



March 2024

Newsletter



Welcome to the newsletter for March. This has been a very short half term and it does not seem possible that the spring term is coming to an end. We have lots to share and celebrate with you and we hope you enjoy reading it.

Outdoor Classroom

Our new outdoor classroom project is really progressing and there is a real buzz around school with the children excited to see what is coming next. The craftsmanship from Artisan Structures is excellent and I am sure you will agree that this is a fantastic addition to the school. We cannot wait to see the end product!



Mothering Sunday Posies

Continuing a long school tradition, the ladies from St Mary's Church came into school on Friday 8th March to help the children make lovely posies for Mothering Sunday. A huge thank you to Jo Walton and Amanda Dawson, along with ladies from the 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, and to the Stow Estate for providing the greenery. Please can we ask that you return the plastic trays so these can then be re-used next year.



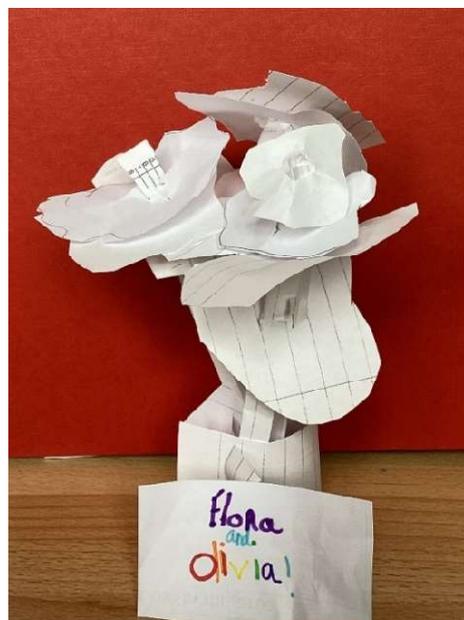
British Science Week

British Science Week took place from 11th – 15th March. To mark the occasion, all classes throughout the school took part in a national competition sponsored by STEMPPOINT, an organisation that promotes skills in science, engineering, technology and maths with the aim of encouraging children to consider future careers in these areas.

In pairs, the children had to look at the properties of trees then, with just 4 sheets of recycled A4 paper, make the best tree they could. The only tool allowed was scissors. Glue, paper-fasteners and clips, sticky tape and staples were banned. Instead, the children were encouraged to learn and use slotting, folding and rolling techniques to join the different parts of their trees together.

The winning pairs were Noah and Ivy W from Key Stage One/Reception and Olivia and Flora from Key Stage Two. They received Easter eggs during our celebration assembly. Their entries have been submitted to STEMPOINT. The closing date is March 29th so national results will be out after Easter.

There were some very impressive techniques demonstrated across the school along with a very pleasing amount of skill building and teamwork in all classes. Well done all!



Messy Church by Heidi Moat

Easter Messy Church, which took place after school on 25th March, was - gloriously messy! Children made Easter gardens with soil, moss and plants, chocolate nests were created and decorated with eggs and wreaths telling the Easter story were coloured and glued. We went on an Easter sensory journey using sand, grass, water and other natural elements to recreate Jesus' last week on earth. As usual we had healthy snacks on offer, and everyone took home an Easter treat.

It was great to be able to welcome some families from Supertots as well as other new faces. Why not come and visit us in the summer term? Watch out for the next date which will be circulated through the school. Happy Easter to you all from all the Messy Church Gang!



World Book Day

Back at the beginning of March, we celebrated World Book Day. As usual, the children and staff dressed up as their favourite book characters and took part in different activities to celebrate reading. Parents and carers were invited into school at the end of the day to read with the children. Mrs Fenn kindly baked biscuits for the children to enjoy. The children took home a £1 World Book Day voucher at the end of the day. Here are some photos showing how we celebrated this exciting day.



Class 2 Science by Miss Pennock

In Class 2 we have been learning about taking care of the earth. The children have looked at the impact humans are having on our planet and ways that we can help to reduce waste and reduce pollution. They brought in some items to show how we can Reduce, Recycle, Reuse and Repair.



Relaxation Reef

As part of our work for Children's Mental Health Week back in February, we have created a dedicated wellbeing area in the shelter, which the children have named the Relaxation Reef. The children now have access to a number of resources to support their wellbeing at break and lunch times, including: fidget spinners, squishies, doodle pads, theraputty, bubbles, mindfulness colouring and much more. The resources were introduced this week and the area has proved very popular so far.



