



Dame Ellen Pinsent School

Autumn Term News Letter - 2023

Where children are happy; developing independence and confidence, so that they can be their very best.



Autumn Term News Letter - Monday 18th December 2023

Head Teacher Updates



Dear Parent/Carer,

As Christmas is approaching, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on a wonderful term and congratulate all our new children who have settled into school so well. This term across school we've had some fun learning opportunities in addition to our lessons, including:

- Sporting competitions including the Panathlon Challenge and the SEND Football at Villa
- Tennis and golf coaching
- Dance club
- Proud to be me Week
- Trips to Woods Farm, the Black Country Museum and Spotty Pots
- Our inflatable fun day with Seedlings classes
- Coffee Morning with parents

However, I think the amazing event of the term so far has to be our wonderful art gallery. Many of you got to see this during parents evening and went home with your child's art (after purchasing it from our gallery). It was an amazing event to celebrate the learning of all our children in our topic of the ½ term – Painters. This ½ term our topic is Victorian Christmas – I can't wait to celebrate this during our last day of term at our Victorian Fayre.

Staffing Updates

I am delighted to let you know that Miss Sherwin returns to school following her maternity leave and will become Badgers class teacher from January. I'm sure you will join with me in thanking Miss Morate for the amazing work she has done with the Badger's children this term, she has been extremely hard working and creative and I know the children will miss her. However, we are delighted Miss Morate will be staying with us at Dame Ellen, supporting teaching across the school.

As Mrs Maclean will begin her maternity leave during the spring term Otters will have a new class teacher from January, Mr Doxford. We are delighted to let you know that Mr Doxford, who is an experienced teacher of children with SEND and autism, joins the school in January and has already been working with us to ensure a smooth transition for the children. He currently runs a resource base and we know he will be an excellent additional to our school team.

In the meantime, I'd like to thank Mrs Maclean for her hard work this term with Otters children and we wish her all the best when her maternity leave starts during the Spring term.

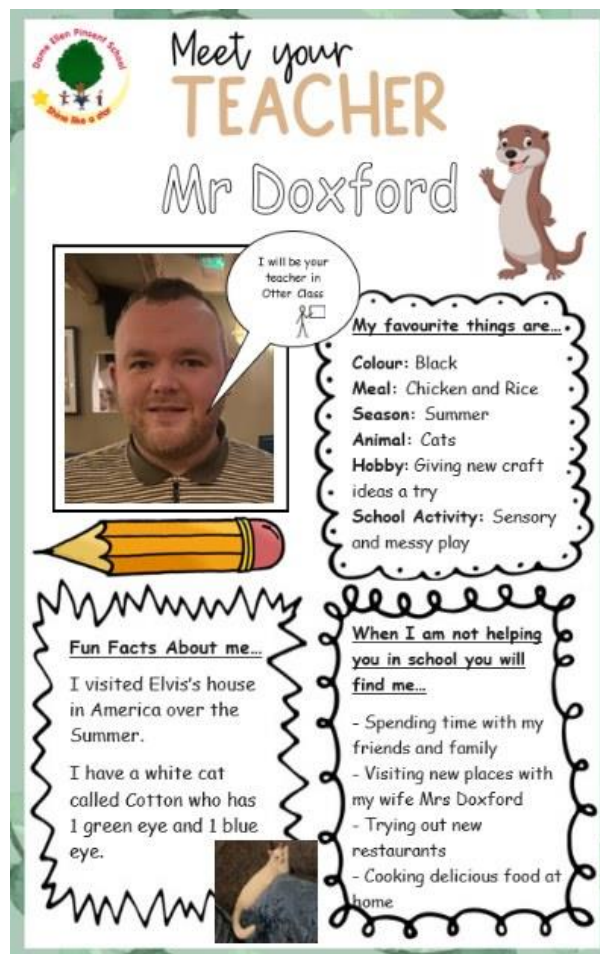
Also this term we'd like to say thanks to Rachel (TA, Grasshoppers) who leaves us; congratulations to Furzana (TA Bunnies) who has had a little baby boy; best wishes to Saima (TA Ladybirds and Wildcats) who has started her maternity leave. We've also welcomed some new TA's: Aneesa (Bunnies); Cameron (Cricket); Erika (Woodpeckers) – they've settled into Dame Ellen life extremely quickly and we are delighted to have them on board.

Finally, I'd like to wish all our Dame Ellen Pinsent families a peaceful Christmas time and we look forward to seeing you all in 2024. The children start back on Monday 8th January.

Best wishes to you all.

