



November 2025 Newsletter



Welcome to the November newsletter, and what a bumper edition it is! Just writing the newsletter, I cannot quite believe how much we have packed in; we hope you enjoy reading about our busy month in school. With Christmas just around the corner, please read the forthcoming event section so you do not miss out on any of the festive events coming up in December.

Lunch with Parents

On 26th November, the parents of children in Class 1 were invited into school to enjoy a school lunch with their child. It was lovely to see so many parents joining us - we had many comments that lunches had improved since they were at school! Thank you to Mrs Fenn and Miss Metcalfe for working hard to provide lunch for so many people.



Pensthorpe Trip by Mr Rackham and Mr Cawley

Last Friday, Classes 1 and 2 went on a special trip to Pensthorpe to learn about habitats of UK animals. At Pensthorpe, we learnt about the different habitat zones at the reserve and then went off on 2 separate activities to see what animals we could discover and understand why they have chosen that place for their habitat. We got to see a variety of birds including different ducks and even flamingos! We also went on a bug hunt and took a few of our findings back to investigate further under the microscope, including a spider. A huge thank you to Nikki O'Mara from the Friends for securing the grant from Aviva for the visit and for her help in organising it.





Christmas Card Designs

The children have been busy designing Christmas cards this month for St Mary's Church and the lucky winners are going to have their designs made into cards and sent out to the local parish. There were so many wonderful designs; I have heard it was a difficult task choosing the winning designs produced by:

Class 1 - Seb

Class 2 - Jack

Class 3 - Monty

Class 4 - Flora

Congratulations to our winners!

Class 1 and 2 Worship in the Church by Mr Rackham

Classes 1 and 2 went down to the church for a special Collective Worship led by members of the Church. The worship focussed on the school's current Christian value: Generosity. KS1 listened to the story of Ruth and Naomi and discussed how Ruth showed generosity in the story.

The children then went off in classes to create their own baskets of things that they are grateful for, just like how Ruth was thankful for Naomi in the story. There were some delightful ideas included in the baskets and the children had a fantastic time. Thank you to the members of the church who helped in the afternoon.





Odd Socks Day

On Monday 10th November, we organised an Odd Socks Day to mark the start of Anti-Bullying Week. The children were all asked to come to school wearing odd socks to represent the fact that we are all unique individuals. Well done to all the children for promoting this very important message. The children also engaged in an assembly exploring anti-bullying on Thursday, delivered by Louise from the Swan Youth Project



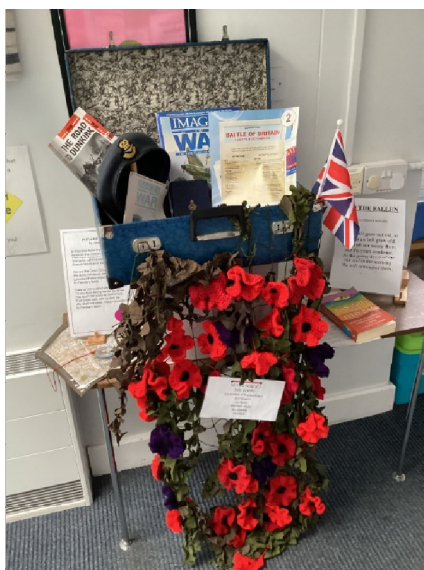
Music Workshop

On Wednesday 5th November, we were treated to a special whole school music workshop by Rosie and Gemma from the Benadetti Foundation. We gathered in the hall where they warmed us up by creating sounds using body percussion. Rosie then played a piece on her cello by the composer Giovanni Solomon. We had to listen carefully to work out how many stages there were to the piece and think about what story might be being told by thinking about the emotions the music made us feel. The next activity was to use body percussion to create a musical storm scene. Gemma taught us a song about a storm which we then sang in rounds with leaders from Class 4 at the front guiding the people on their side of the hall in when it was their turn to sing. It was an enjoyable and interesting workshop. Thank you to those who made this possible.



