



# 'Nurturing brilliance to catch our dream.'



22.03.24

## Attendance

93.4%

Dear Dunsford families,

### Stronger together

What a lovely week we have had at the academy. The teaching staff have been visiting our LAP schools as they complete their National Professional Qualifications, working alongside Trust colleagues. It was an absolute pleasure to get back into the classroom with Cedars, who were very patient with me. It is amazing to see what they complete in a day and how hard they work. I know lots of them have come in not feeling 100% too, so we are handing out as much TLC as we can to get them through.

We also completed a range of assessments this week, and pupils have worked very hard to do their best, displaying an amazing growth mindset by having a go and not feeling stressed while doing them. This is a significant skill in itself. Thanks for all the support in speedy sounds and regular reading you are doing at home; it is making a huge difference, with many pupils making amazing progress.



### A sense of belonging

Thank you all for your respectful and thought-provoking emails regarding our attendance reward. They were certainly received in the way you intended them, and we are a listening school. We believe you and your children are correct in pointing out the challenges, which we had not fully considered.

This week, I spoke with the school council and then with pupils in assembly to explore what we could do to ensure everyone feels valued for what they can control. The children suggested that receiving a sticker or certificate and competing for the 100% class cup would be acceptable for attendance. Children are currently voting on whether they would prefer non-uniform days linked to reading every night instead of something they cannot control, such as illness. We believe that some rules need to be attached to this, such as requiring parents or carers to sign off on the reading record. We understand that sometimes the family may have a special occasion or it was a very busy night, so the reading didn't happen. This is not a problem, but please let us know; we are happy to allow for some 'wiggle' room to support families.

Please share your thoughts on this; we like the children's idea, as it is something within their control. If their reading improves over the term, a non-uniform day will be the reward. We explained that this is the only homework we assign and is valuable preparation for transitions.



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### **Safeguarding**

Just a little reminder to ensure that you do not enter the school at the start of the day unless arrangements have been made with the teacher beforehand. If some are allowed entry while others are not, it creates an unfair situation. Additionally, since we are not aware of your presence and work begins immediately, it can be quite disruptive. For any important messages, please direct them to Mrs. Sinton, as she is amazing at promptly relaying them to us.

### **Realising the Possible**

It's that time of year again (well, earlier actually), when thanks to our brilliant PTFA, the pool will be opening. We're opening half a term earlier this year to really support our Dunsford swimmers. Thank you to the PTFA for organising the incredibly challenging logistics around this endeavour, as well as to all those who support its funding and upkeep. We are surrounded by so many amazing people, and we are incredibly grateful.

Over the next few months, we hope to call on some of you to support us with projects close to our hearts, including the outdoor classroom, pond area, reading initiatives, pool spotting, and perhaps even a career fair. With so many incredible people around us, it would be amazing to bring them together in one place and give children access to what might become their driving passion for the future. Having

Event	Class/Year	Date	Contact
Easter Service ( pupils only)	All	25th March (2.30pm)	Office
Cedars Class Performance	Cedars	Wednesday 27th March—Village Hall from 2.30pm	Mrs Baker
An Afternoon of Music at Dunsford	All (including Nursery)	Thursday 28th March— Village Hall from 2pm	Mrs Wood
Last Day of the Term	All	Thursday 28th March	Office



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## MAPLES

Spring is here!

### Understanding the World

In Maples, we have been talking about the changes that happen from winter to spring and discussing how the children themselves have changed since they were babies. Also, we have been comparing baby animals – lambs to sheep, chicks to chickens.

We have been on a walk around the school, exploring the signs of spring, observing how fast plants are sprouting and shooting up, and how the trees have buds and blossoms on them too. As we have been exploring, we have talked about caring for the natural world and some of the things we can do to look after our environment, such as putting litter in the bin, putting food out for the birds, and putting our snack fruit waste into the compost bin.

### Music – Expressive Arts and Design

We have been listening to the first movement of ‘Spring’ from the ‘Four Seasons’ by Antonio Vivaldi, which starts with birdsong and ends with a sudden Spring storm. The children have been encouraged to listen and talk about the music, expressing their feelings and responses.

Maple children have been practicing for their music performance. Using shakers, we have been thinking about rhythms and beats, quiet and loud, and ‘rest,’ which means STOP!

