



Denver VC Primary Newsletter September 2026



Welcome

Welcome to our new-look September newsletter. For those families joining us for the first time, these newsletters are designed to give you a snapshot of life at Denver VC Primary School, celebrate the many ways our children are letting their light shine, and keep you informed about important news, events, and upcoming opportunities. We hope they provide an enjoyable insight into the learning, achievements, and experiences that make our school such a special place.



You may notice a change to our newsletter this year regarding photographs. After careful consideration, we have made the decision not to include photographs showing children's faces in newsletters published on our website.

This is not a decision we have taken lightly. We know how much families enjoy seeing photographs of school events and celebrating children's achievements, and we love sharing these special moments with our community. However, there has been an increase in cases of photographs being taken from school websites and used inappropriately by individuals seeking to target schools. As a result, safeguarding guidance increasingly recommends that schools take additional precautions when sharing images online.

The safety and wellbeing of our children will always be our highest priority. Whilst we are disappointed not to be able to share photographs in the way we have previously, we feel this is the right step to help protect our pupils and reduce potential risks.

We will continue to celebrate and share the wonderful things happening at school through newsletter articles, examples of work, and photographs that do not identify individual children.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we continue to place children's safety at the heart of everything we do.

New Starters

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new Reception children and their families as they begin their journey here at Denver. Over the past few weeks, the children have settled in wonderfully, embracing new routines, making new friendships, and approaching each day with enthusiasm and curiosity. We are incredibly proud of how well they have adapted to school life and look forward to watching them learn, grow, and let their light shine throughout their time with us. Welcome to the Class of 2026!

New Pupils

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to three new pupils who have joined our school community this year: Zoe and Elliot in Year 5, and Lily in Year 4. We are delighted to have them and their families as part of the school.

Staff News

As well as new pupils, we have welcomed a new member to our staff team this term. Luke Fenn has joined us as a sports coach and he will be teaching PE across all 4 classes, as well as running after school clubs.

As already communicated with Oak Tree Class's parents, Mr Rackham will be undergoing surgery on his other knee during the half term break and will therefore not be in school for two weeks after half term. Miss Pennock, a former Class 2 teacher at Denver will be covering in his absence. Mr Rackham will be offering parent consultations before the half term break. We all wish Mr Rackham well with the operation and hope he has a speedy recovery.

Birthdays

For those families who are new to our school, children are welcome to come to school in non-uniform on their birthday as a special treat. If a birthday falls at the weekend or during a school holiday, children may wear non-uniform on the following Monday or on the first day back at school. Please ensure that clothing and footwear remain practical and suitable for school. We look forward to helping your child celebrate their special day with us!



Communication with Class Teachers

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:

acawley@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

crackham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

mbonham@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

dhenden@denver.norfolk.sch.uk

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

Parent Consultation Evenings

Parent Consultation Evenings will take place after half term on **9th and 11th November**. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's progress, celebrate their achievements, and talk about next steps in their learning with their class teacher.

Due to his knee operation after half term, Mr Rackham will be offering appointments for Class 1 parents on **12th and 15th October** instead. This will ensure that parents have the opportunity to meet with him before his period of absence.

Further details about how to book appointments will be shared with parents shortly.

Open Morning

We are delighted to be hosting an Open Morning for parents and carers of children due to start school in September 2027 on Thursday 15th October from 9.30am to 11.30am. This is a wonderful opportunity for prospective families to visit our school, meet our staff and children, explore our learning environments, and find out more about life at Denver.

If you know any families with children due to start school next September, we would be grateful if you could help spread the word. We look forward to welcoming new families and sharing all that makes our school such a special place

Christian Value

Each half term, we focus on a different Christian value, which is woven throughout our curriculum, Collective Worship, and daily school life. Our Christian value for the first half of the autumn term is **Thankfulness**.

Through lessons, worship, and reflection, the children will explore what it means to be thankful for the people and opportunities in their lives. They will also be considering the qualities of a good friend and reflecting on how they can show kindness, gratitude, and compassion to others through their words and actions.

