

March 2022

Newsletter



Welcome to the March newsletter. Although it has been a difficult term with high Covid rates, both in children and staff, we are proud that we have still continued to offer a variety of events for the children to enjoy.

Mothering Sunday Posies

Last Sunday was Mothering Sunday and we continued a long tradition of making posies in school for the children to present to their mums. As always, the children made some lovely creations, as well as some thoughtful cards. A huge thank you to Jo Walton, Carole Reich and Amanda Dawson, along with ladies from St Mary's Church, for their hard work in preparing everything. Thank you also to Morrisons in Downham Market for their donation towards the cost of the flowers. If you have not already returned the plastic trays, please could you do so after the Easter break as these can then be re-used next year.





Denver Supertots Playgroup

We have now hosted two successful Denver Supertots sessions at school. The playgroup is being jointly run by the school and students from Downham Market Academy. The next session is this Friday, 1st April from 9.45-10.45am. If you know of anyone with pre-school aged children, please do let them know as we are keen to welcome new families.

Easter Bunny Competition

There was much excitement in last Friday's Celebration Assembly as we announced the winner of the 'Name the Easter Bunny' competition. A very lucky Libby, in Class 1, had her name of Butterfly Rainbows (an excellent choice I'm sure you'll agree) picked out of the Easter basket. A huge thank you to everyone for participating in the competition, and to Kathryn Williams for donating the bunny. A pleasing £67 was raised, all of which will go into The Friends' funds!



Science Day – 14th March

To mark British Science Week 2022, a science curriculum day was held across the school on 14th March, the theme being 'Growth'. The classes began with class assemblies exploring the theme of growth in a wide range of aspects of our lives. We then focussed in particular on learning about the growth and reproduction of plants to link to the STEMPOINT EAST science and technology challenge that was to come later in the day.

In Class 3, the children learnt about the life cycle of plants and the different ways that seeds are dispersed. This resulted in some lovely role play to demonstrate what they had learnt. In this picture the children are demonstrating how coconut seeds are dispersed in water.



In Class 4, the children looked at the reproductive parts of flowering plants and learnt about the crucial role of bees.

In the afternoon, the STEMPOINT EAST challenge began. The children in all classes had to plan and make a free-standing plant using only 4 pieces of A4 paper and scissors. No glue or tape was allowed. Techniques such as slotting, folding and creating tabs were practised then the children had just one hour to make their plants.

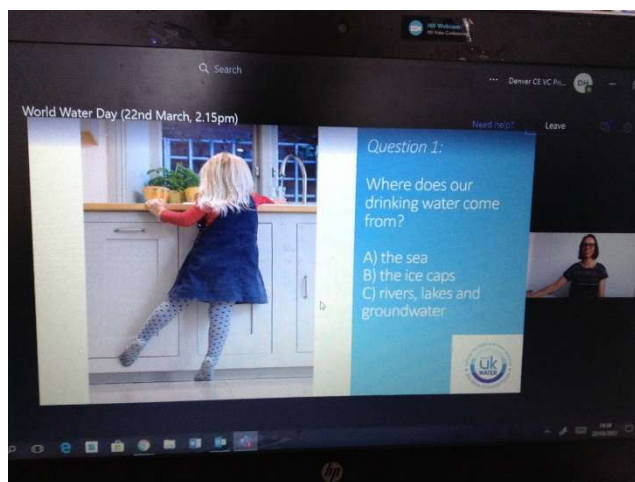
This is Emie's winning design from Class 3:



It was a really enjoyable and successful day with plenty of learning. At the end of the week, the children in Key Stage 2 also took part in the national poster competition to express their knowledge and understanding of growth.

World Water Day

To enrich their learning in geography, Class 4 took part in a special online assembly to mark World Water Day on Tuesday 22nd March. The assembly taught them about the importance of the water cycle and that there is one constant cycle of water on the planet. They also learnt about how geology affects the location of suitable supplies of ground water. Being chalky, this area has good stores of groundwater but these need to be protected from harmful chemicals and pollution. The assembly also talked about the important work of Water Aid in protecting water supplies and getting it to people where there are problems such as droughts and floods that have affected the supplies. The children discovered that 1 in 10 people throughout the world do not have access to clean water close to their homes.



Rising Theatre Star

Louie, in Class 3, has been attending Theatre Train Professional Training in the Performing Arts in King's Lynn since he was 5 years old. They are currently putting on a show at the Guild Hall Arts Centre in King's Lynn called A Night at the Movies. The children had the opportunity to put together a monologue from a film and audition for it to be part of the show. Louie chose to perform the 'Life is like a box of chocolates' scene from Forrest Gump in his audition and he did so well that he was chosen to perform it as part of the show. What a fantastic achievement, well done Louie!



