

25th June 2020



Dear Dunsford families,

I hope that you and your families are all keeping safe. It is so nice to see so many families in school and also to see all of the effort that our 'Home Heroes' have been putting into completing work at home.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your ongoing support and kind messages that you have given to us all through these unprecedented and rapidly changing times. Your understanding and patience during this time has really demonstrated a strong sense of community and thought for each other. I would like to thank and applaud you for all that you are doing, both for the school and the school community as a whole.

This week has been 'Community Week' at Dunsford, where we have been thinking about the changes to come in our school community and supporting our wonderful PTFA - who have found creative ways to keep our community strong while also raising money during these strange times.

One of the activities this week has been to communicate with Mrs Guntrip, by writing her short letters or drawing pictures to introduce yourselves to her. Mrs Guntrip writes,



'I am so looking forward to becoming a member of the Dunsford family and I am really excited to receive your letters and pictures. I am sure that you will also want to find out lots of information about me and that you will have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may wish to know more about my hobbies, books I like to read or music that I like to listen to. You may also want to know about any pets that I have and what subjects I like to teach. I would like you to think carefully about some creative questions and, once you have handed your questions in to Mrs Alpey, I will begin to answer as many as I can so that you will hopefully know lots about me before September! I can't wait to join you all at Dunsford and to begin the new school year with you all.'

### **Class structure**

When I last wrote to you, we were not in the position to share any details regarding next year's class structure. However, I am now pleased to inform you that we are able to share further news with you. Now that the school funding has been confirmed, we (as a trust) have made the decision, based on our core



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**TOGETHER WE EMPOWER EXCELLENCE**

principle of 'children first' and the needs at Dunsford, to move back to a three class structure (with a nursery) from September 2020. Being part of the Learning Academy Partnership gives us the flexibility to do this which otherwise would not have been possible in a stand-alone school. We are so thankful and extremely grateful that we are in this fortunate position to be able to offer this to our community and the benefits that this will bring for you - our families and children.



20-21	Year Groups	Pupil Numbers	Classroom	Number of Pupils	Teachers
<b>Nursery</b>	2-4 year olds	variable	Daffodil Building	max 16	Miss Farress and Mrs Wilson
<b>Class 1*</b>	YR	14	current Otter classroom	21	Mrs Dann
	Y1	7			
<b>Class 2*</b>	Y2	11	downstairs classroom, main building	25	Mrs Kersey and Miss Lloyd (job share)
	Y3	10			
	Y4	4			
<b>Class 3*</b>	Y5	12	upstairs classroom, main building	21	Mrs Hedger
	Y6	9			

\*NB class names to be decided with the children's involvement in September

### **Staffing Update**

You will have noted that Mrs McKnight is not mentioned above. This is because we are delighted to share with you that she has accepted a leadership position at one of our sister schools, Dartington C of E Primary. Mrs McKnight has been with us for 3 years, and has had an impact across our school, working as EYFS Lead and also as our Maths Lead. She has worked closely alongside key leaders across the Trust and has recently benefited from the trust wide 'Leap into Leadership' programme to springboard her further career development. Encouraging the development of all staff is one of the key principles of our Trust.

Mrs McKnight writes:

'I have really enjoyed my time at Dunsford and I have been privileged to have been welcomed into this fantastic community. I have enjoyed being part of the teaching team here enormously and will miss all the children, families and staff at Dunsford such a lot. I am very excited about this next step and am so pleased that I can stay within our wider Trust family and use the skills I have been developing in my

leadership programme. I hope to be able to see the children frequently at our shared Trust-wide activities and opportunities, and do make sure you say hello if we see each other out and about!



### Transition Arrangements

We know that, at this time of the year, the children become excited about the prospect of meeting their new teacher and getting to know them. This year will, of course, look very different in terms of how we are able to approach this. However, we do recognise the importance of this and the transition for the children. With this in mind, we will be providing different opportunities for both the children and yourselves to get to know new teachers. We will be posting some short clips on Classroom / Tapestry or by email (as appropriate) in which teachers will be able to answer some of the children's questions and we have also asked them to write a short paragraph to introduce themselves below. We have included a picture so that you can also begin to become familiar with what they look like.

**Mrs Hedger**



Hi, my name is Mrs Hedger and I am really looking forward to coming and working at Dunsford Community Academy in September. I previously worked within the Learning Academy Partnership South West as an SLE (Specialist Leader of Education) and leader of the School Direct Programme. I taught at Ellacombe Academy for 5 years before deciding to follow my dream of teaching abroad. I then moved to Dubai four years ago, where I have had a great experience teaching children from all over the world, travelling to new countries and meeting new people. I am now looking forward to moving back to Devon and working at Dunsford. In my free time, I am a keen horse rider and I love to walk on the moor and along the coast, something that I have really missed having spent the past 4 years in a desert. I am really looking forward to meeting you all in September.

Hello, my name is Miss Dann and I will be your Early Years and Year One teacher from September. I am very excited about joining the Dunsford family and I can not wait to meet all of you. I am passionate about offering children the very best start in life and strive to ensure that everyone has a safe and happy experience at school. When I am not teaching I love to spend time in the great outdoors, either taking care of my beautiful garden, walking across the countryside or coastline, curled up with a book or spending time with my cherished family. Healthy eating and fitness also play an enormous part in my life, ensuring that I maintain and promote physical and mental health and well-being. I am very much looking forward to September and having the opportunity to get to know you all.

**Miss Dann**



### **Mrs Alphey's celebrations**

I have worked alongside Mrs Alphey for the past 3 years. During this time, it has been clear to see the immense passion and dedication that she has shown as the Head Teacher of Dunsford Community Academy. She has been a proud leader of the school and she has always shown a true commitment to ensuring the best for the children and families at Dunsford. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Mrs Alphey in my role as Executive Head since December and I am thankful for the opportunity to see Dunsford 'through her eyes' and for her to be able to show me what a truly special school and community Dunsford is. It is hard to put into words how much Mrs Alphey has done for the school and the community over the last 21 years and I know that she will be missed by all. I would like to give a heart-felt thank you to Mrs Alphey for her service and dedication in her role as your Head Teacher and to show my appreciation for all that she has done.

I recognise that Mrs Alphey is moving on during a time of uncertainty and that we would have liked to mark and celebrate this transition in a very different way than we are currently able to do. However, I would like to assure you that, in the Autumn term, there will be a time of special celebration where we will be able to say our goodbyes in a way that is both fitting and a tribute for all that Mrs Alphey has done. I will write to you with further details of this in the Autumn term. In the meantime we will make Mrs Alphey's last day of term as special as we possibly can given the current restrictions.

Mrs Alphey writes:

"I feel so lucky to have been part of this special school community for so many years. I've been teaching and leading at Dunsford for most of my working life, and have spent time with hundreds of amazing young people over that time. Teaching children is a joy. Helping children to discover their talents and strengths, giving them opportunities and sharing in their happiness, guiding them to be the best versions of themselves and supporting them to overcome areas they find harder to grasp - it's the ultimate privilege and so rewarding. It's also such a thrill to bump into an ex-pupil, or ex-parents of our school community, and to find out how they're all flourishing and enjoying life! I'm so glad I'll still be connected to Dunsford in my new role, and look forward to visiting from time to time and keeping in touch with everyone. I've been telling anyone who'll listen recently that I'm not leaving without a celebration and a big cake - looking forward to it already!"

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Stephens

Executive Head of Academy