

DANEHILL CE PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Learning together, learning for life

I have been talking to the teaching staff this week about the challenges of helping younger children to enjoy the process of writing. As adults we know that writing is a key skill, essential for lifelong success. We know that it takes years of practice to get really good at it, and we want our children to start making progress from their earliest days at school. What's more, our ability to ensure that this happens is critical to our reputation as a successful school. But what matters to us is not necessarily what matters to all of our children. They, quite rightly, tend to be preoccupied with exploring, sharing and making sense of the world around them. The challenge for the teacher is to find ways of ensuring that what matters to us is offered in ways that also matter to children.

Historically schools have done this really well with the teaching of PE and sports. Children learning to play football, for example, are taught the necessary rules and skills and then, very quickly, are given opportunities to put these into the context of a real game. It's likely to be a junior version of the adult game (perhaps played on a smaller pitch and over a shorter time frame), but essentially the children are enjoying the opportunity of learning in a highly purposeful context. The authenticity of the real (albeit junior) game is a powerful vehicle for learning.



This same principle can be applied to any area of the curriculum and the Foxes 'Jolly World' event at the end of this term was a great example of how effective this can be. The class wanted to share their term's learning by turning their classroom into an interactive space for everyone to visit. The children themselves identified tasks that needed to be done. They made posters; wrote invitations, and decided on job descriptions for running Jolly World when it opened to the public. One child, who is usually very reluctant to write, decided that she needed a badge so that visitors would know that she was a tour leader. Her teacher was thrilled to see that, without any persuasion, she skilfully applied all the phonic knowledge she could remember in order to make a badge that she would wear on the day.

Over the coming months we will continue to think about how we can design learning that matters to us all – learning that achieves strong attainment and progress whilst at the same time engaging lively minds.

Lizzie Overton
Headteacher

Key events this term:

Disco	Friday 3 rd November
Shopping day	Tuesday 5 th December
Christmas Fair	Saturday 9 th December
Christmas Nativity:	Thursday 14 th December
Christmas Lunch, jumpers & a pantomime!	Friday 15 th December
Santa lantern walk	Sunday 17 th December

Please keep an eye on the [class blogs](#) for details of class outings and events, and the [school website](#) for term dates and the year ahead.



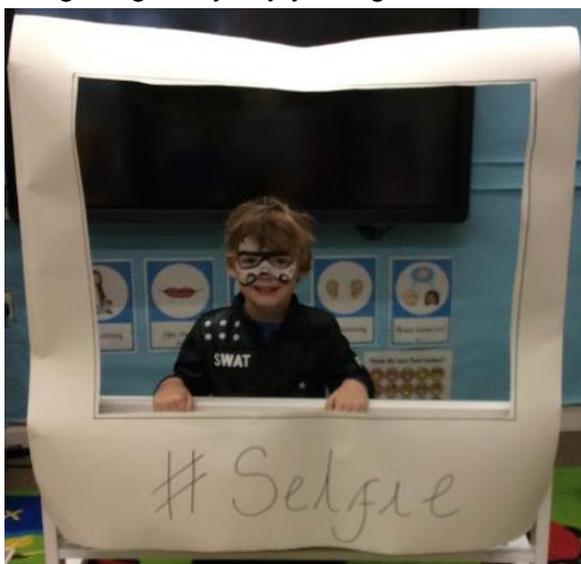
Party time

Hedgehog's class have spent the term getting to know each other. They have been bringing in their favourite toys to show each other and talking about all the exciting things they enjoy doing with their friends and family. They celebrated becoming a class with a 'Team Hedgehogs party, where they made a big hedgehog cake to share. They made their own pass the parcel and



even made party bags to give to their families, filled with goodies including a selfie!

Next term we are focussing on how we can encourage the children to engage with different kinds of writing. In order to build high levels of motivation and purpose, we will be thinking about how writing activities can be threaded through the children's role play.



Viki Shoubridge and Hedgehogs Class

The nitty gritty

A few cases of nits have been reported to us – please check your children's hair over the holiday so that we can start the new term nit free!

Governor business

A warm welcome to Simon Meeke and Ben Chapman who have joined the governing body. Simon is heading our new 'Development Committee' which will look at how the school can extend and improve what it offers, and Ben is an Assistant Head at Cumnor House School who we have enjoyed working with over recent years. Kestrels walked up through the woods just this week to enjoy a wonderful production of Michael Morpurgo's 'Why the Whales Came', and we are looking at the possibility of teaming up for science project work in the new year.

Governors have also been busy talking with other local schools and advisers about the various possibilities for partnership work in the future. We are motivated by the need to ensure the financial sustainability of the school but excited too by the different possibilities for partnership that are emerging.



It's a jolly world



Foxes' learning journey is inspired by Janet and Allan Ahlberg's book 'The Jolly Postman' and Jolly World is our creative classroom where we have different areas. In the room we have a Witch's Den, a Giant's castle, a Wolf's den and a post office. In the Witch's area we have potion making. We made disgusting potions and published them in a recipe book. We made a very colourful castle out of boxes. We also have a golden egg which the giant gave us because he wants us to look after it while he is on holiday. We wrapped it in a material to keep it warm and laid it on a soft bed of leaves. We also had fun making parachutes for Jack so that he could safely get down from the beanstalk. We had fun presenting our work in a creative way and putting it on display.

This is what the children had to say about what they created.



Lexi said, "I loved it because we got to invite our parents."
Flossie said, "I loved it because we made different areas."
Lewis said, "I liked showing off our classroom."
George said, "I liked using woodland stuff in the den."
Aidan said, "I loved learning about the Jolly Postman."

