

Newsletter

Autumn 4: 2021



Dear Parents/Carers,

Despite having to make some changes to planned events this term it has been lovely to see the children enjoying the wider curriculum in school, whether it was a visit from the Newton Abbot Museum Curator, the Playground Singing Workshop, food technology or football club returning. The children also enjoyed being part of the Children in Need fundraising events and I must thank you all for your generosity.

School Photographs

Just to remind you that we have the school photographer at Decoy on Monday 29th November although unfortunately we are unable to take photographs with siblings in school once again this year.

Staff update

Like other schools in Devon and further afield, we still have far higher staff absences than usual. I appreciate that this makes communication with staff far more difficult for parents/carers and can also make children feel unsettled. We are frustrated that we are unable to always book the same supply teacher to cover a class during a week but despite really good relationships with Teaching Supply agencies this just has not been possible. Fortunately, we have always maintained a large support staff team so please be reassured that there are still lots of very familiar faces in classes for the children even when teachers or teaching assistants are away.

You will no doubt have also noticed that Mr Lee has not been at school since we returned after the half term break. He is missing everyone and cannot wait to get back to his Decoy family. He is happy for me to let you know that his absence is Covid related as it has had a significant effect on his health and he will not be back at school this term. Not having our Deputy Headteacher obviously has quite an impact on the day to day running of school but it is really important that he makes a full recovery before coming back. I know you will all join me in wishing him a full and speedy recovery.

Miss Thomsett has officially started her maternity leave and we are very excited for the arrival of her baby in December. I look forward to being able to share a photograph with you all when Baby Thomsett arrives!

Mr Kilkelly has decided that it is the right time for him to take early retirement and will be leaving at the end of this term. He currently teaches Puffins, Year 3, on a Friday and releases Mr Ball and Mrs Morrell for leadership time every other week. We wish him a very happy retirement and know that he will enjoy honing his surfing skills!

We are also welcoming new staff to our team. Mrs Oliver and Mrs Aggett are joining the Reception classes to support children with their learning and well-being.

Keeping Safe

This week's Devon County Council ConnectMe news update:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKDEVONCC/bulletins/2fde124> reports,

'Overall, Devon's case rate remains above the national average. Cases are highest in those aged 0 to 19 years old, especially among those of secondary school and college ages. Schools and colleges are following the latest public health advice to control the spread of the virus.'

Advice to schools from the Director of Public Health South West is that we continue to reduce mixing between groups of children as much as possible including consideration of pausing 'whole school' assemblies for the time being and any other 'large gatherings.' Due to the recent number of positive cases in school, we have therefore had to make the difficult decision that our EYFS and KS1 Christmas Productions will not be 'live' events but will be recorded so that families can still see and enjoy the wonderful performances. I know many families will be extremely disappointed by this news but due to recent outbreaks in some year groups in school we cannot take the risk of holding an event that increases the risk of transmission across our community. We will be sending out a letter with more information soon.

Start of the school day

Please can I politely remind everyone that our school gate closes at 8:55am and the registers close at 9:10am.

Dates for the diary

I have delayed sending out the Diary Dates until today as we have been continuously reviewing planned events for this term. We have had to make the difficult decision to postpone school trips this term, adapt visits for visitors and cancel some events. Like everyone else, I assure you we are hoping to be able to return to the usual school calendar or events as soon as possible.

Thank you for your ongoing support despite some unavoidable disruptions this Autumn Term.

Kind regards



Mrs H. Poustie
Headteacher