



# February 2023

## Newsletter



Welcome to the February newsletter. Spring is finally just around the corner, along with the longer days and better weather (hopefully!). Although February is always a short month, as you will see from this newsletter, we have been very busy in school and have lots to share with you.

### Outdoor Learning

Just before half term, we launched our outdoor learning programme with Classes 1 and 2. Outdoor learning is an innovative and engaging approach to outdoor education that aims to inspire children to learn and develop through hands-on, experiential activities in nature and provide opportunities for them to connect with the natural world. The children will initially have a dedicated outdoor learning session each half term during the school day, and we hope to weave further opportunities into the curriculum as the programme develops. We are also running an Outdoor Learning after school club each Wednesday for Classes 1 and 2, which is proving to be very popular. We have already received some very positive feedback from children and parents and the benefits are already apparent. Many thanks to Mr Cawley for his hard work in introducing outdoor learning to Denver. Here are some photos of the children enjoying the sessions so far.



## Crazy Hair Day

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March, we had our first Crazy Hair day to raise money for the Friends. The children and staff came to school with some excellent creative hair styles, as can be seen below. A pleasing £87.50 was raised so thank you to everyone who joined in.



### **Spring Flowers**

You may remember that back in the autumn term, the children and members of the Friends planted some spring bulbs on Denver Playing Field and in the wild garden on the school field. The flowers are just starting to come through and adding some lovely colour the school grounds.



### **Safer Internet Day**

On Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, we celebrated Safer Internet Day to help promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for our children. The children all took part in activities exploring ways to keep themselves safe online in their computing lessons.

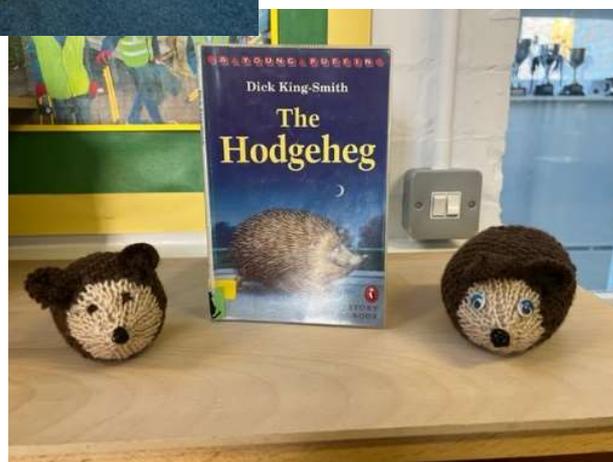
### **Children's Mental Health Week**

We recently engaged with Children's Mental Health Week, which ran from 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> February. The theme was Let's Connect and aimed to encourage children and adults to consider how they can make meaningful connections that support our mental health. The week started with a special assembly on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> led by Louise Ramsey from the Swan Youth Project. The children all engaged in activities throughout the week to help them to develop the knowledge, skills and values to support their own and others' mental health and wellbeing.



## New Library Update

Our new library is almost finished now, and I am sure you will agree that it is looking fantastic. We received confirmation last week that we were successful in winning the Tesco Community Grant award, contributing £1500 to the project (many thanks to everyone who added the blue tokens into our slot) and The Friends have also generously offered to donate £1660 towards purchasing some of the items. A huge thank you to everyone involved in its creation, in particular Amanda Dawson and Michelle Caul-Byrne for spending many hours adding the new books to our library system, Michelle Maynard for art work, Angela Williamson( one of our TAs) who has been working hard to get all the books on the shelves, and to our amazing librarian, Allison Alves, who has dedicated a significant amount of her own time to making the new library such an inviting and inspiring space. Here are some photos of our wonderful new library:





### **Outdoor Reflection Area**

Over the past term, we have been working with a local family, the Burton family, to create an outdoor reflection area in our living willow on the school field. The Burton family raised over £2000 to create a memorial to members of their family who have attended Denver VC Primary over the years, and we thought that an outdoor reflection area would be very fitting. With their generous donation, we have purchased a bench and some planters and we are hoping to also add a bird bath. We hope to complete this project soon so the children can enjoy using the reflection area in the better weather.



### **Eco-Committee Update**

The Eco-Committee would like to organise a waste-free Wednesday on 8<sup>th</sup> March to cut back on the amount of waste and single-use plastic we use in school. They want the children to bring in packed lunches which do not contain any single-use packaging. We will also ensure that school lunches are packaging-free. More details to follow.

### **Staff News**

We are pleased to welcome a student teacher, Kinita Webb O'Dea, who is working in Class 2 on Fridays alongside Mr Cawley. Her placement is part of her course through The Cambridge Partnership. We have also recently been joined by Lydia Dimock, a student from the College of West Anglia, who is doing a work placement in Class 1.

### **Big Norfolk Holiday Fun**

Booking is now open for Big Norfolk Holiday Fun, a funded holiday activity scheme for children aged 4 - 16 this Easter. The scheme runs from Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April right through until Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April and is free for all families eligible for benefits related free school meals. More information, including booking details can be found in the email attached with this newsletter.