Courageous Advocacy

Courageous advocacy is the act of speaking out or taking action against an issue of injustice, often on behalf of those whose voices are not heard. At Denver, we encourage children to think about causes they care deeply about and support them in becoming courageous advocates who make a positive difference in the world around them.

This month, we were delighted to celebrate Seb and Annabelle, who showed great kindness and community spirit by baking cakes for local firefighters during the hot summer weather. Their thoughtful gesture was a wonderful example of looking beyond themselves to support others and demonstrate appreciation for those who serve our community.

We know that many of our children carry out acts of kindness, fundraising, environmental work, and community service both in and out of school. Please do continue to share these examples with us so that we can celebrate and inspire others through their acts of courageous advocacy.

Together, we can help our children understand that even small actions can make a big difference.

Attendance Matters

At Denver VC Primary School, we are committed to ensuring every child has the best possible opportunity to succeed. Research consistently shows that children who attend school regularly are more likely to achieve well academically, build positive friendships and social skills, develop a strong sense of belonging, and gain the knowledge and confidence needed for future success. Every school day counts, and even small improvements in attendance can make a significant difference to a child's progress and wellbeing.

Our overall school attendance so far this year is **98.4%**. This is a positive start to the year and above our aspirational target of **97% attendance**, and with everyone's support, we are confident we can continue to achieve this.

To encourage and celebrate good attendance, we recognise the class with the highest attendance each week during Celebration Assembly and highlight our monthly attendance figures in the newsletter.

September Attendance

Cherry Tree Class	98.3%
Oak Tree Class	98.8%
Holly Tree Class	97.9%
Redwood Class	98.6%

Congratulations to Oak Tree Class for achieving the highest attendance in September!

Earlier this term, we shared a letter from the Local Authority outlining the national expectations regarding school attendance. In line with the guidance set out in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*, Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued where the relevant criteria are met. A copy of this letter, along with our updated Attendance Policy, can be found on our school website.

We continue to monitor attendance closely and where attendance becomes a concern, Mrs Jones will contact families at an early stage to offer support and guidance and help identify any barriers to regular attendance.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Jones through the school office. We are always happy to work together with families to support good attendance and ensure every child can thrive.

Together, let's make every school day count!

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The safety and wellbeing of our children is our highest priority. We have updated our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for this academic year to ensure it reflects current guidance and best practice. Parents and carers can view the policy on our school website under About Us, Safeguarding. We encourage all families to take a look and familiarise themselves with the procedures we have in place to keep children safe.

If you ever have any safeguarding concerns or worries about a child, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our safeguarding team. Working together helps us ensure that every child feels safe, supported, and able to thrive.

Out of Hours Communication

As a reminder, if you need to contact the school urgently outside of normal school hours, for example if you have a safeguarding concern, please use our dedicated email address:

worried@denver.norfolk.sch.uk A member of staff will review your message and respond as soon as possible.

Acceptable Use Agreement

Thank you to all parents and carers who have already returned their child's Acceptable Use Agreement.

If you have not yet done so, please could you return the signed form as soon as possible. These agreements are an important part of helping us ensure that all children use technology safely, responsibly, and appropriately both in school and when accessing online learning resources.

Benedict's Law

You may be aware of new allergy legislation, often referred to as Benedict's Law, which aims to strengthen the protection of children with allergies in schools. While many of the requirements were already part of our existing practice, we have reviewed and enhanced our procedures this term to ensure we continue to provide the safest possible environment for all pupils.

As an additional safeguard, we now hold spare emergency adrenaline auto-injectors (EpiPens) on site for use in emergencies. Our Allergy Policy is available on the school website for your reference.

Snacks

Children in Cherry Tree and Oak Tree classes are provided with a free piece of fruit each day as part of the Government's School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme.

Children in Holly Tree and Redwood Tree classes are welcome to bring a healthy snack from home to enjoy during breaktime. Suitable snacks include items such as fruit, vegetables, cheese, or plain crackers. Thank you for supporting our healthy eating approach.

