



September 2025 Newsletter



Welcome to the September newsletter, the first for this academic year. September has flown by; it does not seem possible that we are halfway through this half term. For our new parents, these newsletters are an opportunity to share with you a flavour of day-to-day school life, celebrate the many ways the children are letting their light shine and to inform you of forthcoming events.

Reception Intake

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Reception children and their parents/carers to the school. They have settled in very well over the last few weeks and are getting used to all the new routines. We look forward to seeing them grow throughout their school journey here at Denver. Welcome to the Class of 2025!

New Pupils

I would also like to warmly welcome three new pupils to our school, Finn in Y3, Daisy in Y1 and Sophia in Y5, who have joined us this year.

Staff Update

As well as new pupils, we will also be welcoming a new member to our staff team next week. Miss Isabelle Lanchester will be joining us as our new Secretarial Assistant. Isabelle is completing a L3 Business Administration Apprenticeship alongside her new role. We look forward to her joining the team.

As already communicated with Class 1 parents, Mr Rackham will be undergoing surgery on his knee on Monday 6th October and will therefore not be in school for three weeks leading up to half term. Mrs Powell, a familiar face to the school, will be covering in his absence. We all wish Mr Rackham well with the operation and hope he has a speedy recovery.

New Positive Behaviour Policy

We have made some changes to our Positive Behaviour policy for this year. We have introduced WOW tokens to celebrate the WOW moments when children are really letting their light shine. These tokens are in team colours and the team with the most tokens each half term will receive a collective reward. We have a WOW token leaderboard in the hall, and this is updated weekly in celebration assembly.

We have also made changes to our approach to unacceptable behaviour. In the new policy, consequences for unacceptable behaviour follows five steps. This sequence is subject to change if the behaviour is serious:

1. Warning with a verbal explanation.
2. Warning card given or placed on child's workspace.

3. If the behaviour persists, the child will then be given a time out (10 minutes) in another classroom or with the Headteacher. Parents will be informed of any time out.
4. If after the 10-minute time out the child's behaviour persists, they will receive an internal inclusion for the rest of that morning or afternoon. Parents will again be informed.
5. 3 internal inclusions during a half term will result in an internal exclusion for a period of one day, including break and lunch times. Parents must attend a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss ways forward. Each new half-term will be considered a fresh start.

A copy of the new policy can be found on our school website under About Us, Policies. If you have any questions about the new policy, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Birthdays

For our new parents/carers, children are allowed to come to school in non-uniform on their birthday. If their birthday falls on a weekend or within a holiday period, they can wear non-uniform on the following Monday or the day we return to school. Please ensure that children wear sensible footwear.

Celebration Assemblies

Just a reminder that all parents/carers are welcome to join us for our Friday celebration assemblies to celebrate the achievements of all our children. For safeguarding reasons, the back gate will be opened at 2.50pm and closed again at 3pm, therefore if you would like to join, please arrive at the gate before 3pm. It was wonderful to see many of you joining us last - I think it was the best attended celebration assembly we have ever had; we look forward to continuing to welcome you to this wonderful celebration of the children's achievements.

Summer Reading Bingo Challenge

Well done to everyone who engaged in the Summer Reading Bingo Challenge this year. We were really pleased with the number of children who returned their bingo cards.

Whole Class Samba Sessions

This term, the children in Class 3 are receiving whole class Samba sessions run by Richard Hall from the Norfolk Music Hub. Here are some photos of the children in action.



Meet the Teacher Meetings

Thank you to those parents who joined our 'Meet the Teacher' meetings; we hope these were useful. Please remember that teachers are available at the end of the school day if you would like to talk to them or can be contacted via email or Class Dojo. Here are the email addresses for our class teachers:

crackham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

acawley@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

mbonham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

For their wellbeing, please do not contact them beyond 6pm.

Little Wandle Parents Session

Thank you to those parents who attended the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised information earlier in the term. If you were unable to attend the session and would like more information about our approach to the teaching of phonics, please visit our school website under the tab Parents/Carers, Phonics. 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/>

Tapestry

We are continuing to use Tapestry again this year, an online learning journal for children in EYFS. Tapestry is widely used across the country and will provide parents with regular feedback about their child's progress.

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 the first half of the autumn term is friendship and the children will be exploring what makes a good friend and how they can be a good friend to others.

