



# DEVONSHIRE DISPATCH

[www.devonshireprimary.org](http://www.devonshireprimary.org)

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8<sup>th</sup> October 2018

## Devonshire Diary

Week beginning Monday 8<sup>th</sup>

October – Bikeability course for Year 6 children

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>/Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October  
Year 5 residential

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October - school closes early for parents' consultation sessions. (1.20pm for Reception and KS1 and 1.30pm for KS2)

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October – PSA own clothes day – bring a bottle or £1

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> - Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October – half term

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> October – INSET day (school closed to children)

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> October – Winter uniform should be worn from this date on.

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November – Year 2 trip to Hampton Court

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>/Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November – individual and sibling photos

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November – Year 1 trip to The British Wildlife Centre

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November – Year 4 trip to Butser Farm

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November – Flu vaccinations for children from Reception to Year 5 (for parents that have consented to their child having this).

## Attendance

So far this term, 18 classes have attendance that is at least 96%; those classes are Robins, Swans, Sparrows, Wrens, Woodpeckers, Nightingales, Eagles, Chaffinches, Larks, Ash, Aspen, Birch, Chestnut, Cherry, Holly, Hazel, Willow and Oak. This is an impressive start to the year. Overall our school attendance is 96.8%.

Mrs Harrison will be contacting parents/carers of children where attendance is already in danger of dipping below 90%. When a child's attendance falls below 90% they are classed as a persistent absentee. Worryingly, we already have 55 children who have attendance that is 90% or below.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, punctuality is going to be a focus this year. It is so important that children arrive at school on time. There are a number of children arriving at school after 8.55am and are therefore arriving late to class. We will be having a fortnightly late gate. On these days, if your child is late to school rather than signing them in at the computer beside the office, there will be a member of the senior leadership team or the borough school attendance officer taking the names of children who are late and discussing the reason with parents/carers. We are keen to work with parents/carers if punctuality is a difficulty.

## Gold!

We have achieved the gold travel plan award which is fantastic news. This is in recognition of our commitment to increasing awareness and use of sustainable travel. Thank you to Miss Leitch and Mrs Sage who co-ordinated our application and to the eco group led by Mrs Reddy who have been working hard to support our work towards the gold award.

## Questions about the school day

Asking children about their day at school is very important as it gives the children a chance to tell you about their day and reflect on it while doing this. Asking children what they did at school can often lead to the answer 'nothing' or 'I don't know'. I read an article recently which included questions that parents/carers can ask their children about their day at school that encourages them to think about specific parts of their day; many of these you may already use but I thought it useful to share a couple of questions in each newsletter.

- ✓ What made you smile today?
- ✓ What was your favourite part of the day and why?

I imagine that this will lead to other conversations about their school day.

## Thank you

Thank you very much for your harvest donations. Mrs Love, Mrs Scrivens and a team of Year 6 children took them to The Sutton Foodbank who were very grateful. We had a lovely harvest assembly last week, where each year group from year 1 upwards performed a harvest themed song or story to the rest of the school.

### **Behaviour**

One of our key areas in our school development plan this year is behaviour. I was absolutely delighted to hear how well Year 5 had behaved on their recent trip to Chessington. On a recent school tour, the prospective parents that I was showing round all commented on the children's behaviour and the very calm atmosphere as we walked around the school.

### **Whole class reading**

Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all areas of the curriculum; therefore reading is given a high priority at our school. In addition to this, and more importantly, we would like to support children in developing positive attitudes to reading which will encourage them towards life-long reading.

With this in mind, we are using a new approach to the teaching of reading where the emphasis will move from 'literacy skills' to 'whole class reading'. In Whole Class Reading, there is a high level of interaction between teachers and pupils. Children are exposed to high-quality texts and discussion in an immersive environment. Texts are carefully chosen by teachers to provide appropriate challenge that builds on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. If you have any questions or would like to know more, please do come and see me. *Mrs Scrivens*

Please do continue to regularly hear your child read at home and/or set a specific time for them to read at home.

### **Riding to school**

I am delighted that our cycle sheds are being used by children who cycle or scoot to school. Please remember that there should be no cycling or scooting on the school site. Once children get to school, they should walk their bicycle or scooter through the school gates and in to the cycle sheds. Please remind your child of this rule if they cycle or scoot to school. For health and safety reasons, children should not be playing in or around the cycle sheds. I have talked to the children about this in assembly but please reinforce this rule with your children, together with the reason for it.

### **School trips**

School trips are a very valuable part of the curriculum; they enhance and enrich the children's learning. We recognise that they are an additional cost to families but we work hard to source the best value in terms of where the trip is and how we get there. In many cases, Key Stage 2 use public transport which reduces the costs of the trip. We can only continue with trips if we receive sufficient parental contributions. We do not have the capacity within the school budget to fund the trips. If the costs of the school trip are not able to be covered then we have to make a decision as to whether the trip can go ahead. On each trip letter it gives you details of what to do and who to speak to if you are struggling to make the contribution for your child.

### **Christmas**

I know that we are only just in to October but Christmas will soon be upon us. Below are some dates linked to Christmas; more details will be sent out nearer to the time but for the moment put the relevant dates in you diary.

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> December (9.15am/2.15pm) – Year 2 Christmas show

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December – PSA Christmas event

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December (9.15am/2.15pm) – Reception Christmas show

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December – Pantomime day, all children to see a performance of Dick Whittington

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December (9.15am/2.15pm) – Year 1 Christmas show

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Jumper Day

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> December (7pm) - Key Stage 2 Carol Service at Christ Church

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas dinner day

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December (11am/2.15pm) – Nursery Christmas sing-a-long

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas party day

### **Christ Church – parenting group**

Christ Church are hosting a parenting group which is open to any parent or carer of children who are 7 years or younger. It is led by an experienced facilitator and topics covered include positive attention, setting boundaries, and communication with your children. It is a group that can provide encouragement and sharing of ideas in the daily joys and challenges of parenting.

The group takes place each Wednesday between 9.30am – 11am, with a suggested donation of £2 per session. There is a supervised play area for children ages 0 – 3.

If you have any questions or would like to sign up, please email Jenny Brooks at [jennyhkbrooks@gmail.com](mailto:jennyhkbrooks@gmail.com)