



AUTUMN 2 2020 NEWSLETTER

DUNSFORD COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Chief Executive Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the Chief Executive of the Trust I would like to welcome you to this month's Academy newsletter to thank you for the tremendous support that we have received from parents and our communities during these challenging times.

Since the beginning of the first lockdown in March our schools have been operating in the most extraordinary and challenging of circumstances to provide a safe learning environment and continuity of provision for our children. The safety and welfare of our children, staff and families remain our key priority.

Throughout this time staff have worked selflessly to keep our schools as safe as possible and at all times 'putting our children first'. I am immensely proud of our leaders, teachers and staff who have demonstrated such professionalism and dedication, above and beyond the call of duty. It is testament to the leadership of our Heads and the hard work of all our staff, with your support, that despite the current restrictions, our schools are beaming with happy children and staff where love and care is tangible and where the exciting buzz of learning exudes. I and my team across our family of schools have worked closely together throughout the pandemic to ensure that everyone is well supported. I am particularly thrilled with the feedback from staff in our recent staff wellbeing survey. There are 258 members of staff employed by and working across the Trust and 96% reported that they are proud to be a member of our Trust. As a result, 95% of staff would recommend the Trust as a place to work.

I want to also thank our Board of Trustees and Local Governance Committees for their continued work and support. The Trust values: '**Collectively Empowering Excellence**' have been abundantly evident during the course of this past year with all of our school communities pulling together to ensure we are able to deliver the best possible care and education for our pupils, while also delivering on ambitious projects to support those in the community who have faced challenges the past year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the excellent work happening across the Trust. Across all our schools, there has been excellent fund-raising efforts for charities who are doing great work to support those in need at such a challenging time. We have seen some truly outstanding efforts from parents and pupils across our schools, such as Dunsford Community Academy who have raised an amazing £3,330 and this will feed 330 children for a month! Thank you!

As many of you will know, our Trust works extensively across the South West schools region to: support school improvement; deliver teacher training and provide staff excellent professional development opportunities, all with the aim of improving pupil outcomes. The Learning Academy Partnership is the Number 1 Trust in the country for the outcomes of disadvantaged children and in the Top 10 Trusts nationally for the progress that all our children make. This is an amazing achievement and testament to the excellent quality of leadership, teaching and learning across all our schools.

It was 10 years ago, in 2010, that we were designated as a National Support School, then recognised as a nationally designated Teaching School (2014) and then as a National English Hub (2019). This recognition and the resulting activity has contributed to improved opportunities and achievement for all our children, and also drives additional income generation that is reinvested into our Trust schools for the benefit of our children and staff. As always, our pupils are at the heart of everything we do.



Together we empower excellence

Chief Executive Update

I am pleased to share with you that very recently we were awarded almost half a million pounds' worth of extra Government funding to extend the reach of our flagship **English Hub**. The money means that the Trust will be able to grow the Centre of Excellence, based at Ilsham C of E Academy but involving all our Trust Schools, to share our expertise in teaching English both across the Trust as well as the South West more broadly. This is a flagship achievement that we are immensely proud of.

New School for Paignton.

As some of you may know, the Department for Education previously asked the Trust to open a new school in Paignton, to support the overwhelming need for primary school places in the area. We are making good progress with our plans to open St Michael's Church of England Academy in Paignton in September 2021, with building work for the new site in Fisher Street making good progress, and the admission process in full swing. This new academy will be the tenth school in the Trust and another exceptional school within our Trust family. It will begin by offering Nursery and Reception places to families in and around Paignton. If you know of any families who would be interested, please put them in touch with our admissions team (admissions@lapsw.org).

Dartington C of E Primary School

Since June 2019, we have been working very closely with Dartington C of E Primary in a management partnership with a view to Dartington joining the Trust more formally. This relationship has been very successful. Formal consultations have been postponed due to COVID but I am now pleased to share with you that the consultation process will begin early in the Spring term with a view to Dartington converting to academy status and joining the Trust formally from April 2021.