Remembrance

In early November, the School Council members sold poppy merchandise to raise money for the Royal British Legion. We then held a special worship for Remembrance on Armistice Day. The ladies from the church kindly created a wonderful poppy display in school for the children to look at and reflect on.



School Council New Menu Tasting

On 12th November, Sharon Moore from Norse attended the School Council meeting to discuss the new Autumn/Winter lunch menu with the children. Sharon talked to the children about nutrition and what makes a healthy balanced diet, and also the different types of food on the menu. Sharon asked the children questions e.g. Why do we not have chips on the menu each day? The children came up with some very good answers.



The children tried coca cola jelly to see what their thoughts were and there was a clear thumbs up from the members! They also tried the peach crunch (kindly baked by Mrs Fenn) with Greek yoghurt from the new menu - again this was a real hit. It was lovely to see some of the children trying Greek yoghurt for the first time.



Sharon asked for feedback on the new menu and the children completed feedback forms. She also asked the children to design their own school dinner. A huge thank you to Sharon for coming in to talk to the children!



Children in Need

Friday 14th November was Children in Need, and we held a non-uniform day to support this year's appeal. Mrs Fenn baked some delicious Pudsey biscuits which the children really enjoyed eating – thank you Mrs Fenn! We raised a super Children in Need total of £172.10. – an amazing effort. Well done everyone!

Families Cambridgeshire Magazine

Below is a link to the November/December edition of the Families Cambridgeshire Magazine, which contains lots of festive ideas. The link can also be found on our website within the Parents/Carer section.

[Families Cambridge Magazine November and December](#)

Staff Update

Mrs Batterham, one of our longest serving members of staff, will sadly be retiring from her MSA position at the end of the autumn term. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

Colder Weather

As the weather has started to get colder, please can all children come to school wearing a coat. Thank you for your cooperation.

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 this half has been generosity. I would like to recognise Fred in Class 2 for his wonderful generosity in using his own pocket money to purchase hedgehog food to be used in school – what a generous act, Fred – well done!

Shoe Box Appeal

Just a reminder that if the children would like to donate an item which could be included in a shoebox or fill a whole shoebox, these donations need to be handed in by the end of term. For more information about the scheme and lists of suggested items, please visit www.rotaryshoebox.org

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

Class 1

In Class 1, we have celebrated Anti-Bullying Week and enjoyed odd sock day, discussing why it is important that we are all different and celebrating our differences. Linked to this, we also thought about what kind things we could do to with our friends if they felt sad.

Class 2

So far this term in RSHE, Class 2 have been learning how to recognise and celebrate their strengths and achievements and set simple but challenging goals. The children took part in a compliment carousel where they took it in turns to stand up and say something they had done that they were proud of. Next the children took turns to give the person next to them a compliment. Finally, the children created a set of goals that they would like to achieve this year, in 5 years' time and for when they are adults. I hope they achieve their goals and fulfil their dreams! For the remainder of the term the children will be learning about personal hygiene and germs including how bacteria and viruses are spread and treated and the importance of handwashing.

Class 3

This term in Class 3 we are looking at our own emotions and feelings, as well as those of others. We will look at how sometimes we can find it hard to control emotions and that it is a normal part of growing up. We will look at ways to calm ourselves and relax.

Class 4

In Class 4 RSHE this month we have continued to share our worries placed in the 'ask it basket' during our weekly wellbeing worship session and talking things through with our wellbeing ambassadors. We took part in Anti-bullying week by wearing odd socks to celebrate our individual qualities and uniqueness. Louise from Swan Youth also came to share an important collective worship about recognising and dealing with bullying. Our PE lessons have supported our learning in RSHE by teaching us how to be Young Leaders with an appreciation of participants, area, equipment and communication all with safety as our first thought.

In the RSHE lessons we have developed our learning about how we can reframe our thinking. We looked at ways to resolve uncomfortable situations, where we can gain support from at difficult times and also explored different mindfulness techniques.

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.