Church News

The ladies from St Mary's Church, Denver and the wider community are knitting/crocheting poppies for a display in church for Remembrance Day. If anyone has odd balls of red, purple or black wool they would be gratefully received.

Active Travel

We are continuing to work hard to promote active travel. This year, we are encouraging the children to actively travel (walk, scoot or cycle) to school as often as is possible. Each year group has an appointed Travel Ambassador, and these children will record the children actively travelling to school in their class daily. Once a child reaches 10 active travels, they can choose something from the travel goody box. This goal will increase by 2 each time they receive a reward. For those children for whom it is difficult to actively travel due to the distance they live from school, if they actively travel across from the playing field to the school back gate 3 times before school, this will also count as an active travel. We have also purchased a pedometer for all our children, and they will be wearing these once a week in school to encourage them to be active.

In line with our active travel objectives, we now have 8 Frog bikes which can be hired out to enable all children to take part in Bikeability. If you would like more information about hiring one of our bikes, please contact me.

Times Tables Rockstars

We are continuing to focus on times tables again this year to encourage the children to be able to confidently recall the relevant times tables and division facts for their year group. All children in Classes 2, 3 and 4 have access to Times Tables Rockstars and we encourage them to use this resource both in out of school to help improve their times tables knowledge and recall: a sound understanding of times table facts is essential in becoming a successful mathematician. Special certificates will continue to be awarded each week in celebration assemblies for the most active child on TT Rockstars in Classes 2, 3 and 4.

Shoe Box Appeal

Each year, we support the Rotary Shoebox Scheme to spread a little happiness to those less fortunate than ourselves in many different countries across Central and Eastern Europe. We would be extremely grateful if the children could donate an item which could be included in a shoebox or fill a whole shoebox if they are able to before half term. The shoeboxes used must be the ones supplied by the Society and we have some in school if anyone would like one. Items do not need to be brand new, although should be of good quality. Baby items can be accepted, although these do need to be brand new due to import taxes. Donations for the shoeboxes can be placed in the blue bin at the top of the school field. Howard from the Downham Market Rotary Club is coming into school soon to talk to the children about the appeal. For more information about the scheme and lists of suggested items, please visit www.rotaryshoebox.org

Foodbank Donations

As part of our Harvest celebrations, we would like to again support the Downham Market Foodbank. If you can donate an item(s) to the foodbank, please drop them at the school gate on the morning of our Harvest Festival which is being held at St Mary's Church, Denver, on Monday 13th October at 2pm. Some members of the School Council will deliver the items to the foodbank. Thank you for your support.

Parent Governor Vacancies

We have **two** vacancies on our Governing Body for parent governors and we are seeking nominations of parents interested in taking up this important role. Governors are responsible for ensuring the strategic direction of the school, its performance and the use of resources to support learning. They help to ensure that our school provides the best education it can for children, parents and our local community. Being a governor can be very enjoyable and worthwhile experience. A letter regarding the forthcoming election has already been shared with you. If anyone would like any further information about being a governor, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Relationships, Health and Sex Education and Citizenship (RSHE) Update from Mrs Henden

Since returning from the holidays, it has been a busy time in this subject. In all classes there is a weekly wellbeing worship where children get to share how their lights are shining and to discuss any worries and solutions to those worries. Our collective worship is focussed on the Christian value of friendship where stories are shared and discussed to promote healthy friendships.

Here is a summary of what has been happening in each class:

Class 1

We have begun the PATHS curriculum. We have been learning about the feelings happy and sad. We have been learning how to be a friend and how to give compliments.

Class 2

We have set our class rules, applied for School and Eco-Council roles and held our elections. We have been learning about body parts which links to our science topic about the human body, and we have used the Zones of Regulation to explore different feelings.

Class 3

We have held elections for roles in class as well as for the more prominent roles of School Council, Well-Being Ambassador and Eco-Councillor. We have talked about democracy and the importance of everyone's voice being heard. We talked about classroom expectations and what makes a good learning environment. Later in the term we will be looking at feelings, emotions and responding to others.

Class 4

We have established our class rules for a safe and happy learning environment. We have learnt about democratic voting and used this approach to vote for candidates who represented themselves for roles in the School Council including Sports Reps, wellbeing ambassadors and Eco-councillors.

