

# The Opossum Federation Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we end this first term of the academic year, take a moment to reflect on our effort and successes of the Autumn term. For many there will have been moments of great pride as they achieved aspects of learning or negotiated social relationships in the classroom or playground. Most will have had challenges to overcome; these are part of the learning and growing process. We are proud of the resilience and determination shown by so many children as they have faced these individual challenges.

In the last week our communities have been treated to wonderful celebrations of the festive season which we sincerely hope that you enjoyed. We offer thanks to all the pupils, staff, parents and volunteers who worked so hard to produce the nativity story, carol/church services, winter bazaars and other activities across our federation. These events provide us with wonderful opportunities to come together to celebrate this season, which is significant for a large number of our families and across our country. Thank you also for your support of the Christmas Jumper Day appeal, which has enabled our federation to raise over £500.00 for Save the Children UK. Enriching Lives and Building Futures is part of our federation mission statement; your generous donations will help make that a reality for children across the world. The Christmas Jumper Day campaign website says: *Your jumper could be the difference between a hot meal or no meal. It can help bring essential healthcare, education, protection and food to millions of children around the world who are missing out on these basics. Your support can protect children from easily preventable yet still deadly diseases like malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia.* Concern for others and social responsibility are values central to our schools and which help to create global citizens of the future. Thank you for your support.

To those celebrating, we wish you a very happy Christmas and to all members of our federation, we hope you have a wonderful holiday. We look forward to welcoming you back in 2018 to continue our learning journey together.

**Prue Barnes-Kemp**  
**Executive Head Teacher**

**Lisa McIntyre**  
**Head of Federation**



# Autumn Events

## National Young Mathematicians Award

This year over 700 schools took part in the competition across the UK. The Dawlish team were selected to go through to Round 2. The organisers were extremely impressed with the perseverance the children showed in the face of some challenging problems and they demonstrated fantastic team work skills. At Round 2 the team competed against 300 schools. The organisers stated that the team showed fantastic systematic working out and communication as a team. Although they were not selected to progress to the next stage at Cambridge, we were incredibly proud of these young mathematicians and we would like to congratulate them on their achievement.

## Trips

Reception class children visited the local forest and used their senses to observe seasonal changes and spot colourful Autumn leaves and forest creatures. Thank you to all parents who were able to join us and take part in such meaningful learning.

As part of the Year 4 topic on Roman History they visited the British Museum to learn more about life in Roman Times. The museum's open glass displays provided the opportunity for the children to explore primary resources which included a variety of objects - coins, pottery, stonework, statues and writing tablets. They were able to use this to compare them to the objects we use today. From the museum's interactive presentation, children also discovered the evidence that objects provided about Romanisation in Britain after the Roman conquest and the impact that Romans had on Britain.

Children from Year 5 were engaged in some exciting learning opportunities. Linking to their topics learning "Scandinavia" and "Vikings: ruthless killers or peaceful settlers?", they visited the British Museum in order to increase their knowledge on those subjects by looking at primary sources.

They spent their day exploring different artefacts from the Viking era, taking notes and drawing sketches to use in their home learning projects. They also had the opportunity to explore other galleries to reinforce the knowledge acquired in previous years (Roman Empire, Ancient Egypt...) and to begin discovering the wonders of Ancient Greece (topic to be learnt during Spring 1).

Year 6 – Natural History Museum - During their visit they took part in a number of learning opportunities; exploring how the world has changed over time thus affecting the animals inhabiting it and observational drawings of birds. The children also explored adaptation and survival of the fittest-Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, which is linked to the Theory of Natural selection. *Quotes from Year 6 pupils - 'Evolution means how things have changed over hundreds of years' - 'I liked this trip, especially the competition we did with the bird beaks.'*

## Armistice Day – Thorpe Hall

On the 10<sup>th</sup> November at 11am the entire school gathered for a Remembrance Day ceremony, which was led by our newly inducted prefects. After the last post sounded, Thorpe Hall fell silent for 2 minutes to remember those who fought for our freedom.

The displays of homemade poppies around the school were a reminder of the importance of 11th November.





## Photography Project

Year 5 have taken part in a photography project with an artist in residence, Andy Rumball. The overall theme for the project was 'Democracy', and each class has focused on one underlying theme (Community, Equality, Humility, Courage and Belonging). The photography project develops opportunities for pupils to engage creatively with a theme, through ideas, concepts, symbols, words and most importantly images. The learning produced over the three weeks will be displayed in an exhibition entitled 'Chor;us' on January 24<sup>th</sup> at Raven Row Gallery.