Water Bottles

It is important that children stay well hydrated throughout the school day, as this supports concentration, learning, and overall wellbeing. Please ensure that your child brings a named water bottle to school each day containing **water only**. Bottles can be refilled throughout the day as needed.

School Uniform

Please can you ensure that all items of school uniform, including coats, are clearly named. This makes it much easier for us to reunite lost items with their owners. Our lost property box is already overflowing, and unfortunately many of the items are unnamed, making it difficult to return them to the correct child.

Supertots

Our popular playgroup, Supertots, takes place every Wednesday from 9.30am to 10.30am and is supported by students from Downham Market Academy (DMA). Supertots provides a wonderful opportunity for pre-school children and their parents/carers to play, learn, and socialise in a friendly and welcoming environment. We would be grateful if you could help spread the word to friends, family members, and the wider community, as we are always keen to welcome new families. We are also looking for volunteers to help support the running of the playgroup. If you have some spare time on a Wednesday morning and would be willing to help, even on an occasional basis, please contact me for further information.

Summer Reading Bingo Challenge

Well done to everyone who took part in our Summer Reading Bingo Challenge this year. We were delighted by the number of children who returned their completed bingo cards and continued to enjoy reading throughout the summer holidays. Thank you also to parents and carers for supporting and encouraging reading at home.

Harvest Service

We warmly invite parents, carers, families, and friends to join us for our Harvest Festival Assembly at St Mary's Church, Denver, on Friday 16th October at 2.00pm. This special service provides an opportunity for us to come together as a school community to give thanks for the many blessings we enjoy and reflect on the importance of helping those in need.

As part of our Harvest celebrations, we will once again be supporting the Downham Market Foodbank. If you are able to donate any non-perishable food items, please bring them to the school gate on the morning of Friday 16th October. Members of our School Council will then deliver the donations to the foodbank on behalf of the school.

Your generosity makes a real difference to local families, and we are grateful for any support you can provide. We look forward to welcoming you to St Mary's Church for this special celebration.

Times Tables Rockstars

We will continue to place a strong emphasis on times tables this year, helping children to develop the confidence and fluency needed to recall multiplication and division facts quickly and accurately. A secure knowledge of times tables is a key building block in becoming a successful mathematician and supports learning across many areas of maths.

All children in Oak, Holly and Redwood classes have access to Times Tables Rock Stars, and we encourage them to use this fantastic resource both in school and at home to strengthen their times tables knowledge and recall.

To celebrate effort and achievement, special certificates will continue to be awarded during our weekly Celebration Assemblies to the most active Times Tables Rock Stars users in each class.

Thank you for your support in encouraging regular practice at home. Just a few minutes each day can make a huge difference!



Flu Immunisations

The School Age Immunisation Service will be offering flu vaccinations in school on 11th November and 1st December. Parents and carers must provide consent using the link sent directly by the Immunisation Team.

School Photographer

Our school photographer will be visiting on Monday 2nd November, the first day back after half term, to take individual and sibling photographs.

Please ensure that children come to school in full school uniform and looking their very best for their photographs. Details of how to view and order photographs will be shared with families once they are available.

Purple for Polio Day

On 13th October, we will be supporting Purple for Polio Day by inviting children to come to school dressed in purple, with a suggested donation of £1.



Purple for Polio is a global campaign led by Rotary International to raise awareness and funds to help eradicate polio, a serious disease that can cause paralysis and, in some cases, can be life-threatening. Thanks to the efforts of organisations such as Rotary and their partners, polio cases worldwide have been reduced by more than 99%, but there is still work to do to ensure that no child anywhere in the world suffers from this preventable disease.

We are delighted that Claire Jacques from Downham Rotary will be leading a Collective Worship, helping the children to learn more about the importance of this campaign and how even small actions can make a big difference to the lives of others around the world.

This event links closely to our Christian values and our commitment to courageous advocacy, encouraging children to think about how they can support those less fortunate than themselves and contribute positively to the wider world.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing a sea of purple on 13th October!

RSHE Update by Mrs Henden

The new term has been busy for us all. In each of our classes we have focussed on relationships and friendships to help us to settle back in. Mr Rackham also led a whole school worship to raise awareness of allergies in honour of Benedict's Law.