At the beginning of the school year, we 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. Our Attendance policy 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. October's attendance figures were as follows:

Class 1	97.5%
Class 2	96.9%
Class 3	94.8%
Class 4	95.3%

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

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **95.7%**, which is below our school target. Please support us in improving school attendance to ensure the best outcomes for our children.

Office News

Please can we remind all parents/carers to order their child's lunch choice on Arbor, either daily or in a bulk order. The office staff are having to go into classrooms each morning and interrupt lessons to gather this information, which is very time consuming and disruptive to the teaching and learning.

Clubs

Just a reminder that all after school clubs finish next Friday, 5th December. Our Before School Club and 3:15 Club will run until the end of term.

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.

PE Kit

Please can you ensure that children wear the correct PE uniform on PE days. PE kit should be plain and in school colours, without large logos. Football kits should not be worn. Earrings must be removed for PE and not taped over. Thank you for your cooperation.

Denver Supertots

Just a reminder that our Denver Supertots playgroup runs every Wednesday from 9.30-10.30am with support of the students from DMA. They have two more sessions left before the end of term and they will be starting back in the new year on Wednesday 14th January.

Christmas Cards

From next Monday, the children will be able to post all their Christmas cards to their friends and staff members in the Christmas post box. Please ensure that envelopes clearly show the recipient's first name and the initial of their last name, along with their class, to ensure that cards can be delivered successfully e.g. John S, Class 4. Cards can be posted until the last day of term, Friday 19th December.

First Admission to School

Just a reminder that applications for children starting school in Reception next September need to be made by 16th January 2026. The easiest way for parents to apply is online 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.

Young Carers

Our next Young Carers session is being held on Thursday 11th December and it will have a festive theme.

Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley

Fire starting and bird feeders...

The first of our outdoor learning sessions for the KS2 children introduced them to the need to help our feathered friends, and in a turn of lucky planning, fire starting...on November 5th of all days! The children used pinecones and string to create a sturdy structure in which to slather lashings of lard over, followed by ample amounts of birdseed to keep the animals happy as the nights draw in.



Smaller break off groups joined me to revise the fire triangle and have a go at creating their own little fires using a firestick. We had 100% success rate! We closed the session with a safety around fire talk; very important on this day of all days! Next time, we invite a lady to visit and introduce hedgehog wellbeing...watch this space!



Hedgehogs...

This evening (the coldest so far this year!) marked the opportunity for the Outdoor Learning Club to listen to and interact during a talk about the small spikey friends we know and love as 'Hedgehogs'. Jan from the hedgehog charity visited our school and showed the children items relating to hedgehogs, and gave a really informative and interesting talk on many aspects of caring for hedgehogs and maintaining their habitat. I, for one, learned loads! The children then showed Jan around our area in preparation for us building some hedgehog hotels in the coming weeks.



Owls....

The ODLC was lucky enough to have Nigel, the game keeper for the Stow Bardolph estate, visit with some very interesting artefacts....we all had the opportunity to learn about, and dissect Barn Owl pellets. Nigel shared his wealth of knowledge about Barn Owls, in a really interesting and child friendly way. He brought videos of his own owl boxes, and a puppet owl to help to illustrate what he was teaching. The children all got to pull apart a pellet, allowing them to discover the bones and teeth (and in one case a skull!) of the prey of which they feed on.

All children had an excellent time, and I were very appreciative of Nigel imparting his knowledge on the penultimate outdoor learning club of 2025. Next week, they will be doing something a little warmer.....