World Book Day

After the disruption of the last few years, it was lovely to celebrate World Book Day together as a school this year. As usual, the children (and adults!) dressed up as their favourite book characters and took part in different activities to celebrate reading, including reading to children in other classes. They also took home a £1 World Book Day voucher.

In response to our post about World Book Day on our Twitter account (@denver_vc), we received the following responses from published authors.

- **Cressida Cowell (author of How to Train Your Dragon): Happy #WorldBookDay everyone! You all look fabulous x Love Cressida**
- **Claire Freedman (author of Monstersaurus and Aliens Love Underpants): Fantastic costumes everyone! Is that a brilliant Monstersaurus I spotted? You all look great and I hope you had a very exciting World Book Day!**

Here are some photos of the children in their fantastic costumes.



Seed Donation from Baytree

A huge thank you to Baytree Garden Centre at Hilgay for donating a variety of seeds for our Wellbeing Gardening Group to plant. We look forward to watching the flowers and produce grow over the coming weeks and months.

Parent Governor Election

Earlier in the month, we sent out communication regarding the two vacancies on our Governing Body for parent governors. Unfortunately, we did not receive any nominations of parents interested in taking up this role. Being a governor is very enjoyable and worthwhile, and is important that we have parent representation on our Governing Body. We plan on having another election round after the Easter break and hopefully we will be successful in filling these very important roles.

Christian Value

Each half term we focus on a different Christian value in school, and our value for this half term is **compassion**. The children have been recording examples of acts of compassion in their class floor books and the school choir have been learning a song about compassion. A wonderful example of compassion in action was the response to the request for donations to help the people of Ukraine in their most difficult of times. Mr Eastwood, Head of School at Downham Market Academy, said in his thank you letter to our school 'I know that your theme for this term is "compassion" and I think that you have all demonstrated this is abundance by donating so much to our collection for the Ukrainian refugees who have fled their homes due to the conflict there. Your compassion will go a long way to make others feel better and I know that they will be very grateful'. Here is a photo of the numerous donations collected at Downham Market Academy.



Phonics Information Session

On 28th March, we held a Phonics Information Session to give further information about our new systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP), Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. For those of you unable to attend, I have added some key resources, including the PowerPoint presentation used, to the phonics tab under Parents/Carers on the school website. Copies of the handouts are also available in school – please see Mrs Jones if you would like one. 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/>

SEND Coffee Morning

On 29th March (in Autism Awareness Week), we held our first SEND Coffee Morning in school. This is a half termly support group for our parents/carers of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities). The session gave parents/carers the opportunity to meet together to share their experiences to signpost support networks they have found useful. Those who attended found the session really useful and we hope to encourage more parents/carers to come to the next session after the Easter break, date to be confirmed.

Light and Life Assemblies

On 28th March, we were joined by Jackie and Peter Smith from Light and Life Assemblies who told the Easter story to the children in an interactive and engaging way.



Eat Them to Defeat Them

Throughout this half term, we have been promoting vegetable consumption by engaging in the 'Eat Them to Defeat Them' campaign. Each week, we have focused on a different vegetable, with the final week being the humble pea. We have been really impressed by the amount of children eating, or at least trying, their veg – well done children! Thank you to Mrs Fenn for ensuring that each veg of the week has been included in the menu, and to parents/carers for helping us to promote the campaign.



Eco-Schools

The Eco-Committee are continuing to work hard towards the school achieving the Eco-Schools award. The School Council kindly purchased hi-vis jackets, gloves and litter pickers and the Eco members have now started a weekly litter pick on the school grounds. Here is a photo of Anaisa and Katherine in litter picking action.



