

DEBDEN PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 31st March 2023

Dear Parents,

Happy Easter! The end of term is upon us, and we are now already two-thirds of the way through the academic year. It has been another brilliant term for the children, with lots of exciting events and experiences taking place, some outstanding successes in both the wider curriculum and extracurricular fields, and fantastic progress for the vast majority of children across the academic spectrum. Below are some highlights from the past few weeks and a look ahead to the start of next term.

Saffron Sounds Workshop: Children in both the Frogs and the Kingfishers Classes were fortunate this week to receive a visit from the musicians at Saffron Sounds. Led by members of the 'Jess Gillam Ensemble' – Elsa and Sam – each class created their own composition designed to be used as a 'Voyager Golden Record' (teaching extra-terrestrial beings about life on Earth) including a consideration of both melody and lyrics. The children found the session extremely engaging and inspiring, and enjoyed using their creative, imagination and natural musical talents. In May, the children are invited to the Saffron Hall to play their recording, listen to the recordings of other schools, and to listen to the Jess Gillam Ensemble play live!

Learning A Musical Instrument: Lots of children really enjoyed the music sessions, and several children have since approached me or their teachers about taking up learning a musical instrument with one of our peripatetic music teachers in school. If you are interested in your child doing this, all of the details that you need to do so can be found through this link. The teachers are all great and the prices for learning this valuable life skill are reasonable in comparison to other areas of the country. <https://www.essexmusicub.org.uk/site/making-music-in-school/learn-it/>

Sporting Superstars: This term has possibly been our best ever in terms of sport. We have participated in more local sports events than we ever have for this time in the academic year, and more and more of our children/ teams are reaching local area (and even regional finals). Several sports teams have also been created, who have been taking part in fixtures against other schools – I mentioned a few in assembly last week, but in amongst all of the celebrations I failed to mention our wonderful netballers (pictured here), so have said I would give them a special mention in the newsletter. The team played their first match against Ashdon on 20th March. They came from behind to draw 6-6 and displayed great team spirit and resilience. Everyone in attendance said that the match was a thrilling watch. Well done girls!



We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the parents who have helped out this term to make all of these sporting successes possible. We really appreciate it.

Easter Church Events: We hope that you have enjoyed our Easter service this morning. I'd like to say a big thanks to Reverend John, who took time out of his busy Easter schedule to help to put the service together and to teach the children some of the songs. He has also welcomed several of the classes for tours to the church this half term, which I know they have found really valuable. We are very lucky to have such a knowledgeable and proactive church leader supporting our school.

Reverend John also arranged the 'Easter Cracked' workshop for us a couple of weeks ago with the Stort Valley Schools Trust. The children learnt a lot from the fun-filled workshops and gained a deeper understanding of why we have Easter, what it's all about and why it is important to Christians.

Easter Renovations: Many thanks to the parents who gave up part of their Saturday last week to pull out the old trim trail equipment. Over the Easter break, the new equipment will be installed, which is very exciting. Lots of people have had to commit a lot of time and effort to push this project through, and so a big thanks to them. A special thanks to Mrs Samson, who has coordinated the meetings with the contractors and the recruitment of the parent volunteers last week.

We also have some new LED lighting being fitted across the school next week. This will be of huge benefit to the school, because not only will we be far more environmentally-friendly, but we will also save a small fortune on lighting costs over the coming years – money which can be redirected to projects that benefit the children of our school. Once again, it has taken a great deal of work to make this happen, and so I would like to thank one of our governors, Mrs Tunnecliff for all of her work in helping to lead this project.

Here are a few upcoming dates for your diaries

First Day of Summer Term A: Monday 10th April

Colchester Zoo Trip: Kingfishers and Frogs: Monday 24th April

Colchester Zoo Trip: Dragonflies, Ducklings, Minnows: Thursday 27th April

We are in the process of booking some curriculum enrichment trips and visits and will keep you posted with the details as they are confirmed.

Latest Attendance

Here are the latest attendance figures for the year-to-date up to the end of this term. A reminder that the government target for all schools is 95% (for an individual child 95% attendance equates to missing no more than one school day every four weeks). This is being pushed so hard at national level because there is a clear correlation between a child's attendance and their academic outcomes. Hopefully now that the longest winter known to man is coming to an end, we will be able to reach this next term!

If your child's attendance falls below 90%, we are obligated to send letters out at the start of each term informing parents of this and explaining the potential consequences.

Class	Attendance
Ducklings	93.28%
Minnows	94.62%
Dragonflies	94.25%
Frogs	94.93%
Kingfishers	94.38%

I hope that you all have a lovely Easter break.

Kind Regards

Mr Hawley

Head of School