Gemma Walker and Foxes Class

Big bags and little bags

Some of the younger children are bringing books and homework into school in large rucksacks. These are too large to store in the classroom and mean that the children are having to go backwards and forwards to the cloakrooms during class time. If your child is keen to bring in a large bag, it would be really helpful if they could put books and homework (and anything else they might need in class) into a book bag that could be brought into class for the whole day.

Jumpers and socks anonymous

Please remember to put names in all your children's clothes – we are collecting a lot of un-named jumpers and socks in the office!



Who's been revolting?

We have been studying the Romans in Britain. We have done some research about when the Roman period was and why it was that the Romans chose to come here.

We've been especially interested in Boudicca's revolt against the Romans. The children chose to write a speech as if they were Boudicca rallying her Iceni people to rise up. We found out about the events of the Iceni attack on Camulodunum (Colchester) and wrote a newspaper report to capture what we think these events would have been like. We made some wanted posters for Boudicca and wrote stories

imagining we were Iceni warriors taking part in this revolt.

We are the fearless Iceni tribe and we must fight for revenge! The beastly, cruel Romans betrayed us. They viciously whipped my daughters Heasra, Lamosea and I. When King Prasutagus died, they promised that they would take half of the land and Heasra and Lamosea would get the other half, but these savage Romans took it all! So now we need to fight these beastly, cruel Romans who horribly betrayed us! And viciously whipped my daughters and I. We will march into their cities of Camulodunum and Londinium and we will ruin their cities. The gods will be with us and we will have victory!



Next term we're going to work a lot like real historians – getting into research teams and thinking more about how we'll share what we've learnt with you . . . watch this space!

Steve Dallman and Badgers Class

Healthy snacks but no nuts please

We'd be really grateful if children could be given healthy snacks for break times rather than foods that contain refined sugar and/or salt. Please also ensure that snacks don't contain any kind of nuts so that we can avoid the risk of allergic reactions.

Preloved stuff

Fran Albanese (Ellie and Fin) has kindly offered to take on the sale of second hand uniform. She would also like to collect any unwanted school production costumes or Christmas jumpers in case these can be of use to other families. Please get in touch with Fran via the office or in the playground if you're on the look-out for any of the above or if you have anything you no longer need.



Victorian adventures

In Kestrels, this term, we have been doing a topic on Victorians. Before we went on our trip to Preston Manor, we wrote letters to apply for a job as a servant.

As soon as we got there, we started the role play when Mrs GJ told us off for not looking presentable. We lined up, in silence, ready to meet our soon – to – be housekeeper, Mrs Storey.



We learnt how to set a table for a five course meal, how to wash the clothes, polish the silver and cook jam tarts.

Oscar, Oliver and Harrison got told off for talking – not the way servants behave. In the end, Casper, Amelia, Grace and Oliver were given the jobs. Thank you to Mrs Quick for cooking the jam tarts for us – yum!

Nathan, Blythe, Tryfan & Oscar

In Science we have been looking at the Victorian scientist, Charles Darwin.

“First of all, we did a biography or timeline of his life. Then we learnt about evolution and adaptation and the different beaks of the finches in the Galapagos Islands. On Friday, we were given the task of testing and recording which beak (tweezers, chopsticks, straw, cocktail stick and spoon) worked best with different ‘foods’ (mussels, ham, custard, paperclips, leaves, acorns, rice and spaghetti). The straw with the mussels and the custard was disgusting! We are now creating our own birds and islands.”



Oliver, Grace, Ollie & Rory

Over the coming weeks we'll be thinking about what kind of an outcome we are going to create for sharing our learning with you.

Mary Glynn-Jones Kestrels Class

Match kit amnesty

Please have a good look at home to check whether you might have any of our school match kit. We are missing a few pieces and would be really grateful to have these back.

Delicious effort

The Kestrels cake sale raised a whopping £133-40 for their chosen charity - Chestnut Tree House.

Sporting success

Cross country

On 5th October 4 teams from Danehill went to compete in the cross country at Chailey School. The Year 3/4 girls went first and they did very well. We realised how far it was! The Year 3/4 boys went next. Guess what? Joe was the winner, and the others were not far behind him. After this, the Year 5/6 girls had their go. Susannah came 15th and this meant she was in the final. Then it was our turn. We felt a bit nervous before it began. but once we had done the first corner we knew we could do it. The first one to finish from Danehill was Harrison. He came 9th and we all finished the course.



Susannah and Harrison then went to the Partnership Final on 18th October. What a fantastic achievement to have 2 people competing at such a high level event!



Football

At Chailey, on 12th October, the Yr 3/4 team and the Year 5/6 team played in the Football Tournament. Year 3/4 got to the semi-finals and then finished 3rd overall. Their best scoreline was 6-0 and they all showed determination and skill.



Mr Denslow and Mr Lewis were the managers/ head coaches for the Year 5/6 team. They told us to make space and pass to team mates, and it worked as we got to the finals! In the finals, we played against Newick and did our best, but lost 1-0.

Both teams played brilliantly and really enjoyed themselves.

Reporting by Fin, Oliver & Harry

Musical finale



What an amazing term! The orchestra children have been refining their skills with some superb ensemble playing, and played with great enthusiasm for the Harvest service. Well done too for the early starts on Thursdays. Blythe, Sam and Elodie have formed a guitar trio, and also performed at the service; we look forward to hearing more from them.

We're fortunate to have some great instrumental teachers coming in to teach violin, guitar and drums, but I've also been inspired by one or two children who've taught themselves from YouTube: a reminder that learning is everywhere, and sometimes our job is simply to allow it to happen. Looking forward to an exciting and musical Christmas term!

James Waters