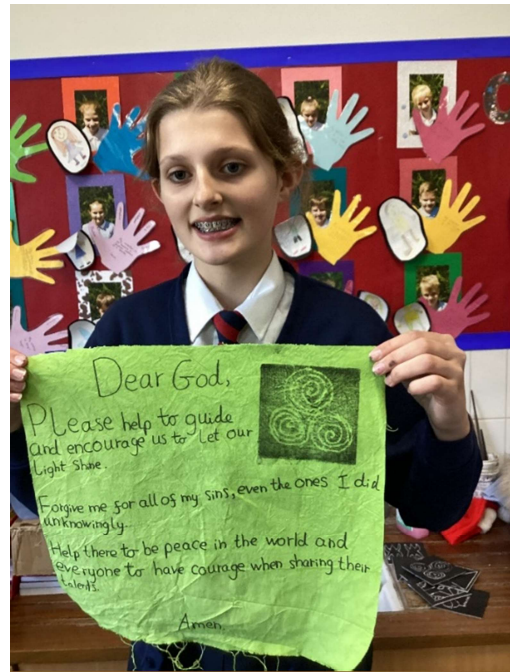
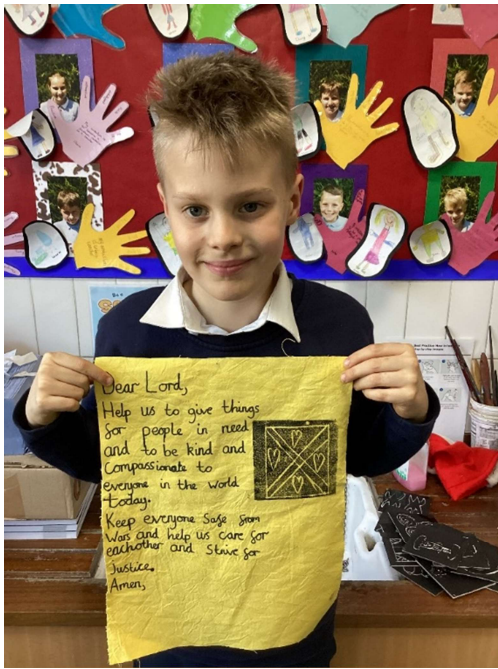
Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge

Throughout the period of Lent, we have been engaging with Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge, the theme of which this year has been Brave Believers. This year, the Lent Challenge has partnered with World Vision to explore how the Christian faith can help us all to work together across the world. The children have engaged with a range of activities, including writing poems about bravery and exploring the work of World Vision.



Prayer Flags

On Thursday 10th March, Class 4 were joined by Carole Reich, one of our school governors, to make prayer flags for the school. She taught the children about the origin of prayer flags and the use of symbolism. The children wrote some very heartfelt prayers about current world events. Many of the children linked their prayers to the school vision of letting our lights shine and to Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge of being a 'Brave Believer'. The children invented their own symbols with a particular meaning to them. Lots of the examples linked to the Christian values we have been studying, such as compassion and hope. For those of you who attended the Easter Service, you may have seen these displayed in the church. These will also be displayed in our reflection area. A huge thank you to Carole for giving up her time to help the children.



Easter Service

On 30th March, we shared an Easter Service with our families at St Mary's Church, Denver. The service included readings, a performance from each class and the choir and prayers. The children all received Palm Crosses which were blessed in the service. A huge thank you to our Foundation Governors, Carole, Janet and Jo, for their help in putting together the assembly, along with Mr Lawrence for his hard work in teaching the children the songs.



Covid-19 Update

As I'm sure you will all appreciate, this term has been quite challenging due to the high levels of Covid amongst both staff and children. Since the return from the Christmas break, we have had over 60 positive cases in school, and staff absence has, at times, been difficult to manage. Despite the challenges, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone in the school community for your understanding, and for acting responsibly by keeping those infected at home. I am really proud of the staff team for their flexibility and determination to minimise the impact on the children's learning – thank you!

We are still awaiting confirmation from the DfE as to what will happen after the Easter break regarding testing and positives cases. We will keep you informed as soon as we receive more guidance.

Out of School Hours Communication

Just a reminder that parent/carers can contact the school urgently over the Easter break, for example because of a safeguarding incident, 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.

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

There are still plenty of activities left to book on the Big Norfolk Holiday Fun, an Easter holiday activity scheme. The scheme is being run from 4th - 19th April for children aged 5-16 (and 4 year olds in reception classes) who are eligible for free school meals. It aims to offer lots of fun activities to help keep children and young people busy and active during the holidays. For further information about the scheme, please visit:

www.activenorfolk.org.uk/bignorfolkholidayfun

Friends' Update

Easter Coffee Morning

The Friends of Denver School held an Easter Coffee Morning in school on the morning of 25th March. A selection of delicious cakes were on offer, as well as some good raffle prizes. It was lovely to welcome so many parents/carers/grandparents into school and a pleasing £186.15 was raised on the day. A huge thank you to all involved in organising the event, and to those who came along to support it.

Village Yard Sale – 24th April

This year's Denver Village Yard Sale is being held on Sunday 24th April. This is always one of their most successful fundraising events each year, and we hope that many of you will come along to support this event, as well as picking up a bargain. The Friends are still looking for volunteers to help on the day for an hour or two. If you can spare some time, please email friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

Easter Trail

The Friends have organised an Easter Trail around Denver Village that will run from Monday 4th until Monday 18th April. Entry sheets cost £2.50 each and every one purchasing one will receive a small Easter treat. Completed forms are to be returned to school by Friday 22nd

April when a prize draw will be made with the winner receiving an Easter egg. Entries can be purchased before and after school until Friday 1st April or by emailing friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

Class 1 Equipment

Mr Rackham has asked The Friends to fund some new equipment for Class 1. The following items are on the 'wish list':

- sand for the sandpit
- foam bricks
- large plastic construction bricks
- floating toys (boats etc.)
- sand toys/equipment
- balance bikes

If you have any of these items in nearly new condition, we would be grateful for any donations.