### **Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge**

This term, we will be participating in Bishop Stephen's Lent Challenge, the theme of which is Live Life Full this Lent – 'I have come that you might live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). The children will be exploring what make their lives and that of others full, and what we might need to do to ensure we lead a full life.

### **Mother's Day Posies**

Each year, the children make posies in school to present to their mums on Mothering Sunday. The ladies from St Mary's Church have once again kindly offered to help prepare the items needed and the School Council will purchase the flowers. I know the children always enjoy making the posies, and I'm sure our mums enjoy receiving them.

### **Tax-Free Childcare**

We are now set up as an approved childcare provider for our paid for before and after school clubs. This means we can accept payments through the Tax-free childcare system if parents are eligible. Eligibility checks for parents can be completed online at [Sign in to your childcare account - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/sign-in-to-your-childcare-account). An email will be sent soon giving further details.

### **Drinks Money**

Please can we ask that parents/carers send in the correct money for drinks, either 20p per day or £1 per week. We do not hold enough cash in school to be giving change when parents pay with notes. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

### **3.15 Club**

Just a reminder that we offer a 3.15 Club from 3.20pm-4.20pm each day. The children who attend take part in a variety of sports and art and crafts activities. If you would like your child to attend the club, bookings can be made by emailing [3.15club@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto: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

### **Attendance Focus**

In each newsletter we have an attendance focus as part of our continued work to improve school attendance. Please remember 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. January's attendance figures are as follows:

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Class 1 | 90.0% |
| Class 2 | 94.0% |
| Class 3 | 96.7% |
| Class 4 | 95.7% |

Well done to Class 3 for having the highest attendance for the month of February, the second month in a row! 😊

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 95.7%, which is lower than our target of 97%. Please work with us to help improve attendance and ensure the best outcomes for our children.

### **Industrial Action**

The next National Education Union industrial action is being held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March. Once again, we have plans in place to provide sufficient cover for all our classes and therefore we will be open as usual.

### **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](mailto: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.

### **Christian Value**

Each half term we focus on a different Christian value in school, and our value for this half term is **hope**. This value will be explored in collective worship as well as in curriculum time and the children will record examples of hope in action in their floor/class books.

### **Courageous Advocacy**

Courageous advocacy is the act of speaking out against an issue of injustice, often on behalf of those whose voice is not heard. We have recently been gifted a special trophy from Ely Diocese to be awarded to an individual child or group of children at the end of the school year who have demonstrated courageous advocacy. We will be encouraging children to think of issues they would like to speak out against and supporting them to become courageous advocates. Here is a photo of our new Courageous Advocacy trophy.



### **Denver Supertots Playgroup – 2<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March**

Just a reminder about our Denver Supertots Playgroup which takes place every other Thursday from 9.30-10.45am. All pre-school age children and their parents are welcome to attend for a small cost of £1 each child, with children under 1 being free. A variety of games and activities are planned, with refreshments provided for the adults. The playgroup is jointly run by the school and students from Downham Market Academy.

### **Science Week – Week Commencing 13<sup>th</sup> March**

This year British Science Week falls from 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March and we will be marking this with special science lessons.

### **Parent Governor Election**

We recently communicated that we had two vacancies on our Governing Body for parent governors. I am pleased to inform you that we received one application from a parent, and we are currently working with them on their induction to the Governing Body. Once induction has been completed, we will formally welcome them to the Governing Body.

### **Eat Them to Defeat Them**

Last week saw the launch of this year's 'Eat Them to Defeat Them' campaign to promote vegetable consumption in children throughout the UK. The first vegetable to be promoted was peas and this week it is sweetcorn. The children will be encouraged to eat the vegetable of the week in school and will receive a sticker for doing so. The children also took home a pack last week containing a reward chart and stickers - please use the packs to encourage your children to eat more veg at home.



### **Dogs**

Please can we remind you that dogs should not be brought onto the school grounds at drop off or pick up. Thank you for your co-operation.

### **February Update from The Friends**

#### **Valentine's Disco**

We have had a busy month getting ready for our Valentine's disco which was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February in the Village Hall. As well as the disco there was a limbo dance, photo booth, biscuit decorating and crafts. We hope everyone who attended had a fantastic evening. Massive thanks to Thomas Burt, a former pupil, who kindly did this disco for us.

#### **Coronation Party**



We have also been busy planning the Coronation Party on 5<sup>th</sup> June, working with the school and the School Council to ensure we incorporate and fund as many of the children's ideas for the event as possible to make it a real celebration.

#### **Funds**

This month we have agreed to fund a Glass Blower to come into school and work with all the pupils to have a go at this amazing traditional craft. We look forward to seeing the results of their handy work. We have also funded 2 x tables, 8 x chairs and 4 x toad stools for the new library. Thank you to all members of the Friends and all the parents and carers who have supported our events and made it possible for us to keep funding and supporting the pupils.

#### **Pre-Loved School Uniform**

We have a good stock of pre-loved school uniform available please email [friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk) with your requirements or speak to Victoria Fradley (Arthur's

mum in class 3). All uniform is passed on free of charge although a small donation is always welcome.