Finally, I wanted to share with you the 'Thank a Teacher Card' campaign, run by the Teaching Awards Trust. Any pupil, parent or member of the public can show their appreciation for those education staff working in schools and colleges by sending them a free card and personal message. In the lead up to Christmas, we want to make sure as many teachers and education staff receive thank you messages from students, parents and other teachers as possible after an incredibly challenging year. You can send a free thank you e-card to teachers and education staff in the next couple of weeks by visiting the website [here](#).

I would like to introduce our new Chair of Trustees, Richard Vaughton and end by wishing you all a very peaceful, safe and enjoyable Christmas break.

Very Best wishes



Mrs L Atkinson
Chief Executive



Chair of Trustees Update

I was delighted to be appointed Chair of Trustees in September this year after serving on the Board since 2016. I would like to begin by thanking everyone for my warm welcome to this role. I have immensely enjoyed my first term as Chair of Trustees for this outstanding Trust. I feel very privileged to lead the Board of Trustees in a Trust that I believe passionately about. The Learning Academy Partnership provides a first-class education to its pupils, thanks to the hard work and commitment shown by the dedication of our Leaders, teachers, support staff, our parents and Local Governance Committees across the Trust.

I wrote to you in July regarding a report by the ESFA that related to historical matters between 2016-2018. The Trust is committed to self-improvement and I am pleased to now be in a position to provide an update to you and to share the excellent outcome of a number of recent independent audit reports that demonstrate the excellent position of the Trust and the high standards of Governance and Financial Management.

It is testament to the work of leaders within the Trust and particularly the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, Finance Team and the Governance teams that the Trust is recognised as so strong with all levels of Financial Management judged as **High Standard**. These independent reports described as '**flawless**' can be found on the Trust website under Governance. (<https://www.lapsw.co.uk/governance/>)

Furthermore, a 'forensic' Governance Review has been undertaken and I am delighted to also share that Leadership and Governance has been recognised as a strength. The final report will be available on 4th December. These reports build upon the many previous good reports the Trust has received since 2011 when the Learning Academy Partnership was established.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and Local Governance I would like to thank everyone for your continued support to your school community and to the Trust overall. I look forward to our joint work to continue empowering excellence for all our young people.

Your sincerely,

RVaughton

Richard Vaughton
Chair of Trustees
Learning Academy Partnership



Head of Academy Update

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our end of term newsletter. We have so much to share with you from this half term and we really hope that you enjoy reading all about what has been happening at Dunsford Community Academy!

It is hard to believe that we are already at the end of the first term. As a staff we have felt truly blessed to have had all of your ongoing support as we have navigated the uncertain territory that the current COVID-19 situation has brought. You have understood the different decisions that have been made this term and your support has enabled us to ensure that we have been able to keep children safe, happy and in school learning; what a brilliant achievement!

As we reflect on what has been this year and look forward to next term, we do so with many things to look forward to. We have listened to parent feedback and, as a result, we will be increasing the music offer to parents and children by welcoming Mr. Blurton who will be joining us on a Thursday to teach both piano and guitar. Mr. Blurton is highly experienced (having been a teacher himself) and he currently offers music provision at some of our sister trust schools Warberry and Ilsham. We are very much looking forward to welcoming him to our Dunsford family.

Next half term we will continue our learning in many different curriculum areas. The children will be learning as Historians, Scientists, Global Citizens, Writers and Mathematicians (to name but a few!). Please do look out for our curriculum pages on our website that outline what your child will be learning next half term. Forest School sessions will also continue as will our extra-curricular club sessions.

The window for Reception place applications for September 2021 is now open and we would be thrilled to welcome more members to our school family. We have a video on our website which prospective parents and children can view to gain an idea about what our wonderful school is like so please do direct any families to this. The video can be found here: <https://dunsford-lap.co.uk/parents/reception-induction-2020/>

Finally I would like to thank you all for your amazing acts of generosity this half term. You have supported a wide number of charities including Love the One, Save the Children, Children in Need, Teign Valley Larder. The amount of money that has been raised as a school will truly transform the lives of children outside of our trust and that is extremely special.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you the most wonderful Christmas and New Year. I hope that you all stay safe and enjoy the festivities this year with loved ones in a way that you are able to.