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

Our regular feature in the monthly newsletter introducing you to the workings and concerns of school governors.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, as the end of term comes nearer the school is beginning to fill with the sounds of the festive season. The children continue to focus on their learning, but the atmosphere is one of slightly restrained excitement.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: No, we still need more governors, but we are happy as we may have filled the parent governor spaces. The role does come with responsibility but as Denver is such a wonderful school there are rewards in celebrating and helping to guide the strategic direction of the school.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, because governors are about to have their first termly meeting with staff to look at subject monitoring. At these meetings a governor sits down with a subject leader and discusses the progress being made on a subject’s action plan. It is an opportunity for staff to take stock and to be heard as they outline what has been happening within the subject across the school. These sessions are fascinating, and both governors and staff find them helpful.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, our journey to establish a nursery at the school continues. We’ve recently met with Diocesan and local authority professionals to discuss how we could accommodate a nursery. It was such a positive meeting with suggestions we hadn’t thought of being made. There are many hurdles to overcome but the support of these officers is much appreciated.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, as we look at our attendance figures which central government is focussing on very closely, we are grateful for the slow but sure improvement in attendance. We encourage families to ensure children attend regularly. Some facts relating to poor attendance are that *“For the typical student, each day of absence equates to a 0.8% reduction in earnings at age 28.”* and *“At Key Stage 2 in 2022/23, pupils with 95-100% attendance were 1.3 times more likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths compared to those attending 90-95% of the time. Missing just 10 days in Year 6 can reduce the likelihood of reaching the expected standard by around 25%.”*

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, I am always aware when visiting the school of the time and effort all the staff put into ensuring the children get a fantastic experience throughout their school life. We are fortunate to have staff who go above and beyond to do their absolute best and to let their lights shine.

“Alright Gov’nor?”: Yes, over the last term we have seen the relationship with St Mary’s Church develop and deepen. To support the RE teaching and learning the church has hosted a KS1 and KS2 session in church exploring more about the Christian value of ‘Generosity’. This will only add to what I hope will be a positive SIAMs (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspection when it arrives this academic year. The school is exploring what is meant by spirituality which will continue over the coming weeks and months.

Update from The Friends

November has been all systems go for the Friends as we build up towards the Christmas period. Behind the scenes, we have been very busy helping to organise the Christmas Fayre. We are looking forward to seeing everyone, and we hope you enjoy the games and stalls throughout the school. Also, if you are able to donate any raffle or tombola prizes, they are greatly appreciated. Please either leave them in the blue bin at the top of the field, hand them into the front office or pass them to one of the friends on the school field. Thank you.

It was nice to see parents and carers in the hall for parents' evening at the start of the month. We hope all the children are settling into the new school year. Also, to reception parents who purchased photos or digital files, they should be with you shortly, if not already.

And finally, a massive thank you to our Treasurer Nikki, who was able to obtain funding to take KS1 on a trip to Pensthorpe. It was a fantastic day, with so much to see and do. Unfortunately we did not have enough time to explore everything and I strongly encourage parents to consider taking their children back if they are able to. Once again, thank you Nikki. Have a fantastic build up to the festive period. See you all around school!

Ben. G - Chair of The Friends of Denver School.

Forthcoming Events

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 from 3.20-5pm. There will be a range of stalls and the children in KS2 will once again be organising their own games. The Friends, as always, as organising one of their amazing raffles with some excellent prizes. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival

St Mary's Church, Denver are busy organising their first Christmas Tree Festival, which will run from 13th-21st December. They invite you all to celebrate with them and fill St Mary's, Denver and our community with light, joy, and community spirit this Christmas! A flyer giving more information will be shared with you soon.

Christmas Lunch – 17th December

The children will be enjoying their Christmas lunch on Wednesday 17th December. To help them to get into the festive spirit, the children can wear Christmas themed clothing on this day. They will be making crackers for this event with members of the Friends.

Christmas Parties

We have arranged for each class to have their own Christmas party in the last few weeks of term. The parties are always a fun way to end the term and will help to get the children into the festive spirit. School uniform should be worn on party days. The parties will take place on the following dates:

	Dates
Class 1	18 th December
Class 2	12 th December
Class 3	10 th December
Class 4	16 th December

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.

Pantomime - 19th December

The children in Years 1-6 will be visiting the Maltings, Ely to watch the pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk on the penultimate day of term. This is very kindly being funded by the Friends of Denver School. The children in Reception will have a Christmas party in school.

