



December 2022

Newsletter



Welcome to the final newsletter of 2022! As always, December has been a very busy month with many different festive events and activities. From Christmas plays to pantomimes, the children have had lots of fun and it has been lovely to share many of these events with parents/carers and the wider school community. Here is a flavour of just how busy the children have been!

Decoration Day

Our Christmas celebrations started on 2nd December with our annual Decoration Day. This is always one of the children's favourite events in the school calendar as they get to spend a fun-filled day making Christmas craft activities. Here are some photos of their creations.



Pantomime Visit

The children in Y1-Y6 had a lovely end of term treat last Friday when they visited the pantomime, Cinderella, at the Maltings in Ely, whilst the Reception children stayed in school for their Christmas party. 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.



Christingles

On Monday 12th December, it was lovely to welcome the ladies from St Mary's Church into school to help the children make Christingles. A huge thank you to Morrisons in Downham Market for generously donating the oranges and some of the sweets, and to the Coffee Morning group at the church for providing the rest of the items. Thank you also to one of our governors, Jo Walton, for organising this. In the afternoon, the children joined many other local schools in an online Christingle service from Ely Cathedral.



Christingles Boxes

A huge thank you to those children who have returned their Christingle boxes. Over £60 has been collected in the boxes and this money will go to the Children's Society to support their life-changing work with children and young people. Thank you!

Christmas Parties

Over the last few days each class has enjoyed a Christmas party. The Entertainer in King's Lynn, Tesco in Downham Market and The Friends of Denver School donated some party game prizes, and The Friends kindly wrapped up a pass the parcel for each class. Here are some photos of the children enjoying the festivities:



Open Classrooms

Thank you to all the parents/carers who attended the open classrooms over the last few weeks. The children are always proud to share their work, and they really enjoyed receiving compliments from their parents.

Christmas Lunch

The children enjoyed a delicious Christmas lunch on 14th December. A huge thank you to Mrs Fenn and Mrs Metcalfe for their hard work in making Christmas lunch a special occasion for the children. Thanks also go out to Michelle Maynard for donating the serviettes and Rosie Glover for the plates. The children all had a cracker to pull which they made with the help of Michelle, Lisa, Amanda and Lesley from the Friends. Thank you to all involved!



Choir Perform at Oakes Court

On 14th December, the school choir performed to the residents of Oakes Court in Downham Market. They sang a medley of songs they have been working on this term, including some festive favourites. The residents thoroughly enjoyed the children's singing and it was lovely to see them joining in. Thank you to Mr Lawrence for his excellent work with the choir this year.



Classes 1 and 2's Christmas Play

On Wednesday this week, Classes 1 and 2 performed their Christmas play, The Girl Who Made Santa Cry to a hall packed with parents, carers, grandparents and family members. The play told the traditional nativity story with a heart-warming twist. The children all looked wonderful in their costumes and really put on a show with their excellent acting, singing and dancing – they should all be very proud of themselves! A huge thank you to Mr Lawrence for writing another original play for the children to perform, to the staff for their hard work in rehearsals, and to the parents for providing the super costumes.



KS2 Carol Service

Our annual Carol Service took place at St Mary's Church on Thursday 15th December. It was lovely to see the church so full with parents, grandparents and members of the community; the children always appreciate an audience. Classes 2, 3 and 4 all had songs to perform, and the choir entertained us with a collection of songs they have been working on. Class 4 have been learning to play the ukulele this term and I was very impressed with how far they have come on in such a short time. Thank you to Thomas Burt, a former Denver pupil, for kindly playing the organ, Miss Berners for coming along to help Class 4 with their ukulele performance and to Mr Lawrence for his continued dedication to music in the school.



Christmas Jumper Day

To add to our Christmas celebrations, the children came to school dressed in a Christmas jumper or Christmas themed clothing today and on Wednesday.

Visit from Father Christmas

Today the children had a visit from a very special person, Father Christmas, who took time out of his very busy schedule at this time of year to visit each class and deliver presents. Thank you, Father Christmas!



Poppy Appeal

We recently received a thank you card from the Royal British Legion informing us that the school had collected a pleasing £162 in donations for this year's appeal. Thank you to the members of the School Council for selling the poppies and related merchandise each day, and to all those who engaged and donated to such an important cause.