We have learnt about how our body image can be affected by different aspects of media and how to overcome this. We have also learnt about puberty and adolescence then the process of ageing and how we can maintain our health as we become older in our science lessons about human development

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.

We recently 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. We have also updated the Attendance policy; this 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. September's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	96.5%
Class 2	96.1%
Class 3	95.7%
Class 4	96.2%

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

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **96.1%**. Thank you for supporting us to improve school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy has been updated this academic year. A copy can be found on our website under the following tabs: About Us, Safeguarding.

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.

Allergies

We have several children with severe nut allergies in school, therefore it is important that lunchboxes or snacks do not contain peanut butter or nut products, including seeds. Thank you for your cooperation.

Snacks

Children in Classes 1 and 2 receive a free piece of fruit as their snack each day. Children in Classes 3 and 4 can bring in a **healthy snack** from home should they wish to.

Water Bottles

It is important that the children are hydrated throughout the day, as being fully hydrated means that they will be able to think faster, be more focussed, and have greater clarity of thought. Please ensure that your child brings a water bottle to school each day containing water only, thank you.

Uniform

Please can you ensure that all uniform, including coats, is named so that lost items can be returned to their owners. Thank you for your cooperation.

School Council

We recently held elections to appoint this year's School Council members and so many of the children were keen to be involved and submitted applications. The School Council has representatives from all classes, and they meet every half term to discuss relevant issues and be the voice of their peers. We held our first meeting last week and the children had excellent ideas to share.

Eco Committee

I am thrilled to inform you that we achieved the Schools Eco Award last year, which is testament to the hard work of Mr Cawley and the Eco Committee. Mr Cawley will continue to work with our newly elected Eco Committee each half term.



Wellbeing

We continue to prioritise wellbeing for both pupils and staff in school. We recently appointed our new Wellbeing Ambassadors, Aoife, Edith, Esme and Evie, onto our School Council and they will be working hard this year to champion positive mental health for the children and adults in school.

Denver Supertots

Our Denver Supertots playgroup this year will be running every Wednesday from 9.30-10.30am with support of the students from DMA. Please spread the word as we are keen to welcome new families. We are also looking for volunteers to help us to run the playgroup. If anyone has some spare time on a Wednesday morning and could volunteer to help, even if only occasionally, please contact me for further information.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Parent consultation evenings will happen after half term on 10th and 12th November. These provide an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress with their class teacher. Appointments will be face to face. More details will follow before half term.

Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley

The first of our Outdoor Learning sessions happened not in school, but at the church. The children were split into three groups, and there were guides for each of the activities. The first was installing an owl box in the old tree; the children learned about the nesting preferences of the owls and saw how the box had been created from upcycled things from the local building site. They watched with bated breath as the ladder was climbed and the installation was completed! The second activity was a walk around the churchyard, looking at the insects and wildlife that bestow our local church. The children were guided by a very knowledgeable man, who used to work for the estate that is now home to Church Farm. They enjoyed learning about the history of the plants, and the habitats of the insects, and were told many interesting facts such as the bows that were made by people a thousand years ago would have been created from a tree such as the yew tree that is found in the churchyard. The final activity was to assist in the clearing of the cut grasses that were in the new rewilding area. This grass was cut in preparation for allowing the smaller plants to shine through, as the area was shadowed by the taller grasses. The children did a sterling job, and the task was enjoyed by all. Mr C



Office News

We apologise for the number of emails/Dojos we have sent out since the start of the new school year. Unfortunately, there is so much important information we need to pass on, especially for our new families, and these are our regular communication routes. To limit the amount of communication we need to send out, please can we ask that you:

- regularly check your inbox for emails from us
- read the information properly to avoid any unnecessary queries
- make a note of any relevant diary dates
- respond to any relevant emails and consents promptly so that we do not have to send further email reminders and clog up your inbox!

Our monthly newsletters and school website also include useful information together with dates for your diaries.

We would also like to apologise for the issues some of you have experienced with Arbor. We believe that the issues have now been resolved, therefore booking for school lunches will need to be made via Arbor after half term.