Mrs Fountain

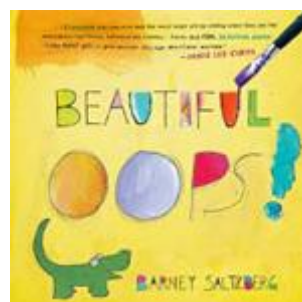
Meet your Teacher: Mr Doxford



Topic

It has been a wonderful term for topic at Dame Ellen. We started our new approach where the whole school have the same topic each half term which is approached in a way that is appropriate for each class.

Autumn Term 1

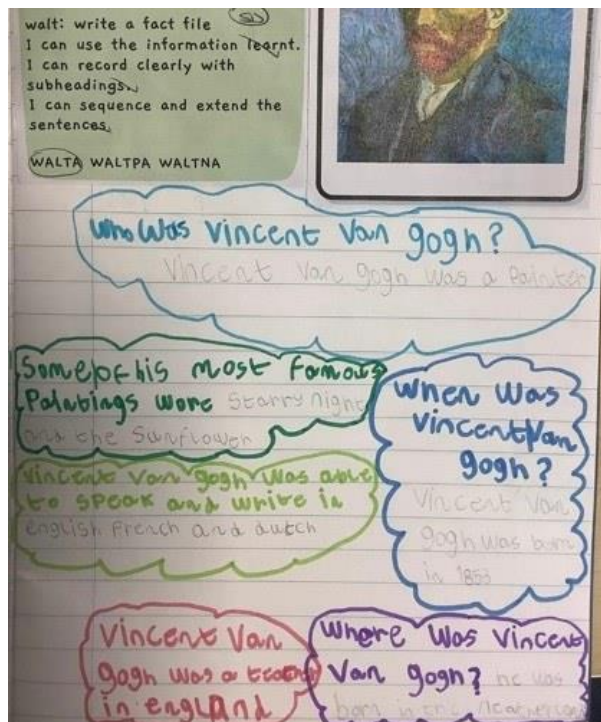
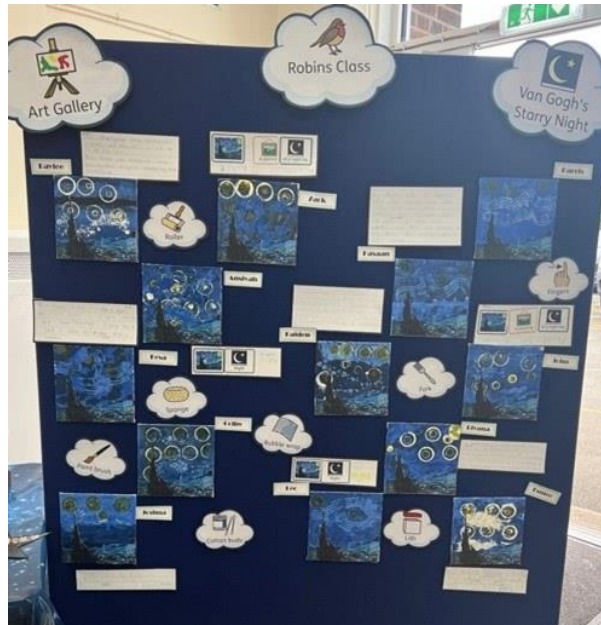




Our topic was 'Painters' which heavily focused on art and painting skills. Each class had a story book that was linked to an artist or painting, including 'Katie and the Starry Night', 'Katie and the Sunflowers' and 'The Great Paint' and 'A Beautiful Oops', to name but a few!

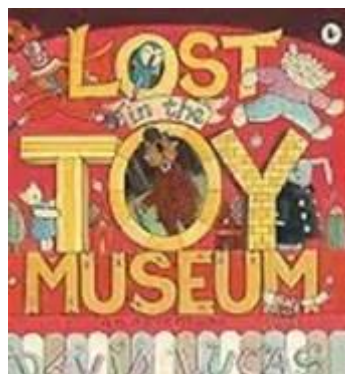
By the end of the half term each child painted a piece of art on canvas, which was then displayed in our whole school art gallery in the hall. It was a wonderfully moving experience and a fantastic way to share and celebrate our work with each other.





Autumn 2

Our topic for Autumn 2 is 'A Victorian Christmas', heavily focused on 'history' and learning about past times. Each class had a story book linked to the topic, including 'A Christmas Carol', 'Lost in the Toy Museum' and 'Oh, Christmas Tree'.



Children are working hard to begin to understand what life was like during Victorian times or to know that things were different 'long ago'. Some classes have been learning about Queen Victoria, whilst others have been learning about what they looked like when they were younger.