Big Norfolk Holiday Fun

Just a reminder that you can still book places on for the **Big Norfolk Holiday Fun** festive holiday activity scheme opened. Activities will run from 19th – 30th December for children aged 5-16 (and 4-year-olds in reception classes). Free places are available for children who are eligible for means-tested free school meals. Parents can use www.everymove.uk to search for and book activities for their child. There are hundreds of spaces available across Norfolk and some brilliant activities to choose from. Parents are encouraged to book as soon as possible to secure their first choices. For more information, please visit Big Norfolk Holiday Fun at www.activenorfolk.org/public/bignorfolkholidayfun/

New 3.15 Club

Following the success of our Before School Club, we are trialling a new after school club, the 3.15 Club in the new year. The club will run from 3.15pm-4.15pm each day and is open for children in all year groups. The children who attend will take part in a variety of sports and art and crafts activities. If you would like you child to attend the club, bookings can be made by emailing 3.15club@denver.norfolk.sch.uk at the latest by 9.30am on the day before a place is required. Charges per session are: 1 child - £3; 2 children - £5; 3 or more children - £7 and payment should be sent to:

- Name of Bank: Barclays Bank plc
- Account Name: NCC Denver VC Primary School
- Bank account number : 70793051
- Bank sort code: 20-62-61

New Library Update

Our library project will continue to be in the Community Grant area in the Downham Market Tesco store until January. We are still leading with the blue tokens so thank you to everyone who has been supporting us. Our new library furniture is being delivered on 20th January, so we hope that we will have a fully functioning library by the end of January. Thank you to everyone who has supported this project, we would not have been able to achieve our goal without you!

Holiday Communication

Over the Christmas break 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.

First Admission to School

Just a reminder that applications for children starting school in Reception next September need to be made by 15th January 2023. Parents need to apply 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.

School Opening Hours

The Government want all schools to open for 32.5 hours each week, therefore we are changing the end of our school day to 3.20pm from January. The school day will start at 8.50am as normal. Any child coming in after 9am will be marked as late and if they are later than 9.10am, this will count as an unauthorised absence. The gate will be locked promptly at 9am and any child coming to school after this time will need to enter school via the office.

Communication

Our main methods of communicating with you are by email and ClassDojo. Please carefully read any information we send to you, especially for deadline dates, consents etc. so that your child/ren do not miss out on opportunities in school. If you are not receiving emails from us, please let us know so that we can check we have your current email address.

As we have a busy school office, if you need to ring us, unfortunately, it may not always be possible to answer your call. Please leave us a message on our voicemail system wherever possible, or send us an email to office@denver.norfolk.sch.uk instead!

We have also recently trialled a new type of consent form for school visits, which has proved very successful. It is an online form which can be accessed through a link we will send to you by email, and has made completion quicker and easier for parents and carers - and more efficient for us to collate the information we require. Any consents we need to send you in future, will be via this system.

Attendance Focus

We are continually working hard to improve school attendance and we recently updated our attendance policy and produced an Attendance Policy Quick Guide for Parents document, both of which can be found on our school website under Parents and Attendance.

We cannot stress enough that any absence from school has an impact on learning, as is exemplified in the table below. Please remember that holidays in term time will not be authorised.

| Attendance | Days Off | Approximate Weeks Off | Hours of Learning Lost | |
|------------|----------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | Excellent |
| 96% | 8 | 1.5 | 40 | Good |
| 90% | 19 | 4 | 100 | Slight Concern |
| 85% | 29 | 6 | 150 | Concern |
| 80% | 38 | 8 | 200 | Serious Concern |

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

| | |
|---------|-------|
| Class 1 | 98.8% |
| Class 2 | 96.0% |
| Class 3 | 94.4% |
| Class 4 | 95.2% |

Well done to Class 1 for having the highest attendance for the month of December! 😊

To help keep you informed of your child's attendance, a letter will be sent out at the end of each half term for those children with an attendance of less than 90%, which is deemed as persistent absence.

Our overall school attendance so far this year is 95.3%, which is lower than our target of 97%. Please work with us to help improve attendance and ensure the best outcomes for our children.