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

This is the first of a regular feature in the monthly newsletter introducing you to the workings and concerns of school governors.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, we are alright because we are governors of a school that is working hard to ensure the needs of the children are met each and every day. We are blessed with a dedicated and outstanding head teacher who goes above and beyond her responsibilities steering the good ship Denver in often turbulent waters. We have a staff team who work together to care for your children and give them the best they can so each child can discover how to 'Let their Light shine!' The school is surrounded by a supportive and caring community who seek to help the school to 'Let its Light Shine!'

“Alright Gov’nor?": No, we are not alright because we have only six governors to be the critical friend, complete the monitoring, and support the school. We have only one parent governor and we have places for three! Governors give up their time to ensure the school is meeting the requirements of the Department of Education in safeguarding, educating and caring for the children in the school. We meet with staff to discuss what they are doing and work with the head teacher to develop strategic plans to ensure the sustainability of the school. Needless to say, we would very much like to expand the governing body by the addition of two parent governors. Look out for the information from Mrs Jones in the near future! We are also keen to co-opt a governor with professional skills in cyber-security to assist us in the complex task of ensuring our policies and procedures are as strong as possible.

“Alright Gov’nor?": Yes, because we're currently working with the local authority as we navigate the complex process of establishing our own nursery. There is government funding available which we will make an application for this autumn. The intention is that in time we will have an additional building to provide a home for a nursery which will strengthen the sustainability of the school.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, we are expecting our SIAMs Inspection anytime soon. This is the inspection that church schools have in addition to Ofsted and as such is important for the school. We are working with the diocese to ensure we are as ready as possible and so far they have been very positive about our progress.

Welcome Back from The Friends

Welcome back everyone, we hope you all had a fantastic summer and that the children have settled back into the new school year, whether that be in a new year group or a new class. We hosted our annual AGM on 19th September and plans are already in place to hit the ground running this term. It is going to be a busy year ahead, so if anyone would like to come join our team, we would love to have you on board. If you would like to learn more about the work of the Friends, please feel free to drop us an email (friends@denver.norfolk.sch.uk) or catch one of us at drop off or pick up.

I'd like to say a huge welcome to Louise H who has agreed to come on board and take on the vacant secretary role. We are looking forward to Louise being part of our team.

Ben G - Chair of the Friends of Denver School

Forthcoming Events

School Choir - 3rd October

The school choir will be singing at Downham Home and Garden Centre's festive launch after school on Friday 3rd October.

Bookable Appointments - 6th October

On Monday 6th October, Sarah Downes, Community Worker, and Allison Burt, Early Help Consultant, will be offering bookable appointments in school for parents/carers to discuss any worries they might have. To arrange an appointment, please contact the school office.

Open Morning - 10th October

We are having an Open Morning for parents/carers of children starting school in September 2026 on Friday 10th October from 9.30-11.30am. Please spread the word.

Harvest Assembly - 13th October

We are having a Harvest assembly at St Mary's Church, Denver on Monday 13th October at 2pm. All are welcome to attend.

RE Workshop - 14th October

The children will be engaging in RE workshops on 14th October, the focus of which is 'Be Brave'.

Friends' Meeting - 17th October

The next Friends' meeting is taking place on Friday 17th October. All are welcome.

OMNES Dodgeball - 20th October

The first OMNES games festival is taking place at Lynnsport on 20th October for children in Classes 2 and 3. The focus of this session will be dodgeball.

Cluster Cross Country – 21st October

We will be sending a group of children from KS2 to the cluster cross country competition at Hillcrest Primary School on Tuesday 21st October. Good luck to all our runners!

Young Carers Group – 22nd October

Mrs Wright is busy organising the first Young Carers' group of this academic year on the afternoon of Wednesday 22nd October.

Cluster Football Tournament – 23rd October

A group of children from Class 4 will be representing the school at the Cluster Football tournament on the afternoon of 23rd October. Good luck to the team!

Bikeability Level 2- 3rd-6th November

Level 2 Bikeability training is being offered to Y5/6 children on the week commencing 3rd November.

School Photographs – 3rd November

The photographer will be in on the first day back after half term to take individual and sibling photos.

Flu Immunisations – 4th November

Flu immunisations will be offered in school on 4th November. Consent must be given via the link already shared with parents/carers.

Music Workshop – 5th November

Norfolk Music Hub will be delivering a music workshop to the whole school on 5th November.

Parent Consultation Evenings -10th and 12th November

Parent consultation evenings will take place on 10th and 12th November. We are hoping to introduce a new booking system on Arbor. More details will follow before half term.