Everybody is now getting ready for our Victorian Christmas market on Friday 22nd December and we will share photos of this on Class Dojo and the school website.



We are hoping that as many children and staff as possible will dress up as Victorians to attend our market. Each class will be making Victorian themed items to sell at the Fayre and classes will be competing against each other to make the most profit. All profits made will go into each Class Fund and will be used as a treat later in the year.



In Spring we are looking forward to our new topic, 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' and welcoming in 'M&M Theatre Production' to perform this traditional tale. The topic is largely focused on performing arts and we are excited to share this with you after Christmas.

Pathways



Seedling Pathway

We are so proud with the fantastic start we have made with our Seedlings pathway this academic year. Bunnies, Ladybirds, Squirrels, and Woodpeckers children have thoroughly enjoyed the pathway and curriculum vision of 'learning through play'.

The class staff have been working hard to set up enabling environments to support the children with their learning. We have seen Bunnies classroom transform with areas of learning 'play zones' and a new village shop role play area. Woodpeckers have introduced a sensory, exploratory feel to their classroom whilst Ladybirds have created a new cosy library area. Squirrels have a new outdoor area to look forward to in the Spring term.

The children are all in the festive spirit, creating wonderful surprises to sell at this year's Christmas market and it has been wonderful to see the Seedling children practicing for their Christmas pathway assembly. We regularly come together as a pathway for our weekly Singing and Signing assembly and our new lunch time club 'Work out Wednesdays'.

A great Autumn term.

Mrs Maleady - Seedling Pathway Lead.





Orchard Pathway

The children in Orchard have had a wonderful autumn term, we started with the Painters topic in September and engaged well learning about a colour a week. We hope you liked our displays at the art gallery event, we love getting creative and messy! After returning from October half term, we have been exploring Victorian Christmas, all Orchard classes were lucky enough to visit a local Christmas tree farm. We touched and smelt the trees we even got to bring some cut offs back to school.





The children have thoroughly enjoyed swimming every week and are becoming more independent with their dressing/undressing skills, this links to our independence and community area of learning. We would really appreciate your support with this over the Christmas holidays, encouraging your children to be as independent as possible. This includes, washing hands, brushing teeth, pulling down trousers, sitting on the toilet, removing their nappy, putting rubbish in the bin amongst everything else.

In learning and problem solving this term, classes have been using scissors, glue and toy catalogues to create Christmas lists, children have been exploring the concept of big and small through presents and baubles. We have used different mark making tools to decorate trees and crackers, explored numbers through sensory trays and watching Christmas films.





We have been lucky to work with the school's Occupational therapist over the term to improve our knowledge and practice with sensory circuits. These circuits link with the sensory processing and emotional regulation area of learning. All of the children across the pathway take part with sensory circuits throughout the school day, these help them to regulate and engage their brains ready for learning. We use equipment such as gym balls, textured stepping stones, sensory scarves, trampettes and bean bags.

If you would like more information on this then please contact Miss Guest the pathway lead.





This term staff attended a training session all about intensive interaction, we are working hard with the children and their communication. In the area of social communication all classes are giving children opportunities throughout the day to communicate in a variety of different ways including PECs, Makaton, intensive interaction, Attention Autism and many more personalised strategies. Again, if you would like any further information on any of these please contact Miss Guest on class dojo.





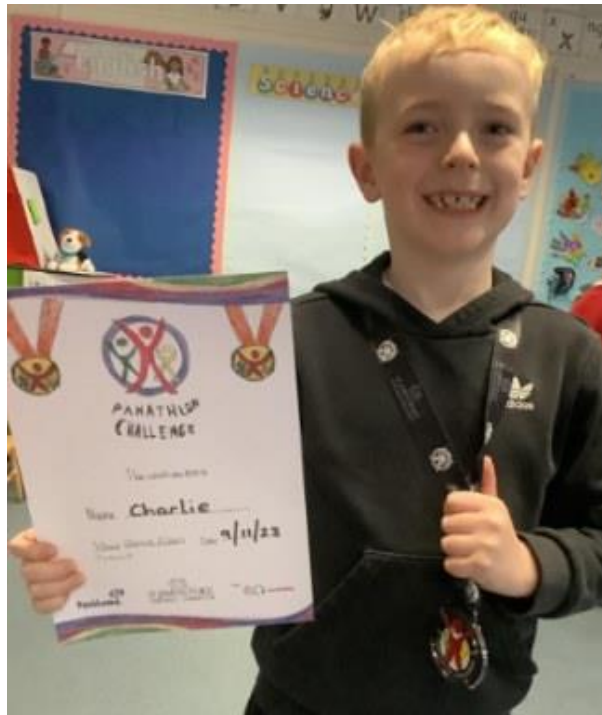
Woodlands Pathway

What an exciting first term we have had in Woodlands Pathway! Our cross-curricular ethos has provided some incredible learning opportunities for the children in Grasshoppers, Bumblebees, Wildcats, Chipmunks, Badgers and Robins which we are keen to share with you in this newsletter.