If your child will be absent from school, please let us know by 9.30am on that day. You can ring us on 01366 383272 and leave a message, or email absence@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

Update from The Friends

Coffee Morning

The Friends held our annual Christmas Coffee morning on 8th December. Thank you to everyone who attended and who purchased raffle tickets, either in person or remotely! We raised a grand total £348.42. We will also be holding our first coffee morning in Downham Market Town Hall on Friday 16th December to help raise money to support the school library refurbishment.

Christmas

December has been a busy month for the Friends, helping in school with all the Christmas festivities. This month we helped make Christmas crackers with pupils, and funded the pantomime and transport, and class Christmas parties. Thanks to the Elves who helped with the Christmas pass the parcel wrapping and helping Santa in his workshop to provide all the pupils with a Christmas gift.



All the fundraising we do directly supports these activities, and we thank all parents and grandparents who support our fundraising activities throughout the year. We are a small group of parents, all of whom have jobs and families and give up our spare time throughout the year. We appreciate all the support from everyone who helps and supports our events. Our next meeting is planned for after school on 11th January and we would love to see you there.



We want your outgrown school uniform and Christmas jumpers!

If you are having a clear out during the Christmas break of any outgrown uniform, we would love to take it off your hands. For the week beginning 9th January we will be collecting any outgrown preloved school uniform. Our blue donations bin will be at the back field gate all week for you to drop off any items you no longer need. Redistributing good wearable school uniform is good for the environment, keeping textiles out of landfill, but also good for the wallet too. A win win all round 😊. And if you have outgrown, or grown tired of your Christmas jumpers at the end of the season, we would also love to take these off your hands too. These can be dropped into the blue bin with any uniform at the same time.

Valentine's Disco

Look out for invitations in the New Year for our Valentines Disco. Returning after a few years absence, we are planning a Valentines Disco for pupils in Denver Village Hall on Thursday 23rd February.



Thank You to The Friends

I would like to say a huge thank you to all members of The Friends of Denver School for their amazing fundraising efforts this year, and also to everyone who has supported these events. The children are really grateful for the resources and exciting opportunities like the pantomime and Christmas parties this fundraising supports.

Sports News

Dodgeball Club

Rhys from Wereham Dodgeball club has been delivering a club to Key Stage 2 children this term. It has been such a success that it will continue from the 9th January for all current members. There are spaces available should anyone wish to join this popular club. If you are interested, please contact Mrs Henden via her email dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk. A similar club was offered to KS1 on Wednesdays from 11th January, however this has not been viable as only one reply has been submitted.

Forthcoming Events

Active Kids – 26th January

The children in Y1 will attend the second Active Kids tournament on 26th January.

Rotary Technology Tournament – 27th January

Class 3 will be taking part in a technology tournament organised by the Rotary Club on 27th January.

And finally...

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole school community for your continued support this year. Denver is a wonderful school, and one I am very proud to be part of. I would like to thank all the staff for their continued hard work and dedication to the school, and to our amazing children who make us proud every day.

On behalf of all the staff, children and governors, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Have a fabulous festive break and we look forward to welcoming you all back in 2023!



Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

Spring Term

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| January 2023 | 4 th | Wed | Children return to school |
| | 9 th -13 th | Mon- Fri | School uniform and Christmas jumper donations week |
| | 11 th | Wed | Friends Meeting 3.15pm |
| | 26 th | Thu | Active Kids – Y1 |
| | 27 th | Fri | Technology Day – Class 3 |
| February 2023 | 13 th -17 th | | School closed for half term |
| | 20 th | Mon | Children return to school |
| | 23 rd | Thu | Valentine’s Disco |
| March 2023 | 31 st | Fri | Last day of spring term |
| April 2023 | 18 th | Tue | Children return to school |

Summer Term

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-----|--------------------------------|
| May 2023 | 1 st | Mon | School closed for Bank Holiday |
| | 8 th | Mon | School closed for Bank Holiday |
| | 9 th - 12 th | | KS2 SATs Week |
| | 29 th - 2 nd June | | School closed for half term |
| June 2023 | 5 th | Mon | Children return to school |
| July 2023 | 21 st | Fri | Last day of summer term |