Some of the children have shared their opinion on this project:

*"In my opinion, it was good because it helped our minds to explore the world around us from many perspectives."*

*"I think it helped us to get better at taking pictures and to express our ideas through them."*

*"I think that it was really fun because we got to do different types of things by using our imagination, like taking pictures through bottles and painting faces, and we enjoyed it all. Also, it was a really good opportunity. It is not easy to get a photographer from Berlin to come all the way to the school and we appreciate it."*

## A-Z of Values

Pupils from Y4 at Dawlish and Newport have been engaged in an Art project to further develop their understanding of what values mean to them and how values can link family, friends and communities together. These workshops have been led by artist Shiraz Bayjoo and the final artwork will be showcased in an exhibition, alongside the Y5 photography work.

## Children in Need

Thank you to everyone that donated to Children in Need, by wearing their pyjamas to school on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2017. The Federation raised a whopping **£1546.28**. Children in need provide grants to projects in the UK which focus on children and young people who are disadvantaged. They are local to people in all corners of the UK and support small and large organisations which empower children and extend their life choices. Children in Need currently supports 2,400 projects all across the UK. Well done to everyone that took part and contributed.

## Sporting News

It has been a very busy term at the Federation for PE and sports. Since September over 100 students from year 1-6 have represented their school in competitive sporting fixtures including football, volleyball, table tennis, rugby, netball, cross country and sports hall athletics. We have also held friendly fixtures at Newport with Dawlish School including football and volleyball and attended the Leyton Orient National League football tournament

Highlights this term include the following

- KS2 boys table tennis team reached the borough finals
- KS2 girls football team reached the semifinals with Taiyah (Year 6), Areebah (Year 5) and Lucy (Year 3) being our star players from Newport.
- Athletics 3 x KS1 boys from Newport, came in the top 10 out of 150 runners with Younes coming 5<sup>th</sup> and David 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Sports hall athletics - we had a number of good performances with Lujana (Year 5) winning the 2 lap sprint with her partner Eden (Year 5)- both from Newport



## Congratulations

### Young Mathematician Award

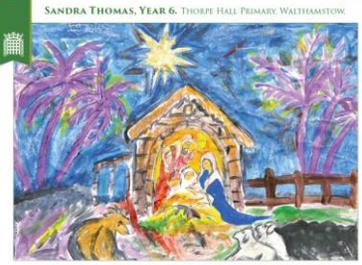
Well done to Umar, Sara, Vova and Ishita the Dawlish Young Mathematicians team who successfully completed Round 1 of this challenging and prestigious competition. We are all very proud of you.

### LAMDA

Pupils from Y5/6 at Newport school took their Level 3 Prose and Verse exam at the beginning of December. We look forward to hearing their results in the new year. Pupils are using the strategies learnt in LAMDA when presenting to audiences in class and assemblies.

### Christmas Card Competition

Congratulations to Sandra Thomas in Alder Class for winning the Christmas Card competition run by Iain Duncan Smith MP. Well done to all the children who produced such lovely artwork. We are very proud that a pupil from Thorpe Hall will have their artwork sent around the world on the front of a Christmas card. Iain Duncan Smith attended a special assembly to present Sandra with copies of the card and a certificate.



### Platinum Awards

The Platinum award is the highest award given to children for excellent social behaviour and learning. We are extremely proud to announce the recipients of the award this term; Ayzag (Grey), Elizabeth (Dambas), Adela (Jaune), Lara (Vert), Daniaal (Green), Alfie (Sosali), Kai (Sona), Cristain (Or), Yi (Dahab and Zayn (Dahab).

### New Arrival

Congratulations to Peter Calpa-Fleming (Y4 Newport) on the recent birth of his baby girl. We warmly welcome the new arrival to the Opossum pouch.



## Farewells

As the term ends we say thank you and farewell to staff who are moving on to new ventures. Thank you to Jean Howes and Alistair Pleasant from Thorpe Hall and Judith Connal and Toby Rochester from Newport for your work with our children and families; we offer our very best wishes for the future.

As family circumstances change, a number of children are also moving on to new schools. We hope that you will enjoy your new schools and take fond memories of the Opossum Federation on with you.



## Visitors and Consultancy

This term Prue Barnes-Kemp has continued working on consultancy projects across local authorities, which have included acting as a School Effectiveness Adviser and school improvement through developing high quality leadership programmes. Prue continues to lead the 'Heads in Waiting' programme for Essex County Council; working with the next generation of Headteachers. Newport welcomed twenty 'Heads in Waiting' in November as they visited classrooms and spoke with leaders and children. Prue has also been involved in leading the Camden Deputy Headteacher conference and has taken part in think-tank discussions based on assessment, ensuring that the practice within the Opossum Federation remains dynamic.