Eat Them to Defeat Them

Throughout the second half of the spring 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, and we are really impressed by how many children are eating their veg. Thank you to Mrs Fenn for incorporating this initiative into the menu, and to parents/carers for helping us to promote the campaign.

Outdoor Learning Club Update by Mr Cawley

On the last outdoor learning session this term, we decided to challenge the children in an Easter egg style hunt. There were no Easter eggs, so instead we used items from EYFS. The children split into teams, and they had to hide their five items around the field; using clipboards, paper and pencils they had to document where these items could then be found in words or pictures. The children enjoyed the challenge and worked well together - hopefully preparing them well for their own *proper* Easter egg hunts over the Easter break. One breakaway group also prepared our new fire pit for next term. They removed the grass and top layer of soil, which was repurposed in the goal mouths to repair the craters that had formed through enthusiastic goalkeeping! We look forward to seeing you all next term for more fun (hopefully in the sun!). Mr Cawley and Mr Rackham.



Guinea Pigs

Dusty and Gingy, our two pet guinea pigs, are settling in well to school life. The children are really enjoying seeing them everyday and taking responsibility for looking after them. A huge thank you to those children and parents who have already taken Dusty and Gingy home for weekends. We are still looking for some willing volunteers to help out during weekends and holiday periods. If you are able to help out, please get in touch. Thank you for your support.



Bishop Dagmar's Lent Challenge

Throughout the period of Lent, we have been participating in Bishop Dagmar's Lent Challenge, the theme of which has been This is the Time – 'For I know plans I have for you... plans to give you hope and a future' (Jeremiah 29,11). The children have learned about how they can take action to care for creation in a time of climate crisis, remembering that we have hope in God and God's plans for our good future.



iRock

Last week, the children were thoroughly entertained by Rory from iRock who delivered an interactive assembly to inspire budding musicians. iRock offer band sessions in schools and the children all took home an information leaflet about what can be offered. If you would like more information about iRock and bookings, please visit www.irockschool.com/enrol



Easter Trail

Each class visited St Mary's Church, Denver yesterday to take part in an Easter trail to tell the children about the story of the Salvation of Jesus. The children had to locate 12 eggs that had been hidden around the church. When they had all been found, the eggs were opened in numerical order revealing an object that linked to parts of the story. The first object was a donkey because Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem. Other objects were a crown, a palm leaf and a bag of 30 pieces of silver, each depicting an aspect of the story. The children were very engaged and learnt a lot from the experience. A huge thank you to Reverend Nigel and Heidi for organising this.



Water Bottles

Please remember that children should bring only plain water to school in their school water bottles, and not flavoured waters or juices. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

Sun Protection

During the summer term when the weather starts to warm up, the children will spend more time outside. To help protect them from the sun, please ensure that they bring a sun hat and water bottle to school each day, and that they apply sun cream before coming to school. Thank you.

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](#)



Denver Supertots Playgroup

Our Denver Supertots Playgroup will continue to offer sessions on alternate Wednesdays and Fridays from 9.30 - 10.45am throughout the summer term. 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.

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. March's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	96.9%
Class 2	91.7%
Class 3	95.1%
Class 4	95.4%

Well done again to Class 1 for having the highest attendance for the month of March.

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **95.5%**, which is lower than our target of 97%. Please help us to support good school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

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. Our Attendance Policy is available on our school website.

School Lunch Price Increase

Just a reminder that the price of a school lunch will increase to £2.60 per meal from 1st April. There will also be a new summer menu when we return from the Easter break. This can be found on our school website in the parents / carers section.

if your child has lunch in school (but is not eligible for free school meals) could we **please ask that you keep a note of how many lunches have been taken in a week and pay promptly for these.** If your child would like school lunches but you are struggling to pay for them, you may be eligible for free school meals – there is a link on our website if you wish to apply: [Denver VC Primary School - School Lunches](#)

There will also be a new summer menu when we return from the Easter break (please see the school website for details).

Sports News by Mrs Henden

It has been a busy month for sport in the school now that the weather has improved and cluster/area fixtures have increased.

In lessons, the children across the school have been learning new skills, including yoga, as part of the new Get Set for PE curriculum. Swimming has now concluded with the children in Class 4 having learnt valuable life-saving and rescue techniques.

Bikeability Level 2 Training

Catherine and Andy from Outspoken Training came to the school from Monday 4th March to Thursday 7th March to deliver Level 1 and 2 cycle proficiency training to children in Class 4.

