



DEVONSHIRE DISPATCH

www.devonshireprimary.org

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11th January 2018

Happy New Year. Many thanks for the good wishes, the cards and the gifts that you gave to the staff at the end of the term. It was very kind of you and much appreciated.

Devonshire Diary

Monday 15th January – Y6 Mayan workshop

Tuesday 23rd / Wednesday 24th January - Y5 trip to Sutton Synagogue (2 classes each day)

Wednesday 24th January (7pm) – PSA meeting at school

Monday 29th January – anti bullying workshop for Y2, 3 and 4

Tuesday 30th January – Y2 trip to Hampton Court

Tuesday 30th January – Y6 author workshop at Overton Grange

Friday 9th February – INSET day (staff training - school closed for children)

Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February – half term

Wednesday 28th March – last day of term for Nursery

Thursday 29th March – last day of term (1.20pm Reception and Key Stage 1/1.30pm Key Stage 2)

Attendance concerns

I am very concerned about the number of term time holiday requests that I am receiving. Last term 36 children missed a total of 131 days due to term time holidays and last week 41 children did not return to school on the first day of term, 12 of these were for reasons that we were not able to authorise. There is far too much learning time being lost to term time holidays. It is essential that parents and carers support our attendance and punctuality policy. Being absent or late for school has a negative impact on children's learning; they are missing out on moving their learning forward. When they return to school they inevitably have to catch up. This is particularly so at the beginning of the school term where the preparatory work for the half term's learning takes place, something that a total of 41 children missed out on last week. Staff and children work very hard to move learning forward and our project based curriculum is an ideal platform to develop children's knowledge and skills. We need parents support for this to be effective. Obviously there will be times when your child is not well and not being at school is the best thing for your child but where the reason for their absence is one that we can not authorise this is disappointing and not working with the school.

Family Support Worker

We have a new family support worker starting at Devonshire this week. Miss Hannah Green will no longer be based at Devonshire, Mrs Emma Green is our new family support worker. She will provide exactly the same advice and support as Hannah and will be based at Devonshire on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. We are looking forward to welcoming Emma to the Devonshire team. Thank you to Hannah for everything you have done at Devonshire. If you wish to speak to the family support worker please make an appointment at the school office or she will be at the school gate on the mornings of the days that she works in school.

Welcome to new staff

Mrs Humphreys and Mrs Herd have both joined the Y5 team as teaching assistants. Mrs Page has joined the Sparrows team as the class teacher for 3 days a week. Miss Grefaite has joined the midday supervisor team.

Scooters and bikes

We encourage children to come to school in ways that do not involve coming in the car. Walking, scooting or riding a bike to school are all ways that we encourage because it is healthy and it reduces the quantity of traffic in Devonshire Avenue and the surrounding roads. We provide storage facilities for bikes and scooters to help. All that we ask is that children do not scoot or ride their bikes on the school site; they get off them before they come through the school gate or at the end of the school day only get on them once they have gone through the school gate. Some children are not doing this and are putting children and parents who are on the school site at risk of being knocked over. If children persist in scooting or riding their bikes on the school site, they will not be allowed to bring their bikes and scooters into school at all. The reason that we have this rule in place is to ensure the safety of everyone on the Devonshire site.

New Group Recorder Lessons Starting - places available

If anyone from Year 1 - 3 is interested in their child taking up the recorder and learning to read music there will hopefully be a new group beginning lessons some time this term. The recorder is a nice easy starter instrument for young children to learn to play and learn how to read music at the same time. I use a special colour coded system to appeal to younger children and group sizes are kept small so they learn very fast. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis so please email me as soon as possible if interested at deannecampbell99@yahoo.co.uk. The cost is £35 per half term for group recorder lessons.

Flute achievements

Well done to Divya in Year 4 who passed her grade one flute exam with merit and Richa in Year 5 who passed her grade three flute exam. If anyone is interested in taking up the flute from Year 2 upwards and would like a trial lesson please contact Mrs Campbell on deannecampbell99@yahoo.co.uk

Special Needs drop in advice group

On Monday 15th January (10am – 12pm) at The Coffee Lounge, Wallington United Reformed Church, Stanley Park Road, Wallington there is a friendly and informal drop in support group for parents and carers of children with additional needs. Mark Brown is an expert in a range of issues including toileting, sleep, behaviour, obsessions, puberty and much more. He has worked with many families to help them overcome a wide range of issues. He is generously donating his time for free to help local families, so come along and get his advice and meet other parents who are in a similar position to you. There is no cost for this session, although a £1 donation would be appreciated.

Swimming lessons

Children in Key Stage 2 have a block of swimming lessons each year, usually lasting for half a term. The children make great progress with their swimming in these lessons. If you have the opportunity, please take your children swimming between these blocks of lessons so that they can practise the skills that they have learnt. This also means that when it is their next block of lessons they are not spending the first couple of lessons remembering their skills. Being able to swim is such a vital skill for children to have; we want to make sure that the children get the most out of their lessons. On the subject of swimming lessons, a big thank you to the parent and grandparent volunteers who help at swimming each week, their support makes our swimming lessons possible.

End of the day collection arrangements

As part of our school development plan we are reviewing our end of day arrangements. Dismissing the children as we do, using all of the gates and doors, enables the children to be dismissed swiftly and most importantly safely. Please could you ensure that you wait for your children in the area specified in the letter sent home at the beginning of last term and not come down on to the path by the cycle sheds or at the front of the school. It is essential that this is kept clear to ensure that teachers can see parents and carers and children have sufficient space to wait.

If there is change of arrangement or a different arrangement as to who is picking your child up, please can you write this in your child's contact book or reading record and ask that your child shows this to their class teacher. The different adult will of course be asked to provide the password for your child but knowing that there is a change of arrangement will speed up the dismissal of the children.

Request for spare uniform

If you have any spare uniform that you no longer need we would be very grateful if you could send it in to school. There are times where children may need to change out of their uniform, into a spare uniform. Our supplies are running low, especially trousers and shirts for older boys. Many thanks in advance.

PE kits

Please remember that your child needs their PE kit in school each day. We find it works best when children bring their PE kits in to school at the beginning of a half term and we send the kits home at half term because by that time they are usually in need of a wash. Also, please remember that earrings should not be worn for PE lessons.

PSA

We are having a PSA meeting on Wednesday 24th January in school at 7pm to discuss discos and the Summer fair. Please come along to share ideas or find out more about what we do. See you there. Many thanks, Hollie (PSA chair person)