



SPRING 1, 2021 NEWSLETTER

DUNSFORD COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Head of Academy Update

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Spring 1 half term newsletter. We have navigated a very different half term than the one we were expecting and I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate with you all that we have achieved together as a school community.

Currently we have a number of children attending school and a number of children working from home. I would like to congratulate all of the children for the amazing resilience which they have shown in what has been an incredibly difficult time. I would also like to celebrate the support that you have provided as parents. It has not been an easy time for anyone but, despite this, there are many achievements to focus on. It is important that we continue to reflect on the positives at this time and that we look forward to the next half term and continue to work together, as a community, to find the light in the darkness.

We continue to recognise the importance of community and how difficult it can be to feel a sense of belonging at this time. We will continue to work with all of our families after half term to ensure that we are supporting you as much as possible to feel that sense of belonging to Dunsford Community Academy as this is so important for all of us. We have a truly special school community and, by working together, we can work to keep each other safe and ensure that we are all happy and healthy when we are able to be together once more.

The parent Care and Share sessions have been a wonderful way to bring parents together during this period of lockdown and they have been a time which I have thoroughly enjoyed. We have received lots of positive feedback about the sessions and they will continue to run next half term. If you haven't attended a session yet then I would urge you to do so if you are able. Everyone is welcome!



I would like to introduce you to a new section on the school's website which contains different information and sources of support for parents.

This section is called Parent Information and Support and it can be found here <https://dunsford-lap.co.uk/parents/parent-information-and-support/>

Finally I am thrilled to be able to share with you the results of our recent Parent Questionnaire. You will receive an email today with the attached document containing the responses to each question. I do hope that you enjoy reading it; it shows that the school continues to flourish even in the most difficult of times!

I wish you all a safe and happy half term holiday. I continue to thank you for your support and encouragement and I look forward to the next half term.

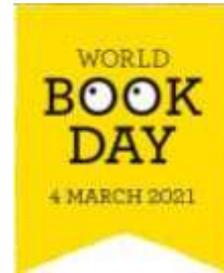
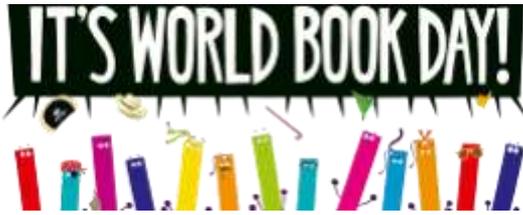
Best wishes,

Mrs. Guntrip

Mrs Guntrip
Head of Academy



Diary Dates Spring Term



This year's World Book Day will be held on 4th March 2021. This event will be different to usual due to the current lockdown. However, we will make sure that there will be lots of ways to celebrate World Book Day at home, at school or wherever you are! World Book Day is one of the most exciting days of our school year, packed with fun activities both in and out of the classroom. Miss Dann, our English Lead here at Dunsford, is currently finalising plans and we can't wait to share these with you after half term!



Science Week

This year we will be celebrating Science Week in the week beginning 8th March. Teachers will share their plans for this week after half term when we have a little more clarity on the return to school status! However, whether in school or virtual, we will have lots of exciting activities planned and we are looking forward to seeing the children's engagement in this.

Parent Consultations

Next half term we will be holding Parent Consultations. These sessions will be held in the week beginning the 15th March and further details will be sent to you when we return to school next half term regarding timings and how to make a booking. This will be a wonderful opportunity for teachers to continue to share with you progress, successes and next steps and we do hope that as many of you as possible will attend.



Maple Class



What a super, busy half term we have all had in Nursery! Our hero 'Superworm' has truly inspired the children in their learning and explorations. We have enjoyed reading Superworm by Julia Donaldson and re-telling the story through rhyme, song and actions (lots of wriggling and squirming).

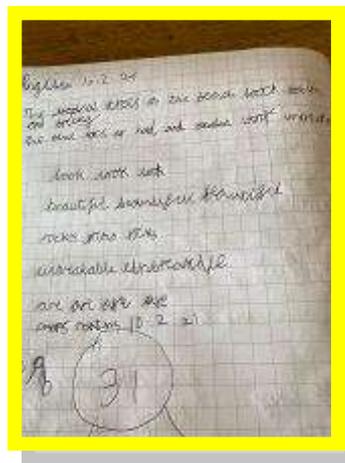
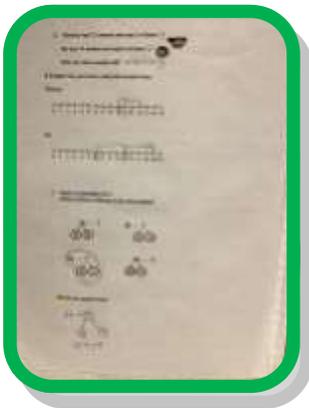
We have explored and found out facts about earthworms and made our own worm farm which we care for and make sure our worms are happy and well-fed. In numeracy, we have been using our knowledge of length and measurement and also extending our language to describe size, and length (shorter than/bigger than). We have also looked at shapes and how they are all around our environment. In art we have enjoyed creating our own pieces inspired by the artist Kandinsky's 'circle paintings'. We have made drawings and have even designed our own Kandinsky style Elmer elephants (David Mckee) using the computer and interactive whiteboard. What a super time we have had learning alongside Superworm. We wish you and your families a super half term and thank



