected a fantastic £210.07! This has contributed to the Downham and District total of £33,954.03 so far. Thank you for your generosity and support of the 2025 Poppy Appeal.

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. 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.

Denver Supertots

Our Denver Supertots playgroup will start back in the new year on Wednesday 14th January.

First Admission to School

Just a reminder that applications for children starting school in Reception next September need to be made by 16th January 2026. The easiest way for parents to apply is online at www.admissionsonline.norfolk.gov.uk If anyone is interested in their child starting here at Denver next September, or knows of anyone else who is interested, please contact the office to arrange a visit.

Young Carers by Mrs Wright

Wow! Where did that term go? Our final Young Carers session of 2025 was last Thursday, and we went full on cosy!

The children were giving a template to design a Christmas/winter jumper. As always, the children were working together beautifully and there were lots of conversations about what they were hoping to do over the holidays.

While the children were busy being creative, I was making them all hot chocolate with marshmallows (ensuring they all had the same number of course) and squirty cream. This went down well. The room fell very quiet, and you could have heard a pin drop while they were drinking it. Once they had created their masterpiece, the children decorated a cupcake with icing and sprinkles and then very swiftly ate them. Unfortunately, as usual, time ran out and the session ended.

I would like to thank all of our young carers who really are the loveliest group of children and wish them all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you all next year.



Our next session will be the week commencing 9th February 2026.

Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley

The final fire of '25

The final session for the ODL club had to finish with fire and some food! We only had a small group tonight, which enabled us to explore fire lighting and safe use of an axe and knife to create kindling. We learned about how to build a fire safely and effectively, learning of the dangers as well as the benefits. The children took well to using fire sticks and were all confident enough to try the kindling preparation.



The last bit was the preparation of the apples, which were sliced by the children, dipped into brown sugar, then wrapped in foil before being tossed into the fire to bake and let the sugar work its magic. Enjoyed by all, this marked the end of the successful ODL club run in 2025; here's looking towards more outdoor adventures in 2026!



“Alright Gov’nor?” by Carole Reich (Chair of Governors)

Our regular feature in the monthly newsletter introducing you to the workings and concerns of school governors.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, what a delight to watch the KS1 Nativity in all its glory. The children were magnificent telling the story of the first Christmas and singing with such joy in front of a huge audience. There was much joy and celebration in the school hall and I'm sure many people were able to set aside worries of world and spend a little while remembering the true story of Christmas!

“Alright Gov’nor?": No, we are such a tiny governing body that it is tough getting everything done that we need to do. We have spaces for 2 parent and 5 co-opted governors and would love to welcome new blood. Please think through whether you could commit to supporting the school by helping in the background to develop strategic plans, discuss with staff how they approach different subjects and give moral and practical support to Mrs Jones.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, the recent meeting with staff looking at different subjects was very positive and revealed the enthusiasm each staff member has for their subjects and helping children to develop skills and understanding. We are so fortunate to have a staff team who are constantly seeking ways to refine teaching and learning approaches.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, we have recently appointed new staff to work in Class 1 to support our youngest children. They will start in the new year; we look forward to welcoming them to the staff team and them bringing new interests and experience. We have such a strong staff team who bring very varied life experiences to the mix. Together they provide the children with good role models and an enthusiasm for learning.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, over this term the children have visited the church for learning experiences to support RE learning. The church organised storytelling and craft experiences to help the children understand more about the Christian value of generosity. In the last week groups of children have visited the church to see the Christmas Tree Festival, the church has been looking particularly festive and beautiful. Together we will all be able to share in a joyful Carol Concert in the church.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, visiting the school reminds me of how wonderful the children are as they work hard, are playful and welcome visitors so wholeheartedly. The school is full of

children who are polite and show an interest in their learning and in being fantastic friends to each other. This school is one where there is much humour shared and a good sense of fun.

Update from The Friends

And here it is, the end of 2025! This first half of the school year has flown by. It has been an eventful and jam-packed December for The Friends. We helped with the set up and running of the annual School Christmas Fayre, which managed to raise over £700! A massive thank you to all those who helped set up, run stalls, collect and donate prizes for the raffle, provide tea and coffee, provide baked goods, the list could go on. Also, a massive thank you to the children for their excellent games and activities, to the staff for their help with everything in the build-up and to the amazing local businesses who donated to the cause. Thank you everyone.

The Friends also took part in the inaugural community Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's Church. I'd like to thank those who helped decorate our tree, and to the children who helped decorate individual baubles with a unique design and message. It was lovely to see so many different trees from all corners of our local community. If you would like to see the trees on display, please check with the church for available visiting times.

We also supplied the pass the parcels for the class parties in the run up to the end of term, and a few sweet treats for the children to enjoy whilst the games were afoot. Congratulations to all those who won prizes.

All that's left for me to say is Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone at The Friends. Enjoy the winter break and we look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Ben. G - Chair of the Friends of Denver

Forthcoming Events

Class 4 Swimming - starting on 9th January

Class 4 will start their swimming lessons on Friday 9th January. They will be swimming throughout the spring term. Please ensure they have their swimming kits each Friday.

SEND Coffee Morning - 29th January

We would like to invite all parents/carers of children with SEND to a SEND Coffee Morning at 9am on 29th January. We have some guest speakers attending, including Sarah Downes from the Family Hub, Allison Burt from the Schools and Community Team and Sally Bailey from SENDIASS. We hope to see many of you there.

And finally...

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all our parents, carers and school community for your support for the school throughout 2025. Thank you to all the staff for their hard work and dedication, and to the children for being such a joy to have in school. Thank you to the Governors for their support and generosity in giving up their time to ensure the school continues to improve and let its light shine. Thank you also the Friends for their hard work in raising funds to support the children.

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and happy and healthy New Year on behalf of us all at Denver Primary. We look forward to welcoming you back on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2025/2026

Spring Term

January 2026	6 th	Tue	Children return to school
February 2026	16 th -20 th		School closed for half term
	23 rd	Mon	Children return to school
March 2026	27 th	Fri	Last day of spring term

Summer Term

April 2026	14 th	Tue	Children return to school
May 2026	4 th	Mon	School closed for Bank Holiday
	25 th - 29 th		School closed for half term
June 2026	1 st	Mon	Children return to school
July 2026	17 th	Fri	Last day of summer term