For our art-themed first half term topic, Chipmunks, Wildcats and Badgers were lucky enough to go on an exciting trip to Spotty Pots in Studley. The children designed a 6-inch tile to represent their personalities and then used special ceramic tile paint to bring their designs to life. After being heated in the kilns, the tiles were ready to bring home and I'm sure you can agree that the finished product looks great!



We have also been lucky to have had lots of sporting opportunities in Woodlands this term. Grasshoppers and Chipmunks have made great progress with their swimming skills during their weekly lessons, and Badgers class have enjoyed the opportunity to hone their golf skills on a Wednesday morning. Children from a range of Woodlands classes have also been selected for a football trip to Villa and the Panathlon Challenge where a few medals were won. Well done Woodlands!





Finally our current topic Victorian Christmas has been very engaging for all our children during the festive period. Children have been immersed in Christmas themed texts A Christmas Carol and Lost in the Toy Museum and have used these as a stimulus for some great writing. In the Woodlands Pathway, we have also been busy rehearsing for our Christmas Performance on 19th December at Holy Cross Church – we can't wait to show you our Christmas songs to retell the Nativity story.

Golden ticket winners





Well-done to all our Golden Ticket Winners this term, they have all done themselves proud by demonstrating and showing consistency in the schools ethos.

Freddy

Leo M

Stephen

Charlie

Josh

Esmee

Hassan

Zack

Bailey

Imaan

Maya

Liyana

Colby

Noah M

RKaya

Archie

Olly

George

Haniya

Naseem

Saad

Kindness Tree



We would like to give recognition to the following children who have shown special kindness to staff and / or their friends within the school. Details of the children's kindness are written onto a leaf and placed onto the Kindness Tree in reception.



"Kindness Is Showing Someone They Matter"

Parent Information

Dinner Money



- Dinner money from Monday 8th January 2024 - Friday 9th February = 25 days x £2.30 = **£57.50**
- Dinner money from Monday 19th February 2024 - Friday 22nd March = 25 days x £2.30 = **£57.50.**
- Total for Spring Term = **£ 115.00**

Other News

School Fund



A huge thank you to our parents', carers, and contacts for your donations to the schools 'School fund'. Your contributions are invaluable and allow us to purchase items that ordinarily we might not have

funding for. This year we have invested in a new stage for the school, ensuring that our children have the optimum platform to show you their wonderful assemblies and seasonal productions.

We would like to thank Bekki and Karen at Stage Systems for supporting the school with this purchase and for the kind donation of an additional backdrop.

Key Dates



- 15th December 2023 at 1.30pm - Orchards Pathway Christmas Workshop (Parents of Orchard pathway only - Otters, Deers and Crickets)
- 19th December at 10.00am - Carol Service at Holy Cross Church, Billesley (Parents of Woodlands pathway only - Bumblebees, Wildcats, Chipmunks, Badgers, Robins, Grasshoppers)
- 20th December at 2.00pm - Seedlings Christmas Performance (Parents of Seedlings pathway only - Bunnies, Ladybirds, Squirrels, Woodpeckers)
- 22nd December - Victorian Christmas Enterprise Fayre (school event only)
- 22nd December - Special Visit from Santa Claus! (school event only)
- 22nd December - Break up from school, normal time.
- 8th January 2024 - Back to school, normal time
- 11th January - Visiting Theatre performing Snow White (school event only)
- 17th January - Chinese New Year Assembly (parents of Chipmunks class only)
- 23rd January - Coffee morning for parents (invite to follow)
- 16th February - Break up for half term, normal time
- 26th February - Back to school, normal time
- 7th March - World Book Day (school event only)
- 22nd March - Break up for Easter break, normal time

Updated School Policies



PE, Assessment & Feedback, Behaviour for Learning, No Platform for Extremism - Model policy based on BCC, Capability Procedure (Teachers), Capability Procedure for Support Staff, Relationship & Health Education Policy (RHE), Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (including allegations against member of staff), Pupil Premium Policy, SEND Information and Local Offer, Code of Conduct for the Governing Board - Sept 2022, Physical Contact and Intimate Care Policy 2017, Managing Attendance Procedure Staff, Health & Safety and Welfare Policy, Admissions Policy, Accessibility Plan Policy, Charging and Remissions Policy.