Best wishes,

Mrs. Guntrip

Mrs Guntrip
Head of Academy



Diary Dates Autumn Term

5th January	Spring Term Starts
22nd January	Devon Waste Workshop
29th January	Life Education Workshop
1st –5th February	National Storytelling Week
8th - 10th February	CAP Workshop
15th - 19th February	Half Term
22nd February	Term Starts
4th March	World Book Day

Term Dates 2020/21

SPRING TERM – 2021

Tuesday 5th January Children begin Spring Term

Mon 15th – Fri 19th February Half Term Holiday

Wednesday 31st March Term ends

Thursday 1st April NON PUPIL DAY

SUMMER TERM – 2021

Monday 19th April Children begin Summer Term

Monday 3rd May BANK HOLIDAY

Mon 31st May – Fri 4th June Half Term Holiday

Monday 7th June NON PUPIL DAY

Wednesday 21st July Term ends

Thursday 22nd July NON PUPIL DAY



Maple Class



What a wonderful half term we have had in Maples! The children have been developing new skills this half term and have really taken ownership of their own learning. This has enabled them to continue in becoming strong, confident, independent learners. How proud we are of all of them!

The children have enjoyed their Forest School experiences with Mrs Twelvetrees, exploring and learning in our wonderful outside environment.

We have continued with our adventures in the Antarctic, looking at the animals, the climate and igloo building; we have even been ice-hole fishing and have created our very own Arctic space to learn and play in.

In art we have been inspired by Van Gogh's Starry Night and created our own interpretations to reflect his style of painting.

Using our mathematical skills and knowledge we have explored counting to 20 and applied our problem solving skills to add 1 more to a number.

In science we have explored ice and how it feels, and what happens as it melts. We have shared many Christmas stories this half term and talked a lot about the Nativity story and its significance during Christmas time.

We would like to thank you and your children for your continued support and feedback. Have a wonderful, safe Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.



Willow Class



What an amazing half term this has been to take us to the end of our first term altogether! Everyone has been busy developing new skills and applying everything that they know into their independent learning. From Phonics and maths, to art and Forest school, the learning opportunities have been abundant and the progress made by everyone in Willow class is truly something to celebrate.

I am so proud of all your children and I cannot thank you all enough for your continued support throughout this term. We have enjoyed listening to stories to help our imaginative storytelling and writing skills, and learning about nonfiction texts that help us to find out facts and even write, and make, our own delicious recipes. Using our developing mathematical knowledge we have explored numbers up to 20, delving into problem solving and reasoning challenges that improve our confidence and broader understanding.

We have also looked at our school and its surrounding area in Geography, studied animals in Science, discovered the importance of Nativity in RE, learnt lots of new skills in PE and reflected on the importance of friendships in Relationships and Health Education. Our daily phonics lessons have also shown incredible development, as everyone begins to enjoy reading their own books and sharing their love of reading with their partner. What an incredible achievement over half a term!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all again, and wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas. I look forward to hearing all about this special time when we return to school in January.



Cedar Class



As we reach the end of our first term together in Cedar Class, I would like to share the amazing half term we have had together. The children have come together and developed as learners throughout this half term. They have demonstrated our school value 'Resilience' as they have embedded their learning through applying their understanding independently, and through teaching their friends the new skills we have learnt in the different curriculum areas.

As mathematicians, we have explored addition, subtraction and multiplication so far, making connections and representing our thinking with concrete, pictorial and abstract representations.

In writing, we have been 'writing to inform' with our final outcome allowing the children to apply the new writing skills we have been learning in a non-chronological report about a type of weather.

Across the wider curriculum, the children have investigated plants in science, the life of Muslims in RE and explored Devon through the eyes of a geographer applying their knowledge of grid references and compass points throughout. The children have explored different techniques of how to paint using watercolours to create landscape artwork pieces, considered the role of those who surround them in Relationships and Health Education and finally, developed their gymnastic skills in PE with Mr Coupe.