On the Monday session, the children stayed on site learning how to maintain their bikes safely and how to perform a range of manoeuvres that they would apply on the roads. The emphasis was very much on risk assessment rather than about danger which the children responded well to.

Successful completion of Day 1 meant that the children progressed onto the local roads. They worked on indicating their intentions to other road users, how to pull away safely, how to stop and progress from junctions and how to make turns, amongst other things. At the end of the course, Andy and Catherine gave each child some specific feedback. They were very complimentary of both their skill development and their behaviour.

All the children completed the course successfully and were rewarded with certificates and badges in our celebration assembly. We are very grateful to our governors, Mrs Walton and Mrs Wilde, for supporting the children in this very useful initiative.



Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel

The Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel challenge took place during the weeks beginning 11th and 18th March. Children across the nation were encouraged to walk, cycle or scoot to school in a bid to increase activity and fitness levels while reducing our carbon footprint. Each day we tracked the number of journeys made to school in these ways to enter a prize draw. We look forward to seeing if we are successful...

Thank you for your support with this. Please don't let it end there! With the newly acquired cycle skills and the better weather, we hope that as many families as possible will continue to walk, scoot or cycle to school to support the aim of 60 active minutes a day for all primary aged children.

Dance Festival – King's Lynn Corn Exchange

On Wednesday 6th March, Denver Primary School burst onto the stage at the King's Lynn Corn Exchange for the latest King's Lynn Dance Festival. The theme this year was 'films and musicals' and the audience of children from 11 local primary schools together with 200 members of the public, clapped, sang and cheered as each school performed their dance routine – the atmosphere was incredible! Once again, the diverse range of styles made the festival really entertaining - the 'Denver Dance Dudes' were the second school to perform and they rocked their socks off! Their confidence was remarkable and each one of them should be delighted with their fabulous performances. Thanks to all the parents who were there to support the school and to Miss Waters and Mrs Dawson for chaperoning. A huge thank you also to Miss de Vanche for preparing the dancers. Well done girls and boys and thank you for all your hard work – you have made us all at Denver School very proud!



OMNES Games Kurling

Last week, the children in Class 3 enjoyed an Omnes Games Kurling Taster session in school. This helped to prepare them for the Kurling event which took part at Lynnsport last Friday for a group of children in Y2 and Y3.



Bee Netball

A squad of nine children from Y6 travelled to Downham Market Leisure Centre on Tuesday 19th March to participate in a cluster netball competition. It had been a while since our netball lessons back in October, but our determined team still managed to come a very respectable 5th place in the tournament. Thank you to Miss Waters and Mrs Williamson for taking them and cheering them on.

Kit News

As a school that celebrates equality and as a legacy of England women's European Cup success of 2022, we have attended events that promote girls' football and continue to do so whenever opportunities in our cluster and area arise. This enabled us to enter the Premier League Primary Stars Kit Scheme in partnership with Nike. We were delighted to have been one of the successful schools and have now received an impressive set of 14 Nike branded kits: football shirts, shorts and socks and a goalkeeper's strip. We look forward to wearing these with pride at our next event.



Clubs Update

Clubs will resume immediately after the Easter break. The children already enrolled in a club will automatically be enrolled for the summer term. There are spaces available in all sports clubs so please contact the office if you wish your child to be added to our registers. Clubs are free of charge.

With the Kwik Cricket tournament coming up at the end of May, the Class 4 Friday club session will be Kwik Cricket based for the next 6 weeks. Again, there are plenty of spaces so if your child would like to join, please contact Mrs Henden via email dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

Forthcoming Events

Denver Village Yard Sale

The annual Denver Village Yard Sale takes place on Sunday 21st April. This is always a really good fundraiser for The Friends so please come along to support this event.

KS2 SATs Week – 13th – 17th May

The children in Y6 will be sitting their KS2 SATs from 13th – 17th May. They have all worked hard and are well-prepared. We wish them all the best of luck – just do your very best, you can do it!

Phonics Screen Week – 10th - 14th June

The children in Y1 will be doing the statutory phonics screen to assess their phonics understanding during this week.

And finally...

I hope you all have a wonderful Easter break. Let's hope we get to enjoy some sunshine and warmer weather. We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on 15th April.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2023/2024

Summer Term

April 2024	15 th	Mon	Children return to school
	21 st	Sun	Denver Village Yard Sale
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