### **Crazy Hair Day**

Thank you to everyone who took part in our recent fun crazy hair day. We loved seeing all the crazy designs at the school gates and particularly enjoyed Mrs Jones' pink hair. The event raised a total £87.50.

### **School Tea Towels**

For all of those who ordered the school tea towels and children's self-portrait items, these will be delivered by the end of February, so you have them ready in plenty time for Mothering Sunday.

### **After School Winter Warmer**

On Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March the Friends of Denver School will be selling hot sausage rolls, or veggie no sausage rolls, along with luxury hot chocolates after school. We hope you can join us and take the opportunity to start the weekend early with an end of the week treat.

### **Denver Yard Sale**

We will be organising our annual Village Yard Sale again this year on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April. There will be a number of pitches available in the village hall itself, and the carpark for those families with pupils in the school that do not live in the village. If you would like a pitch or would be able to help on the day, or beforehand, even for just an hour, please contact us on [friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk). The type of tasks we need help with include delivering flyers and putting up posters, serving teas and coffees in the village hall, or donations of cakes and biscuits.



### **Next Meeting**

Our next meeting date is Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March at 19:30 online. We would love to see you there and if you can join us, please email [friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk) for the dial in details.

### **Sports News**

#### **National Under 11s Mixed Football Tournament**

Our mixed football team travelled to Lynnsport to compete in the area National League event organised by The Linnets and West Norfolk School Sports Partnership. They were one of twenty local teams and came a very credible 7<sup>th</sup> place overall with some close and exciting matches. Sonny was also recognised for his individual talents by KLTFC. The children were a credit to the school with impeccable behaviour and sportsmanship throughout the whole day. We are very proud of them.



### **National Under 11s Girls Only Football Tournament**

Our all-girls football team travelled to Lynnsport to compete in the area National League event organised by The Linnets and West Norfolk School Sports Partnership on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February. They were one of twelve local teams and came 9<sup>th</sup> place overall in their debut as a team. The children were excellent ambassadors of the school earning recognition for their politeness and sporting behaviour. They should rightly be proud of their efforts.



### **Mini Marathon**

If your child you like to take part in the TCS London Mini Marathon on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, please contact Mrs Henden at [dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk) who will register your child for a place. It is free to enter when linked to the school.

### **Forthcoming Events**

#### **World Book Day – 2<sup>nd</sup> March**

We are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March and seeing the children dressed up as their favourite book characters. We would like to invite parents into school from 2.50pm until the end of the school day to read with your child/ren. Please come to the field gate. We have organised a special World Book Day lunch and we will also be selling book themed biscuits for 50p each. Please look out for the World Book Day vouchers the children will bring home on the day.

**Parent Consultations – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> March**

We will be offering face-to-face parent consultations on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March. Mr Bonham will also be offering appointments on 15<sup>th</sup> March. We are currently preparing a digital appointment system and will send parents a link to sign up once it is finalised. The Friends will once again be serving tea and coffee in the school hall and we hope to see many of you there.

**Flowers for Mothering Sunday – 17<sup>th</sup> March**

On 17<sup>th</sup> March, the children, supported by the ladies from St Mary's Church, will be making posies in school to present to their mums on Mothering Sunday.

**Bee Netball – 21<sup>st</sup> March**

On 21<sup>st</sup> March a group of children from Class 3 will be representing the school in a Bee Netball tournament. We hope they have a great time.

**Game Changers – 21<sup>st</sup> March**

On Tuesday afternoons, starting on 21<sup>st</sup> March, Class 4 will be engaging with Game Changers, a programme that focuses on the mental health benefits of sport. The course follows on from the Healthy Body, Healthy Mind programme the children engaged with in Class 3.

**New Age Kurling – 24<sup>th</sup> March**

On 24<sup>th</sup> March, a group of children from Classes 2 and 3 will be taking part in a New Age Kurling tournament, as part of the OMNES games. We hope they thoroughly enjoy themselves.

**Easter Service – 30<sup>th</sup> March**

We are planning on having an Easter Assembly in St Mary's Church on 30<sup>th</sup> March at 1.30pm. All are welcome to attend. More details will follow soon.

**And finally...**

We are continually looking for ways to improve the school, and we value your ideas and opinions. Please do approach any of us if you have feedback to offer so we can ensure that the school continues to drive forwards in a positive way.

**Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:**

**Spring Term**

|            |                  |     |                                     |
|------------|------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| March 2023 | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Thu | World Book Day                      |
|            | 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Wed | Parent Consultation Evenings        |
|            | 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Thu | Parent Consultation Evenings        |
|            | 21 <sup>st</sup> | Tue | Game Changers – Class 4             |
|            | 24 <sup>th</sup> | Fri | New Age Kurling                     |
|            | 24 <sup>th</sup> | Fri | Downham Cluster Football Tournament |
|            | 28 <sup>th</sup> | Tue | Games Changers – Class 4            |
|            | 30 <sup>th</sup> | Thu | Easter Service                      |
|            | 31 <sup>st</sup> | Fri | Outdoor Learning – Classes 1 and 2  |
|            | 31 <sup>st</sup> | Fri | Last day of spring term             |
| April 2023 | 18 <sup>th</sup> | Tue | Children return to school           |

**Summer Term**

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