Visit our school website [here](#) to view our published school policies.

For further information or to request documents that are not on our web pages including documented information translated into a language of your choice, please contact the school office.

School Governors



We have a strong Governing Body that represent and challenge the school well. They are immensely supportive, bringing a variety of skills and knowledge to further enhance our provision. To view the governors roles' please visit our school [website](#) for further details.



Hi All,

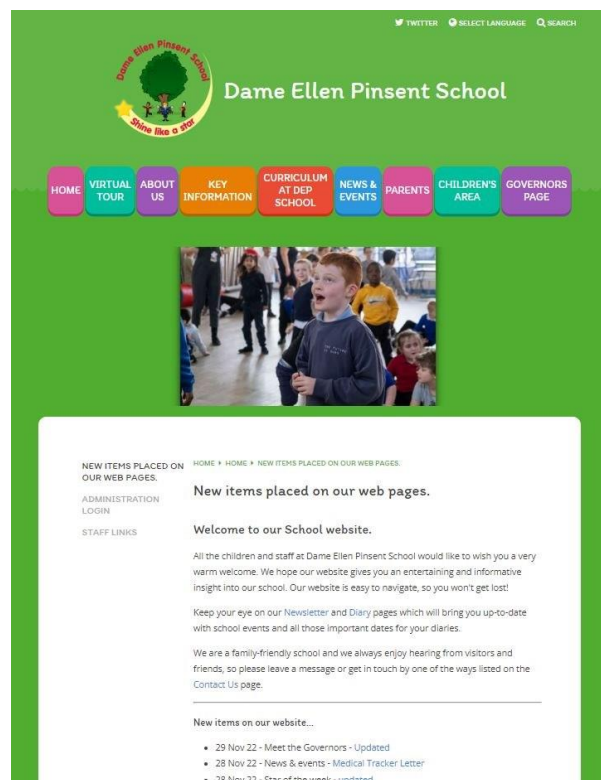
My name is Kelly Beckett and I have recently joined the Dame Ellen Pinsent Governing Body as a Co-opted Governor, which is my first role as a Governor. I have previous knowledge of the governance arrangement and management within schools having started my career as an auditor within Birmingham City Council's internal audit department (Birmingham Audit), working on a team that audited the Children, Young People and Families and Adults and Communities department with my focus area being auditing the 400+ schools that were funded through Birmingham Local Authority. The primary aim of this role was to ensure that schools were being appropriately managed with effective controls and governance arrangements in place, were meeting all regulatory requirements and provided a robust and effective education service to all pupils

I became governor as I wanted to support my local community through helping to ensure the best interests of children are being met whilst providing the vital education and skills required to improve outcomes for children at this stage of their lives. I hope to use the skills and knowledge I have acquired through my audit career to support the school to continue to provide and excellent education and supportive environment for all our pupils.

Regards

Kelly

School website



To keep up to date with actives on our school website visit [DEPS website](#) - **HOME > New items placed on our web pages.**

We are a family-friendly school and we always enjoy hearing from visitors and friends, so please get in touch by one of the ways listed on our School Contact information page.

If you require any of our documented information translated, please contact the school office.

School contact information

Dame Ellen Pinsent School

Ardencote Road

Birmingham

B13 0RW

Office hours are 8:00 to 4.45pm, outside of these times the answering machine will be in operation.

For all enquiries, call or email Elaine Eustace (Senior Office Manager)

Telephone: 0121 675 2487

Email address: enquiry@deps.ac

Contacts

Headteacher - Mrs Denise Fountain

Chair of Governors – Mr Andy Punch

Should you wish to contact the Headteacher or Chair of Governors by mail or phone, please use the main school address and telephone number (above)

For all general enquiries please contact the school office on the main school number above, or email enquiry@deps.ac

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Mrs Cater
- Mrs Fountain
- Miss Parker
- Mrs Gray
- Miss Whittaker

SENCO

- Mrs Cater
- Miss Guest (Assistant SENCO)

School opening hours:

Monday to Friday 09:10 to 15:10 = 31.4 hours

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint please contact the school office in the first instance on 0121 675 2487. Senior Office Manager, Elaine will take your details and get a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to return your call. Our full Complaints Procedure can be read on our [Policies page](#).

School parent apps

- [DEPS Twitter](#)
- [Class Dojo](#)
- [School Money / Teachers2Parents](#)