Willow Class



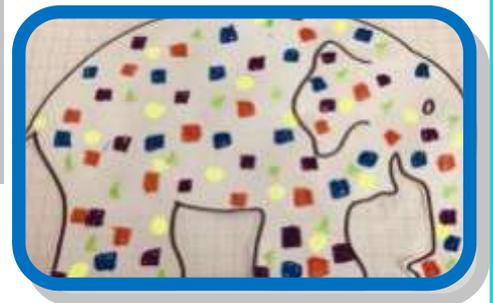
What a truly amazing half term it has been in Willow! Despite things looking very different for everybody, our topic "I wish I was..." has lent itself to us all reflecting upon who we are as individuals, and what our unique qualities are. Our children that have been able to come to school everyday have shown immense courage and perseverance in everything that they have done and, for our 'Home Heroes' (who have been dearly missed), they too have shown us how strong and resilient they are as they have persevered with their remote learning. The teaching and learning this half term has incorporated not only our core subjects; English, Maths, RE and Science, but also our wider curriculum; PE, History, Art and RHE, covered by the Early Years and The National Curriculum. We have also spread a little kindness by supporting Children's Mental Health Week and sharing the importance of E-Safety. I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to you all for your support, optimism and encouragement over the last few weeks and welcome you to celebrate, we me, all the incredible learning that your children have achieved either at school or as home learners. Here are a selection of pictures to capture those special moments!



Cedar Class



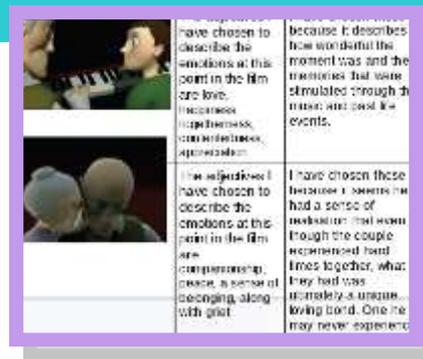
Wow! What an amazing half term of learning the children in Cedar Class have had. Our learning has looked very different, with some children being at home and some children being at school, but this has not stopped us from continuously achieving our best! The children have absorbed our new thinking across the curriculum and expressed their learning in a variety of ways. Please see the selection of photos which demonstrate a small percentage of the incredible learning, from making our own shops, investigating hygiene with bread, our incredible artwork inspired by a range of artists and writing alternative endings to our class text *The Mousehole Cat*! Alongside our curriculum areas, including our wider curriculum of Science, History and RE, we have considered how we can keep ourselves safe and well through supporting Children's Mental Health Week, understanding the importance of E-Safety and sharing our love of reading. We are very proud of all of the children's achievements and the perseverance they have shown throughout. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support, communication and commitment to the learning of your children and the team of staff at Dunsford. The quality of learning which the children have produced this half term is as a result of the hard work you, as parents, have demonstrated too and we are beyond thankful for this!



Oak Class



It has been a very unusual but productive half term in Oak class. I have been so impressed with how quickly the children have settled into a completely new way of working and their independence has been very impressive! With a couple of adaptations we have managed to continue our learning in all subject areas and the children have made great progress as a result. We have looked at building suspense and tension in our writing by using a variety of techniques and the children have produced some very creative stories as a result. We have also focused on speech punctuation, expanding sentences through adding detail and learning how to write a flashback. In reading we have used a variety of texts and our DERIC skills to answer different questions. In Maths we continued our learning about fractions before moving on to analysing different types of charts and graphs and, more recently, we have learnt about perimeter and area. We will revisit all of these areas when back in class to make sure that the children's understanding is secure. In Science we have been learning about life cycles with the help of Oak Academy. We have also learnt about Islam in RE and the influence of Queen Victoria in History. We have also had some lovely art work sent in of our bird creations and Andy Goldsworthy sculptures. My favourite time of each week has been the live sessions with the children where we have met a variety of pets and also found household and classroom objects in our scavenger hunts! The children have had some really thoughtful responses in our assemblies with Mrs Guntrip and it has been lovely to still see the children online. A special thanks needs to go also to you, our parents, as your support has enabled the children to be successful in their learning. I really appreciate this and I hope that the experience hasn't been too stressful but an enjoyable one! Please enjoy a well earned rest over half term.