Cherry Tree Class

In Cherry Tree class, we are covering relationships. So far this term we have discussed

- How can adults at school help me?
- How can I be a good friend?

Redwood Class

As well as working together to rename our class, we have been promoting democracy in action with our School Council elections. We also created our class charter for happy and successful learning. In our RSHE lessons our focus has been on relationships. In the first lesson we learnt about our relationships with adults, particularly role models with the following objectives:

- Learn what a role model is.
- Learn how role model influence can be positive or negative.
- Consider who we view as role models and why.
- Develop skills of respect and self-worth.

In the next lesson we looked at the power of words. These were our objectives:

- Learn how words can have a positive and negative impact.
- Learn the difference between physical and emotional hurt.
- Consider how we can use our words kindly.
- Develop our skills of self-worth and respect.

Following on from that was a lesson about personal boundaries and consent where we learnt:

- What personal boundaries are.
- How and why there are different types of boundaries.
- How differing boundaries can be respected.

Our most recent lesson has explored how to be safe in our relationships with people online:

- What an online friendship is.
- How we can trust our friends.

- Keeping safe with online friendships.
- Developing our skills of understanding risk

Outdoor Learning Update from Mr Cawley

Outdoor Learning Club – Wednesday 17th September

The first of our outdoor learning sessions was bathed in early Autumn sunshine and was the chance for the Year 1s and 2s to join us. We based our session on the idea of choosing and making an animal a shelter on our field, ensuring that they had a roof and some kind of doorway. The children excitedly set about building some really fantastic creations. Then there was the tree watering, the mud kitchen (always a favourite) and the games.

Outdoor Learning Club – Wednesday 24th September

The second of our outdoor learning sessions for the KS1 children built upon the mapwork that the children had been learning about in class with Mr Rackham. The children (and adults!) were shown how to set a map and how to follow the map to the treasure that they were given to hide. Each team secretly hid a large pinecone, completed their map and then passed it in a sealed envelope to the other team to follow and find. The children had great fun searching, although some of their hiding places were a little, 'open'! Next week we are going to create bridges to span a small river, so I'm sure mud will also feature too!

Friends of Denver School Update



Welcome to the new school year, and a special welcome to all the new families joining our school community.

Last year ended on a particularly busy note as we celebrated the school's 150th anniversary. Thank you to everyone who helped make the celebrations such a success despite the weather. A special thank you to Rosie for arranging the beautiful rose plant that now marks the burial place of our time capsule.

For new parents, you can find out more about the [Friends of Denver School and the work we do on the school website](#). The Treasurer's and Secretary's reports, along with the previous Chair's report and farewell message, are also available there.

We are also still looking for a new Chair for the Friends. If you are interested in the role, we would love to hear from you. You're also very welcome to come along to one of our meetings to find out more about what we do before fully committing yourself to the role.

This term, we have already been busy organising orders for last year's class photos. If you have placed an order, **please ensure payment has been made** to the Friends account, as we will be processing and printing orders shortly (reference *Child surname*+Photo).

Next on our agenda are the Reception individual photographs. These took place a little later than usual, as our volunteer photographer was unable to attend earlier due to circumstances beyond their control. We are incredibly grateful for supporters like this who continue to volunteer their time, even after their children have left the school. Their generosity helps us raise valuable funds to support our children's education and enrichment opportunities.

You will be hearing from us again soon with details of our plans for the year. In the meantime, we would like to invite **all parents and carers to sign the [Friends of Denver School Code of Conduct for 2026](#)**. This is also an opportunity to join our WhatsApp group, where you can keep up to date with news, events, and volunteering opportunities.

Our next meeting will be on Friday 9 October at 3:20pm, immediately after school, in the staff room. For those attending, after-school club is available free of charge for your children. Please book via Arbor before 6.00pm on the day before the meeting.

We look forward to seeing many of you throughout the year and thank you for your continued support.