The adults who work in Cedar Class are very proud of the engagement and supportive community which the children have developed together as a class. Thank you for your ongoing support. I hope that you have a wonderful Christmas together, staying safe as a family. I look forward to seeing you next half term to hear all about it!



Oak Class



The lead up to the end of term has provided an excellent opportunity to reflect on everything that Oak class have achieved over the last 7 weeks and over the term as a whole. So much progress has been made by every child and I am extremely proud of them.

Over the last half term we have been applying our writing skills as we focused on 'writing to inform', the children have developed their use of formal language, multi clause sentences and how to share information that they have learnt through a variety of different writing approaches.

In Maths they have become more confident with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and are able to apply these skills to various word problems and reasoning challenges.

In Science we have been investigating changes of state and what happens when solids dissolve, conducting our own investigations and summarising our findings. In Geography we have been learning about locations around the world, Oak class are able to identify the longitude and latitude coordinates of different locations and we also looked at how time zones differ across the world. In RE we have been looking at different people's beliefs and why they have them and in PE we have developed our tag rugby and gymnastics skills.

In between all of this, Oak class have become a wonderful community, supporting each other in class with learning, celebrating each other's successes and working hard each week to earn enough dojos for Golden Time.

I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching the children this term, their eagerness to learn makes them a pleasure to work with and I look forward to seeing what next term brings.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support, I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you in the new year.



Special Events

As a school, this half term you raised an outstanding £3,300, following a sponsored bike ride and vegetable mufti-day, with proceeds going to Love the One Charity.

Six of our Mums (Amy Greenman, Al Topliss, Beth Webber, Felicity Ursell, Helen Parker, and Jess Dunbar) took part in the harvest fundraiser which saw them dress up as vegetables and cycle from Dunsford Community Academy to Fingle Bridge and back, which is a mighty 16 kilometres!

Our children also dressed up as fruit and vegetables and donated money to this amazing cause. A special thank you goes out to Clementine Massey who helped to organise the event. The money raised from this will be donated to children's charity, [Love the One](#).

The charity is based in Odisha, one of the poorest states in India with a population of 46 million people and has 350 children enrolled in their Early Paediatric Interventional Care Preschool Groups and School. The difference that you have all made to the lives of these children is incredible!

In addition to this, you have also raised money for other charities this year by dressing in spotty clothes and wearing Christmas jumpers! As a school we managed to raise **£216.71** for Children in Need and **£33.10** for Save the Children. Well done Dunsford!

A special thank you to all of you who took part in our 'reverse Advent calendar.' We were able to donate another large hamper of food that will support many families within the wider community and we also sent beautiful Christmas cards that the children had made to accompany the package and to let people know that they are being held in people's thoughts this Christmas. What a fabulous community effort and a very heart-warming act of kindness.



School Council

We were completely amazed by all of the applications which I received from children who wanted to be a member of the School Council. The letters were so beautifully written and they really exemplified the individual skills of each child. As a result, the decision was taken to have two separate councils with members being selected based upon their skills and what they would bring to the role.

We are thrilled to announce that we now have School Council members and also Eco/Charity Fundraising members.

Both groups of children will be meeting officially with Mrs. Guntrip next half term where they will be presented with their badges and begin their duties of the role! Before their first meeting, it would be brilliant if the children could begin to make notes of ideas that they have and what they wish to share at the meeting. We are very excited to see what this dynamic group of young people can offer and the positive developments that they can make within Dunsford.





With people longing for a fresh start in 2021, I wanted to reflect for a second and celebrate. We may all be feeling a little shaken with our hair all over the place and eyes streaming having ridden the roller coaster that was 2020, but we're here. It's been a rough ride for some and it is often difficult to see the positives in these situations, but from the perspective of the school and our local community there are reasons to celebrate.

I would like to extend thanks on behalf of the parents in the PTFA for the amazing work that the teachers and school have done this year. It certainly feels as if the children are thriving more than ever which is quite something when you consider the circumstances. You have created a fantastic environment for them and your enthusiasm towards them and their learning has been wonderful and we are looking forward to seeing the school go from strength to strength. The way that you have worked to keep Christmas fun for them this year has also been greatly appreciated.