The NQT programme has completed its first term, with twelve NQTs from across the federation and partner schools, successfully completing their first term. Second year teachers have also met to continue their professional development through the 2<sup>nd</sup> year programme. The focus for their second session was to further develop their pedagogy of great classroom practice through observations. Both these programmes are valuable tools in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning across the federation.

Find us on:  
<http://www.dawlishprimary.co.uk>

Follow us on:  
@Dawlish\_School

Find us on:  
[www.newport.waltham.sc.h.uk](http://www.newport.waltham.sc.h.uk)

Follow us on:  
@NewportLeyton

## Save The Date

The following are dates to look out for in the upcoming Spring Term:

<b>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018</b>	First Day of Spring Term
<b>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Year 1&2 Learning Workshop Coffee Morning
<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Year 3 class trip
<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> &amp; 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Reception class Trip
<b>Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Year 5&6 Learning Workshop Coffee Morning
<b>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Reading Breakfast
<b>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	INSET Day – School Closure
<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018</b>	Year 5 class trip
<b>Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	‘Live Values’ Exhibition, Raven Row Gallery
<b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>	Federation Coffee Morning
<b>Friday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018</b>	Last day of Spring Term 1
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February</b>	First Day of Spring Term 2
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018</b>	Year 4 Class Trip
<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018</b>	World Book Day Reading Breakfast – Non Uniform
<b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>	Federation Coffee Morning
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018</b>	Open Evening – Early Closure
<b>Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018</b>	KS2 Disco
<b>Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>	<b>Nursery Easter Bonnet Parade</b>
<b>Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>	Easter Bonnet Parade/Last Day of Spring 2

View other important dates on the school website, such as planned education visits, by visiting each school website. Keep an eye out for trip reminder emails which will inform you of all planned trips and what arrangements you will need to make.

## Looking for More Information?

The school websites offer a wealth of information; you will find important dates, news updates, Home Learning projects, and links to other helpful websites. We encourage parents to regularly check the school websites for information, in particular ‘Important dates’ and ‘Home Learning Projects’. All the information you need to know from your child’s year group can be found in ‘Learning at Newport’.

## Winter Break Activities

Follow the link below for ideas on how to keep the family entertained over the Winter Break.

[https://www.primarytimes.net/east\\_london/](https://www.primarytimes.net/east_london/)

## Term Dates 2017-18

Autumn Term		
<b>1<sup>st</sup> September</b>	<b>INSET</b>	<b>School closed</b>
<b>28<sup>TH</sup> September</b>	<b>Open Evening</b> (Early closure 1.30pm)	
4 <sup>th</sup> September – 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Autumn Term 1	
<b>23<sup>rd</sup>- 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Half-term break</b>	<b>School closed</b>
30 <sup>th</sup> October – 20 <sup>th</sup> December	Autumn Term 2  Early finish on the last day of school (20 <sup>th</sup> December- 1:30pm)	
<b>24<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>INSET</b>	<b>School closed</b>
<b>20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	<b>Nursery Closed</b>	<b>Nursery Closed</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup> December -2<sup>nd</sup> January</b>	<b>Christmas break</b>	<b>School closed</b>

Spring Term		
3 <sup>rd</sup> January – 9 <sup>th</sup> February	Spring Term 1	
<b>19<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>INSET</b>	<b>School closed</b>
<b>12<sup>th</sup> February- 16<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<b>Half-term break</b>	<b>School closed</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> February – 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Spring Term 2  Early finish on the last day of school (1:30pm)	
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	<b>Open Evening</b> (Early closure 1.30pm)	
<b>22<sup>nd</sup> March</b>	<b>Nursery Closed for Open Evening</b>	<b>Nursery Closed</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Nursery Closed</b>	<b>Nursery Closed</b>
<b>29<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>INSET</b>	<b>School closed</b>
30 <sup>th</sup> March- 13 <sup>th</sup> April	<b>Easter break</b>	<b>School closed</b>

Summer Term		
16 <sup>th</sup> April- 25 <sup>th</sup> May	Summer Term 1	
<b>7<sup>th</sup> May</b>	<b>Bank Holiday</b>	<b>School closed</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June</b>	<b>Half-term break</b>	<b>School closed</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> June- 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Summer Term 2  Early finish on the last day of school (1:30pm)	
<b>12<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Open Evening</b> (Early closure 1.30pm)	
<b>13<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>INSET</b>	<b>School closed</b>