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

Bikeability training 2025

Trainers from Outspoken Training visited the school from Monday 3rd November to Thursday 6th November to carry out Level 1 and Level 2 cycling proficiency training. Most children from Year 5 took part. The first morning was spent on the school grounds to achieve the skills for Level 1.



Successful completion of this enabled the children to progress to Level 2 training on the road by the school.



The third and fourth days of training, once confidence and skills had been developed, saw the children using busier roads. The children are now much more confident in making safe manoeuvres when out on the roads, in their road safety awareness and how to maintain a bike. Well done to everyone who took part. We look forward to welcoming our trainers back next year.

Young Leaders Training

On Tuesday 11th November, Class 4 children began their Young Leaders training. Shaun from Alive Leisure at Lynnsport came to run the session. He began by asking the children to consider good leadership qualities and to share their hopes and aspirations for the course. The main activities in this first session focused on participants. Shaun taught the children a game and talked through how he led and managed the people playing the game.

Then the children were put into groups of three and tasked them with organising six other children into teams and clearly explaining how the game was played. They then had to make sure that they kept the game flowing and bringing the game to an end. At the end of the session, the children reflected on what they had learnt.



In the second session, the children were taught and then practised how to lead games with consideration of the area available and how they communicate to ensure that the participants understand what they have to do to play the game correctly and safely.

In the final session, the children were taught how to manage equipment needed to play games, including setting it up, its necessity to achieve the game's aim and once again, its safety. Children in small teams were able to invent their own game, selecting and organising the equipment and then deploying all the skills from the course by taking it in turns to lead the other groups.

All children successfully completed the course. They will now use their skills to run intra-festivals and support games on the playground. Well done!

Fitness Tracker Training

On Tuesday 11th November, Classes 3 and 4 were joined by Gary Hawkins from West Norfolk School Sports Partnership to begin Fitness Tracker challenges. On this initial visit the children were measured for their abilities in throwing, jumping, agility and flexibility. Class 3 then

completed an endurance challenge around the Daily Mile track. He was impressed by the high level of skills displayed by many of the children. Class 4 ran out of time to complete all of the challenges so Gary will return to finish these very soon.



Following on from Gary's visit we will be given a record of our current personal bests. Gary will set some training tasks to do that will support us in beating these when he next visits at the end of the academic year. The children will retake the challenges to see how much they have improved in each of the areas. We look forward to being able to improve our fitness and ability across the range of fundamental movement skills for sports.



Downham Market Cluster Football Tournament

Having been postponed due to Storm Benjamin, the cluster football tournament for years 5 and 6 finally took place on Thursday 13th November on what was fortunately a lovely late autumn morning. The school entered two teams: Denver Dynamos (light blue) and Denver Rangers (dark blue). Each team played in a round robin against the other teams.

The final outcomes were Denver Dynamos in 3rd place and Denver Rangers in 6th place. The children let their lights shine with their efforts and sportsmanship. We are very grateful to Miss Boddy and Mrs Stansfield for supporting the visit. Well done!



Tag Rugby Development Festival

On Monday 24th November, a group of 16 children from Class 4 travelled to West Norfolk Rugby Club in North Wootton for a development festival. This meant that although the children played matches against other schools, this was an opportunity to improve skills rather than a competition. No scores were taken, just a chance to play friendlies and learn skills from the qualified coaches and young leaders running the event. They all got thoroughly stuck in and had a great time. Thank you to Mrs Collins and Mrs Stansfield for supporting the visit.

Sporting Stars

Tennis Star

Congratulations to Max in Class 2 who recently won a medal for winning all his games in a tennis tournament. Well done, Max!



Player of the Week

Seb in Class 1 was awarded 'Player of the Week' at his football training session for Downham FC this week. Here he is proudly showing his trophy. Great job, Seb!



And finally...

With Christmas fast approaching, the December diary is extremely full of lots of festive events to look forward to. Please do look carefully at the dates below so you do not miss anything. We look forward to getting into the Christmas spirit with you.

Dates for your diary- please keep for future reference:

2025/2026

Autumn Term

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