The PTFA have had a good year in the circumstances and, whilst the first part of 2021 is likely to be subject to restrictions, we have a number of activities lined up. Before we look forward though, there are still a few exciting activities ongoing to close out 2020.

On Monday 21st December we will be carol singing outdoors around the village. We are encouraging as many people as possible to join us and will conduct the carols in a Covid-safe way (groups of 6 singers with appropriate social distancing). Some of the children will be accompanying us on their instruments. You can simply listen in if you prefer but if you would like to join us then we will be meeting at Brownings Mead in front of the bus stop for a 6pm start.

We have just published a wonderful PTFA cookbook entitled "Let's Eat!" which contains almost 40 recipes from teachers, parents and children. Copies are available for just £8 with all profits going to the PTFA - every book purchased also gets an entry into the draw for a wonderful Christmas cake! What a fantastic stocking filler! (The book, not the cake...). Thanks to Flic Ursell for pulling it together and to Rich Frayne and team at Quick Print for your support with the printing.

There are still a few names available for the beautiful doll that was kindly made for us by Jess Redfern. If you have already entered, why not choose another name or two to increase your chances of winning?

Finally we'd like to congratulate John and Judith Turk for emerging victorious from the battle that was the Dunsford numbers and letters quiz. They were the only ones to have answered all 124 questions correctly! Well done both of you - there are many people who are in awe of your abilities!

Thank you to everyone for your support this year - your creativity, ingenuity and support for our limited fundraising efforts has been incredible. As ever, donations to the PTFA, large or small, are always welcome and if you would like to get involved in PTFA activity or to attend our meetings, it would be lovely to hear from you via dunsfordptfa@gmail.com (we promise we don't bite).

Whatever your Christmas looks like in 2020, we hope that you are able to enjoy it - looking forward, but also taking time to celebrate what we already have.

Wishing you health and happiness.

Glen Corbett - Dunsford PTFA Chair

Attendance

Here at Dunsford Community Academy, we want the best for all children as we know you do too. Having the opportunity to receive the best possible education is vital to ensuring that children have the best possible opportunities in their adult life. In order to receive a good education, it is important that children maintain a high level of attendance. We relish celebrating attendance in school with each class and it is fantastic to see how passionate the children are about maintaining high levels of attendance themselves! If

children do not regularly attend school, it may lead to:

- Finding difficulty in keeping up with their school work
- Issues with social skills and maintaining positive relationships with others
- Maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality as they progress through school and in the workplace
- Issues with confidence and participation in class

Punctuality is equally as important as attendance. When a child is late to school, it can cause disruption to their learning and also to that of others in their class. It is therefore important that high levels of punctuality are also maintained.

What does the law say?

By law, all children of compulsory school age must receive a suitable, full time education. Parents are responsible for making sure this happens, either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide a suitable full time education. Once a child is registered at a school, parents are responsible for making sure he/she attends regularly. If a child fails to attend regularly (even if they miss school without the parent knowing) the Local Authority (LA) may take legal action against the parent. The LA is responsible for making sure that parents fulfil their responsibilities. Parents are responsible for making sure that their registered children regularly attend school or any alternative provision is arranged for them.

Attendance

Absences

On the first day of absence you are required to call the academy office between 8.00am and 9.15am to inform the office that your child will be absent and give a reason for the absence.

Absence Requests

The Head of Academy may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. All requests for a child to be absent from school during term time must be made in writing at least a half term in advance of the proposed absence by completing the absence request form obtainable from the Academy office. Please call into the Academy Office if you would like to discuss your child's attendance or any aspect of absences.

Covid-19

We continue to ask that if you are your child is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 that you do not attend school on that day. You should ring the school office and we will support you with what steps you need to take. Thank you for your support with this. Celebration! Thank you for supporting your children during these unprecedented times to ensure that your child is in school on time and learning. We have been able to celebrate lots of success with attendance this half term and I know that we will continue to build and improve on this next half term. Our attendance winners for the best class attendance this half term is Cedar class! What a fabulous achievement! We can't wait to find out who will win this title at the end of Autumn 2. If you are experiencing any difficulties with regards to attendance and punctuality, then please do contact Mrs. Guntrip and Mrs. Sinton and they will be more than happy to support you.