Next week, we will be celebrating Easter with some fun activities and stories.







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## **WILLOWS**

**Attendance**

**96%**



**Clementine**



**STAR of the WEEK**



**SPORTS STAR:**

**Charlotte**

Willows have been very lucky to look after some tadpoles over the last couple of weeks – they are getting bigger and although they have enjoyed eating cucumber they are almost ready to start eating fish food. We hope to see their back legs appear before releasing them into the school pond. The tadpoles have really made us interested in the lifecycle of frogs and toads.

In Science this week we tested different materials to find the best ‘space tether’ (to keep an astronaut connected to their spaceship). We tested marshmallows, cotton wool, hairbands and cloth, but nothing matched the stretch and strength of rubber bands and the rubber from washing up gloves!

PE really tested our balancing skills this week: After a ‘tag’ warm-up we had a bean bag race . . . but we had to balance the bean bag on our head, then our neck, then our back, then our FOOT!! It got harder and harder, but if we slowed down and took care we were able to finish every time.

We have been learning some percussion rhythms with Alice (music teacher) and we’re hoping you’ll be able to come along to our performance next week in the Village Hall (from 2pm on Thursday 28th March).

**Wednesdays:** PE - please come in PE kit for the day

**Thursdays:** Forest School - please bring the following to change in to: wellies, waterproof coat & trousers

**Fridays:** PE –please come in PE kit for the day





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**Austin**

**CEDARS**



**STAR of the WEEK**

**Attendance**

**92%**



**SPORTS STAR:**

**Cole & Alfie**

We've had such a great week here in Cedars!

Looks like spring is finally peeking through; we've been soaking up the sunshine during breaks and lunches out on the field. And in the afternoons, we've started a daily 'mile' run around the field to give everyone a bit of a breather. We're hoping to keep this up throughout the Summer term.

Our journey exploring climate zones is almost over, and it's been quite the adventure comparing climates from all around the world.

As a class, we've been busy practicing for our class production and the big school music performance. Don't forget to send your child in on Monday with their costume. If you run into any issues, just give the office a shout.

With the term winding down, we've been doing our termly assessments. It's been amazing to see each child giving it their all and making fantastic progress in reading, maths, and phonics. And don't forget to read with your child every day; it really makes a huge difference in their learning journey.

Our performance will be taking place at 2:45pm in the Village Hall on Wednesday. Seating will be available to parents and one other closer family member.

Our whole school music performance will be taking place at 2pm in the Village Hall on Thursday.

**Please note – no Forest School on the final day of term and could you please bring back all phonics books as we seem to be missing a few books from our sets!**





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**Tom**

**OAKS**



**STAR of the WEEK**

**Attendance**

**94%**



**SPORTS STAR:**

**Austin**

It has been a wonderful week in Oak class with the children working hard in all their lessons.

In Maths, the children have begun practising their 9 times table multiplication and division facts and are already demonstrating fluent recall of these.

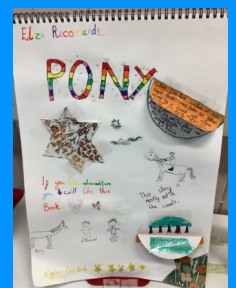
In Writing, the children have begun a new piece of writing based on the traditional fairytale, Hasel and Gretel. The class have been generating some lovely vocabulary to create some atmospheric descriptions of the woodland and the gingerbread house.

In Art, the children began thinking about how they can represent their culture and heritage in the background of their portraits. They studied the backgrounds in Frida Kahlo's portraits and discussed how she used colour and images to represent her Mexican heritage. The children will be creating their final art piece next week by bringing together the learning from this half term.

As scientists, the children spent time researching how they can grow a new plant from different parts of a parent plant. They have planned how they can carry out a fair test and will carry this out in their science lesson next week.

The class have been 'polishing' their ukulele performance ready for the music concert next week. They were sounding so wonderful rehearsing this week that the music drifted into Mr Grimley's office and he popped in for a little preview. We can't wait to perform for you all!

Children will be creating their final art piece on Tuesday next week; can you please send your child in with a mirror to support them in their drawing of a self-portrait.



**PE is on Wednesdays & Fridays.**

PE kits should be in school during the week and not wore to school on any day.