Children in Need – 14th November

We will be supporting Children in Need again this year. The School Council are organising a non-uniform day and asking the children to wear bright colours or Pudsey themed clothing for a suggested donation of £1. More details to follow.

Pensthorpe Trip – 21st November

The children in Classes 1 and 2 will be visiting Pensthorpe on Friday 21st November. This visit is grant funded. Thank you to Nikki O'Mara from the Friends for organising this.

Tag Rugby Festival – 24th November

The cluster tag rugby tournament this year is being held on the afternoon of Monday 24th November.

Christingle Service – 1st December

Our annual Christingle Service will take place on Monday 1st December at 2pm in St Mary's Church, Denver. The children will make Christingles, kindly supported by the ladies from St Mary's Church.

Christmas Fayre – 4th December

Our popular Christmas Fayre will return this year on Thursday 4th December. The children in KS2 will once again be making games for the children to play. More details to follow soon

Nativity – 15th December

One of the highlights of the school year is always the Nativity performed by children in Classes 1 and 2. This will take place this year on Monday 15th December at 2pm in the school hall.

Carol Service – 19th December

Our annual Carol Service will take place in St Mary's Church, Denver on the last day of term, Friday 19th December at 1.30pm.

Sports News by Mrs Henden

Active Kids

The first of the three Active Kids festivals for Y1 children took place on 22nd September. The children took part in a range of different activities involving speed and agility. They enjoyed the session and are looking forward to the next one in the spring term.



Class 4 Tag Rugby and KS2 After-School Club

On Friday 12th September, Class 4 children began the first of three sessions of tag rugby delivered by coach James Burroughs from West Norfolk Rugby Club.

In this first session, the children performed agility drills that encouraged swift changes of direction and pace and how to handle and pass the ball. Next, the children learnt how to tackle using the pads. This then led to some practise in tagging one another to teach the children how to form a defensive line to block the other team from scoring a try.



In the second session, passing drills and games were followed by some tackling competitions using the tackle bags. Next, some time to learn how to pass backwards while in motion and thinking about finding space. The class learned how to form a line of defence and then had some tag rugby match play time to put all the skills and rules into practise.



Attendance at the after-school club was excellent with 22 members. They enjoyed some friendly games as they got used to the rules. They developed their skills over the sessions and got stuck into some matches. Fantastic!



Bikeability Training

Trainers from Outspoken Training visited the school on Thursday 25th September to carry out Level 1 cycling proficiency training for children in Class 3. They spent time on the school grounds to achieve the skills for Level 1. Well done to everyone who took part. We look forward to welcoming our trainers back later in the year to carry out Level 2 training to some of our Y5 and Y6 children.





And finally...

We would like to welcome more volunteers into school to help with a variety of different tasks e.g. listening to readers, helping out on visits, helping to run clubs etc. If you have any spare time and are interested in volunteering, please do let me know.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2025/2026

Autumn Term

October 2025	3 rd	Fri	School choir singing at Downham Home and Garden Centre's festive launch
	6 th	Mon	Bookable Appointments with Sarah Downes and Allison Burt
	10 th	Wed	Open Morning
	13 th	Mon	Harvest Assembly
	14 th	Tue	RE Workshops - Be Brave
	20 th	Mon	OMNES Dodgeball
	21 st	Tue	Cluster Cross Country
	22 nd	Wed	Young Carers' Group
	23 rd	Thu	Cluster Football
27 th - 31 st		School closed for half term	
November 2025	3 rd	Mon	Children return to school
	3 rd	Mon	School Photographs
	3 rd -6 th		Bikeability Level 2
	4 th	Tue	Flu Immunisations
	5 th	Wed	Music Workshop
	10 th -14 th		Anti-Bullying Week
	10 th	Mon	Parent Consultation Evening
	12 th	Wed	Parent Consultation Evening
	14 th	Fri	Children in Need
	21 st	Fri	Pensthorpe Trip
24 th	Mon	Tag Rugby Festival	

December 2025	1 st	Mon	Christingle Service
	4 th	Thu	Christmas Fayre
	15 th	Mon	Nativity
	18 th	Thu	Pantomime
	19 th	Fri	Carol Service
	19 th	Fri	Last day of autumn term

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