School Staff

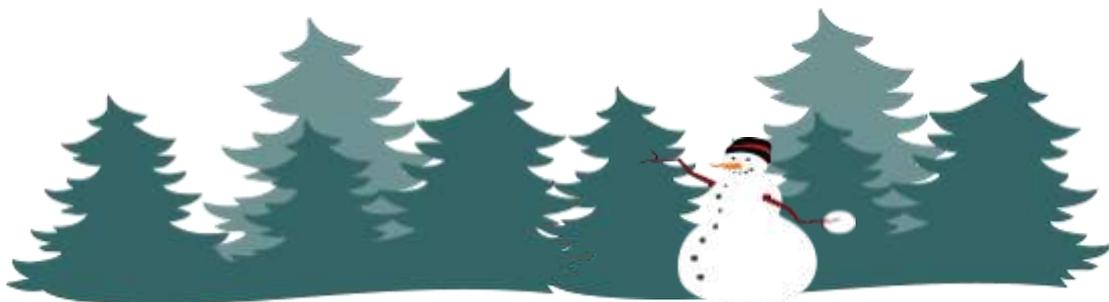
If you have already met me, you will know that I am passionate about offering children the very best start in life, and I strive to ensure that everyone has a safe and happy experience at school. When I am not teaching I love to spend time in the great outdoors, travelling and walking across the countryside or coastline, curled up with a book or spending time with my cherished family, including Jimmy, my gorgeous ginger tomcat. I also have a passion for healthy vegan eating and fitness, which both play an enormous part in my life, ensuring that I maintain and promote physical and mental health and well-being.



I love my role in Dunsford as a Learning Support Assistant. I love being with the children and helping them along on their learning journey. Their lovely smiles really do light up my day.

I enjoy supporting the children in their learning and feel that Dunsford has a warm and welcoming environment that nurtures the children to help them achieve their best.

When I'm not at school, I enjoy exercising and am often out running throughout the week and over the weekend. I also love crocheting and looking after our family allotment as well as our chickens and ducks.



Office News

Start of the day

Can we remind you that Y2-Y6 children need to be at school between 9:30-9:40am and Nursery, YR & Y1 start their day at 9:50am. Please ensure your children are at school on time. If you need any support with this, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Music Lessons

We are lucky to be able to offer guitar and piano lessons at our school from next term. For more details please contact Mr Blurton on chrisblurton@yahoo.com or 07595499188 .

Breakfast Club

Please ensure that if your child is attending Breakfast Club you have booked the session on School Money in advance.

Christmas

We have shared some very exciting festivities in the build up to the Christmas break. These have included Christmas Lunch, Christmas Jumper Day, making Christmas cards for the Teign Valley Larder, decorating Christmas trees and watching an online Christmas Pantomime! We do hope that the children have enjoyed these experiences and that they have enabled the children to develop a sense of excitement for this special time!



Lunches

Please remember to book your child's lunches using School Money. You can book by midnight the night before.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
from all at Dunsford Community Academy**

Office opening hours

Monday 8.30-4.00

Tuesday 8.30 –12.30

Wednesday 8.30-12.30

Thursday 8.30-12.30

Friday 8.30-4.00



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🌐 <https://dunsford-lap.co.uk>

St Michael's Church of England Academy

A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR PAIGNTON

Opening in September 2021



St Michael's C of E Academy is a fully inclusive school for children aged 2 - 11 years old, where children can thrive, grow and learn.

If your child was born between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017, you will be able to apply for a reception place for September 2021 in November 2020 when the admission process opens.

Prior to this you can submit an Expression of Interest for nursery and reception places via our website <https://stmichaels-lap.co.uk/admissions> or contact our Admissions Officer admissions@lapsw.org



St Michael's is proud to be a member of the Learning Academy Partnership

☎ 01626 248800

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