Sports News

Y5/6 Football Tournament

After two years of being impacted by Covid restrictions, the cluster football tournament finally resumed this term, much to the delight of the children. We were really pleased to be able to enter two teams to the tournament which was a School Games 'Compete' level competition. We are really proud of both teams for showing excellent sportsmanship, teamwork and resilience. Everyone gave their best effort and were a delight to take. They showed the very best of our school. Mrs Bower was especially pleased with Charlie, singling him out for a special award for showing the School Games values. The icing on the cake was that our Year 6 team came away as victors of the tournament, winning all of their matches and coming back to school with their medals. Very impressive!



Tri-Golf Festival

On Friday 25th March, the children from Y2 and some from Y4 went to Runcton Holme for a tri-golf festival. The children were put into two teams to play against each other. It was an 'engage' activity, which meant that it was not competitive. There was a carousel of activities, each with a different focus. The children learnt different techniques with the different activities. The children's favourite was trying to chip the ball into the paddling pool to hit a duck! The reward for hitting the duck was to shout out 'QUACK! QUACK!' The children were excellent ambassadors of the school and should be proud of themselves.



New Age Curling

On Friday 25th March, a group of children from Class 3 went to a New Age Curling tournament at Lynnsport. This was an OMNES game event, and Class 3 had already had a taster session in school the previous week. This activity was definitely a hit with the children and they thoroughly enjoyed trying something new. Here are some photos of the children in action.





KS1 Multi-Skills Intra-Festival

On Tuesday 29th March children in Class 4 used their 'Young Leader' skills to deliver a very successful multi-skills festival to all the children in Reception and KS1. The children worked in groups to plan, design and organise an activity and decide on how they would communicate the game to the younger children and how they would score the event. The aims of the festival were many and were achieved: increasing activity levels in all children, improving communication and interaction, promoting positive teamwork, fostering an interest in new physical activities and supporting each other. The younger children were enthusiastic, well-behaved and beamed happily as they improved at each of the activities (these included using agility, pace and stamina to throw, dribble, kick and strike). The older children did a great job of running the event smoothly, showing patience and compassion for the younger children. We are very proud of all of them. Thank you to Mrs Henden for organising the event.





Hockey Award

Well done to Arthur, in Class 2, who won the most improved player award in the under 8s category at hockey last weekend. He has been playing hockey at Pelicans Hockey Club, based at Lynnsport, since completing Hockey Heroes in spring 2021. He has been working hard to improve his game and should feel really proud of himself! Well done Arthur!



Forthcoming Events

Parent Consultation Evenings – 25th April and 5th May

Parent Consultation Evenings will take place on Monday 25th April and Thursday 5th May (3.30-5.30pm). These will, once again, take place on Teams or via telephone. Parents of children in Classes 1 and 2 can contact the office on Thursday 21st April from 9.30am to book an appointment. Parents of children in Classes 3 and 4 can book an appointment on Friday 22nd April from 9.30am. In Class 4, Mrs Henden has politely requested that Y6 parents book an appointment only for Monday 25th April as she would like to advise how they can best support their child in the SATs.

Girls' Football Tournament – 25th April

A Girls' Football Festival is being held at Downham Market Academy on Monday 25th April. We hope to enter two teams from KS2.

Crucial Crew – 29th April

The children in Y6 will be attending the Crucial Crew event on 29th April, where they will learn how to keep themselves safe in a variety of different situations.

And finally...

I would like to thank you all for your patience and continued support over the past term. On behalf of us all at Denver VC Primary, I wish you a very Happy Easter. I hope you all enjoy a relaxing break and hopefully we might see some more of the lovely sunny weather we were blessed with last week. We look forward to welcoming the children back on Wednesday 20th April, for what I'm sure will be another busy term. Take care and stay safe!



Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

Spring Term

April 2022	1 st	Fri	Last day of spring term
	20 th	Wed	Children return to school
	24 th	Sun	Village Yard Sale
	25 th	Mon	Parent Consultation Evening 3.30-5.30pm
	25 th	Mon	Girls' Football Festival
	29 th	Fri	Crucial Crew

Summer Term

May 2022	2 nd	Mon	School closed for Bank Holiday
	5 th	Thu	Parent Consultation Evening 3.30-5.30pm
	9 th - 12 th	Mon-Thu	Y6 SATS week
	30 th - 3 rd June		School closed for half term
June 2022	6 th	Mon	Children return to school
July 2022	22 nd	Fri	Last day of summer term