Nanci Lima Abraham

Acting Chair, Friends of Denver School

Sports News



This week, our Year 1 children took part in the first of three Active Kids Festivals. The festival focused on developing speed, agility, and coordination through a range of fun and engaging activities. The children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are already looking forward to taking part in the next festival in the Spring Term.

Diary Dates

Autumn Term

October 2026	5 th – 9 th		Cycle to School Week
	6 th	Tuesday	Reading for Pleasure Project
	8 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	9 th	Friday	Friends Meeting 3.20pm in the Staffroom
	12 th	Monday	Oak Tree Class Parent Consultations
	13 th	Tuesday	Purple for Polio Day
	13 th	Tuesday	Young Carers Session
	13 th	Tuesday	Reading for Pleasure Project – 3.20pm in Oak Tree Class
	14 th	Wednesday	Intra Cross Country Tournament
	15 th	Thursday	Open Morning – 9.30-11.30am
	15 th	Thursday	Oak Tree Class Parent Consultations
	16 th	Friday	RE Enrichment Day
	16 th	Friday	Harvest Service – 2pm in St Mary's Church
	19 th – 30 th		School closed for half term
November 2026	2 nd	Monday	Children return to school
	2 nd	Monday	School Photographs
	9 th	Monday	Parent Consultations
	11 th	Wednesday	Parent Consultations
	11 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	11 th	Wednesday	Flu Immunisations
	12 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting

	18 th	Wednesday	DT Day Holly Tree Class
	19 th	Thursday	Bags2School
	20 th	Friday	Bikeability Level 1 Training Holly Tree Class
	26 th	Thursday	Christmas Fayre
December 2026	4 th	Friday	Decoration Day
	7 th	Monday	Christingle Service – 2pm St Mary’s Church
	8 th	Tuesday	Young Carers Session
	9 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	10 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	17 th	Thursday	Pantomime (Y1-Y6)
	17 th	Thursday	Cherry Tree Class Party
	18 th	Friday	Carol Service – 1.30pm St Mary’s Church
	18 th	Friday	Last day of autumn term

Spring Term

January 2027	4 th	Monday	Children return to school
	8 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	14 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	15 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	20 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	22 nd	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	25 th	Monday	Active Kids Y1
	29 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
February 2027	5 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	9 th	Tuesday	Young Carers Session
	11 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	12 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	12 th	Friday	RE Enrichment Day
	15 th -19 th		School closed for half term
	22 nd	Thursday	Children return to school
	22 nd	Monday	Girls’ Football Tournament
	24 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
March 2027	26 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	5 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	11 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	12 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	15 th	Monday	Bee Netball Tournament
	19 th	Friday	Redwood Class Swimming
	23 rd	Tuesday	Cluster Netball Tournament
	23 rd	Tuesday	Young Carers Session
	24 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	25 th	Thursday	Cluster Football Tournament
	25 th	Thursday	Last day of spring term

Summer Term

April 2027	12 th	Monday	Children return to school
	20 th	Tuesday	Girls’ Football Tournament

	22 nd	Thursday	Bags2School
	27 th	Tuesday	Tri Golf Tournament
	29 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	30 th	Friday	Crucial Crew Y6
May 2027	3 rd	Monday	School closed for Bank Holiday
	5 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	20 th	Thursday	Dynamos Cricket
	25 th	Tuesday	Young Carers Session
	27 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	28 th	Friday	RE Enrichment Day
	28 th	Friday	Sponsored Walk
	31 st - 4 th		School closed for half term
June 2027	7 th	Monday	Children return to school
	9 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
	14 th	Monday	Girls' Cricket Tournament
	21 st	Monday	Quad Kids
	22 nd	Tuesday	Sports Day 9.30am
	23 rd	Wednesday	Reserve Sports Day
	24 th	Thursday	School Council Meeting
	25 th	Friday	Y5/6 Mini Tennis
	29 th	Tuesday	Area Sports
	7 th	Wednesday	Eco Committee Meeting
July 2027	12 th	Monday	Active Kids
	13 th	Tuesday	Young Carers
	15 th	Thursday	School Games Festival
	22 nd	Thu	Last day of summer term