

Newsletter

Spring 2: 2022



Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been so lovely this term, seeing the return of the trips and visits for the children. The Reception children went on an exciting torch lit night walk around school and you may have seen our Year 3 children marching around school dressed as Romans last Thursday. This week we have a Year 4 Greek Day and Year 5 are visiting Stover Canal and Newton Abbot museum as part of their Local History Study. Thank you for your support with all these activities.

Life at Decoy!

We are fortunate that lots of things remain the same at Decoy. The children are still wonderfully polite, hard-working and helpful and the wider community have been very supportive during a challenging term. We hope that you have not noticed too many changes despite the fact that we have been really affected by staff absences. Last week there were some days when we had 20% of our staff away. Teachers and TAs have been doing all they can to cover Mealtime Assistant Absences and we were able to keep the BASC provision open last week because of offers of help from the teaching and admin team to help out. Mr Lee and I are hall MTAs every day and one benefit has been that it has been a lovely opportunity to be with more children at lunchtime and chat in between wiping down tables, opening yoghurts(!) and serving drinks.

Over the last fortnight, Mr Lee and I have also led tours for prospective Headteacher candidates and each and every one has made a point of commenting on how extremely calm our school is and that there seems to be no disruption to learning or engagement despite supply staff and teaching assistants covering classes and larger groups. I know you will join me in thanking the children and staff for the fantastic teamwork – you should all be very proud of your children!

Keeping Safe

Thank you to all our families who have been so supportive of our plans to minimise the risk of Covid-19 transmission. Despite the national move away from Plan B, we are still keeping certain measures in place at Decoy in keeping with advice from the South West Association of Directors of Public Health. We are maintaining our contingency plans whilst we have so many cases across school. At lunchtime, we only have 2 year groups in the hall together and we are still holding whole key stage assemblies via Zoom. All other measures such as ventilation, enhanced cleaning and hand hygiene are still in place. We are very grateful that so many families are making sure they take lateral flow tests in keeping with guidance and in response to the risk of being close contacts.

Our curriculum

Please remember that we publish our curriculum on the school website. Unfortunately, we have had some difficulties uploading photographs as we are very keen to share the children's work and the school environment during the learning day. Hopefully that will be sorted fairly soon.

Children's Mental Health Week 7th February

Next week is Children's Mental Health Week and the following information is taken from the Children's Mental Health Week Organisation website where you can also find free resources for families.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers>

The theme of this year's Children's Mental Health Week is **Growing Together**.

Growing Together is about growing emotionally and finding ways to help each other grow. Challenges and setbacks can help us to grow and adapt and trying new things can help us to move beyond our comfort zone into a new realm of possibility and potential. However, emotional growth is often a gradual process that happens over time, and sometimes we might feel a bit 'stuck.' Please visit the website which has lots of information for families.

Parking and traffic outside school

I must thank everyone for helping on Friday when we had a real push to avoid cars stopping on the zigzag lines outside of school and to keep the cars moving on swiftly from the 'drop off' D. Please do not use the dropping off 'D' if you need to park and leave your car. At the moment, we have a few families that do need to do so, as they cannot use the disability parking space in the car park due to the car park being used as the school exit route. It worked really well on Friday and to build on that momentum, can I ask that you tell your child, if they walk to school without an adult, to walk around the 'D' on the pavement rather than across the 'D' on the road, as I know that is very worrying for drivers who are concerned about pulling into/out of the 'D' as children cross in front or behind their cars. Thank you for your help.

Welcome to Baby Thomsett

I am delighted to introduce you to Edith Hope who became part of the Decoy family towards the end of December. We are looking forward to meeting her and I know you will join me in wishing Miss Thomsett and her husband the very best for the future as a happy family together.



And finally, please remember that we are here to support all of our families and that sometimes, as adults we may need someone to talk to too. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you think we can help in any way.

Best wishes and stay safe

Mrs Heather Poustie
Headteacher