School Council

As you know, before lockdown began we elected members of the School Council and Eco/Charity Council. Next half term Mrs Guntrip will be holding virtual sessions with these groups to ensure that they can have the opportunity to fulfil their roles for the remainder of the school year.

We would like the children who hold these positions to begin to think about any plans that they would like to voice in the meetings and be ready to discuss these. Mrs Guntrip is really looking forward to these meetings and to hearing the ideas of all of the children!



Staff Challenges

We have recently introduced 'Ask an Adult' and 'The Challenge.' We are asking children to send in questions for adults to answer and also challenges for them to complete.

The children can ask an adult a range of questions, for example, 'What is your favourite flavour ice-cream?' or 'Who was the first person to walk on the moon?' We enjoy seeing how creative the children can be with their questions!

Likewise, we welcome creative challenges! You may ask an adult to complete a set number of sit-ups in one minute or to see how many biscuits they can eat in two minutes! The more inventive the better!

Staff will answer questions and complete challenges and these video clips will be placed onto our social media pages for you to share and enjoy together.



Our PTFA is operating in unprecedented circumstances. We are exceedingly grateful for the continued efforts of those pro-actively fundraising in spite of the pandemic, regardless of scale - a few pounds here or there really does make a difference. The recent success of the school cook book and the numbers and letters quiz has helped to lift the spirits of all involved.

A year on from the start of the first lockdown and we are starting to feel the squeeze more acutely as we erode away the financial buffer that was left over from fundraising efforts in previous years. Our fundraising has taken a battering this year and the reality is that most of this buffer is already committed, with a very modest amount left over to enable us to contribute towards improving the experiences of the children at the school.

In this term's PTFA committee meeting, there was a lively discussion around how we can maximise our efforts in 2021, on the understanding that it will still be very challenging indeed. There are some exciting ideas and it is clear that we need to continue to adapt to circumstances.

Every single parent and teacher in the school is automatically a member of the PTFA and indeed so are the friends of the school in the broader community. It is not an organisation that you have to join – if you are reading this then you are already part of it.

There are a number of opportunities to get involved and the ongoing success of the PTFA and what we are able to do to support the school, relies on every one of us. There will be some posts that will require filling at the end of this academic year as those who have served on the committee step down. Some of these roles are essential for the legal operation of the PTFA as a registered charity. Not to put too fine a point on it, if no one steps up to the plate when the time comes, there is no PTFA. No PTFA means no swimming pool at the school or any of the other things that we are able to financially support throughout the year.

So, this brings me to a question - to those of you not yet pro-actively involved in your PTFA - what contribution can you make in 2021?

I'd love to hear from fresh voices and have included my contact details at the bottom of this update for anyone who would like to talk to me about all things PTFA – I'm open to all ideas and I don't bite!

Take care of yourselves,

Glen Corbett
PTFA Chairman

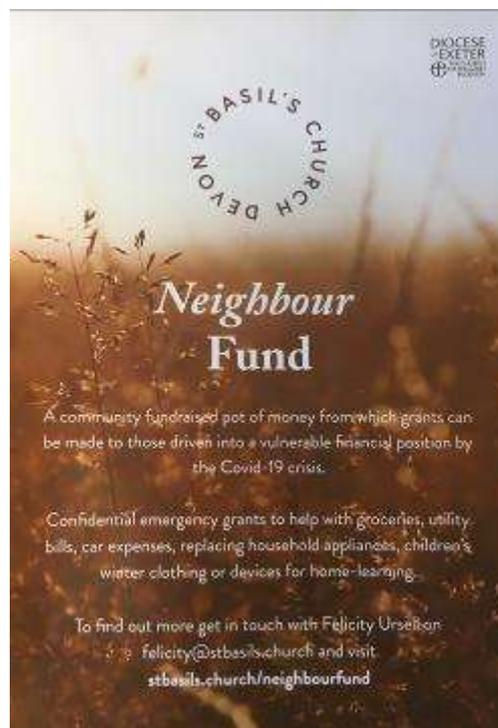
Community Support

The St Basil's Neighbour Fund is a community-fundraised pot of money from which grants can be made to local people driven into a vulnerable financial position by the Covid-19 crisis.

The fund will make one-off grants of up to £300 to individuals for immediate emergency needs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. For example if someone is unable to buy groceries, pay bills or prescriptions, fix a car, replace a household appliance, buy winter clothing for children or other similar needs arising from financial hardship. This grant can also be used to support the provision of IT equipment for children who are working remotely.

If you would like further information then you can find this by following the link below:

<https://www.stbasils.church/neighbourfund>



Office News



Start of the day

Can we remind you that Y2-Y6 children need to be at school between 8:30-8:40am and Nursery, YR & Y1 start their day at 8:50am. Please ensure your children are at school on time. If you need any support with this, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Lunches

Please remember to book your child's lunch using School Money. You can book by mid-night the night before.

Breakfast Club

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

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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dunsford@lapsw.org

🌐 <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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