

The Opossum Federation Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Opossum Newsletter, we publish these at the end of each half term with the aim to provide a snapshot of the exciting learning experiences, extended school activities and news from our family of vibrant schools. Our federation is built on three core objectives; to enrich lives, unleash possibilities and build futures, these we aim to achieve by enabling all pupils to achieve academically and develop skills which will assist them to become successful citizens of the future.

Our varied curriculum is aimed at providing pupils with a rich and stimulating learning experience. Pupils are supported and encouraged to develop their curiosity and to become confident, articulate and positive members of the community. The extensive range of clubs, school trips and visits provide pupils with an array of opportunities beyond the classroom and allows them to build additional skills. This is supplemented by our half termly Home Learning Projects which are designed to help children develop their skills and knowledge outside of school with the support of their families. These projects also provide an opportunity for children to actively discuss with those at home what they have been learning about at school that half term.

We continue to work in close partnership across our family of schools in a variety of ways. Joint Pupil Parliament sessions enable the children to share their ideas and views on federation wide issues and assist in developing the Pupil Voice across our organisation. The children also share learning experiences, school journeys, sporting activities and extended school activities throughout the year which allows them the opportunity to develop as a pupil community. Staff also work and learn together across the organisation in a variety of ways such as the federation wide staff training programme, moderation sessions and shared half termly planning days where teachers from each year group in all four schools come together to review the upcoming half term's topic and share ideas and strategies to plan for the pupils' learning. Our staff and pupils benefit greatly through our collaborative approach, including development opportunities for staff and increased enrichment opportunities for our pupils.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our families who contributed to each school's Harvest Festival collections. All food received has been shared with local food banks who were very appreciative of these donations. We also wish to thank parents and carers for their patience with the roll out of ParentMail across the federation. We are aware that unforeseen glitches occurred but these have, on the whole, been resolved; please though do speak to the administration staff if you are still experiencing any difficulties.

This year promises to be yet another successful year at Opossum and we look forward to working with you and your children.

Have a restful and enjoyable half term break,

Prue Barnes-Kemp
Senior Executive Head Teacher

Lisa McIntyre
Executive Head Teacher



Autumn Events

Reception

This term Reception have been learning about stories and how they are structures with a beginning, middle and end. As part of this, Dawlish and Newport we went to visit Leyton Library and borrowed books for their classrooms. Oakhill and Thorpe Hall classes will be visiting their local libraries after half term. If you haven't been as a family....why not visit during the half term holidays.



Year 1 Local Park Visit

Year one had their first educational visit which was to our local park. As we walked around we identified the key features of the park. We saw a pond, a play park, some benches and lots of rubbish bins to keep the park tidy. When we walked past the pond we also saw lots of ducks and swans. We all had a great time exploring our local park.

We went on a school trip to Highams park. We had such a lovely time. It made me so happy because it was so fun. We had a checklist to see what we could find in the park." - Emily /Oakhill



Year 2 R.E.

This half term, Year 2 have been learning about Islam in R.E. The children then had the opportunity to visit either the Noor ul Islam mosque in Leyton or Woodford Mosque (Oakhill will visit in Autumn 2). Prior to the visit, the children spent R.E. day learning about importance of faith and looked at the different features of a mosque. During the visit to the mosque, the Imam and the manager explained to the children the importance of prayer, family and treating everyone with respect. The children enjoyed listening and sharing how special their faith is to them.



Year 3 Gurdwara

This half-term, the Year 3 classes at Dawlish and Newport had the opportunity to visit the local Gurdwara in Leyton to learn more about the Sikh religion. The children were very excited to learn all about the different Guru's and got to experience what happens in the Gurdwara on a daily basis. The children asked lots of interesting questions and got to see many interesting things such as the Holy Book and examples of the 5 K's of Sikhism. After all of the learning the children had the opportunity to sit together and eat food prepared by the Langar kitchen. This was a great opportunity to spend time together and talk about everything that they had learned.



Year 3 British Museum

This term, Year 3 have enjoyed learning about Ancient Egypt and have visited British Museum to find out about more. They had a fantastic time there and some were surprised to understand that mummies were once humans that had died a long time ago. "I thought mummies were aliens and were not real!" remarked Arif from Cagaar class. So we wrapped him up to show him! Classes also experienced a taste of Egyptian cuisine when they made Kushari, with rice, macaroni and lentils mixed together.

Year 4 Thames Walk



It was a crisp autumnal day when Year 4 walked along the River Thames for our topic, 'Where does all the water go?' We have been studying the physical and human features of the River Thames and the Amazon River. We used the opportunity see some of these features first hand. Our route took us from St Paul's, over the Millennium Bridge to the Tate Modern where we were entertained by excellent buskers as we ate our lunch. We then walked past the

Globe Theatre, the Golden Hinde, H.M.S. Belfast and finally to City Hall and Tower Bridge. It was a great day!

Year 5 St Paul's Cathedral

All Year 5 classes visited St Paul's Cathedral to support their learning about Christianity. As in previous visits, the staff at the cathedral commented on the children's excellent approach to learning, insightful questions and outstanding behaviour.

As we set off to St. Paul's Cathedral, we took the 275 bus to Woodford station and then we took the train from Woodford station to bank. It took a 5 minute walk to the Cathedral. When we got inside, a tour guide named Cathy took us to a small Chapel which was underneath the Cathedral. After Cathy told us the rules, she told us a bit about the Chapel. Then we went upstairs, where we saw some coffins of famous people. We also saw some pictures of them. Then we went up even more stairs and saw the brilliant dome. We were able to see a special staircase, which was in the movie Harry Potter. Then we went back into a room to eat our lunch. I loved learning about the Cathedral. By Mia H and Aliya C, Thorpe Hall

Reading Supper

The schools held a Reading Supper this half term, offering an opportunity for families to enjoy an evening story together over a cup of hot chocolate. Thank you to all families who came along, they remain a popular event.



On Wednesday October 2018 there was a reading supper where children and parents went to the school library at 5 o'clock. It was a fun day and lots of people were there. We had chocolate milkshakes and biscuits. Everyone read books and sat on comfy cushions.

We sat outside and played some games everyone read lots of fun books and everyone had an amazing time.

By Maia, Thorpe Hall

Year 6 Learning about Refugees

This half-term, the Year 6s have been learning about refugees – exploring the reasons behind why refugees flee their countries, and where they are heading. Classes participated in a workshop with the British Red Cross, learning about the definitions of types of different types of migrants (including asylum seekers, refugees and political migrants). Furthermore, pupils wrote persuasive letters to Members of Parliament- John Cryer, Iain Duncan Smith and Theresa May, to ask the government to take more action on helping those refugees in need around the world.

The Arts

We have been pleased to introduce weekly sessions with a LAMDA trained tutor at Oakhill and Thorpe Hall this year. We have been really excited to be able to offer opportunities for children to learn from specialists. LAMDA sessions are now in place for Years 2, 3 and 4 and Mr Vicente now teaches weekly music lessons to all classes from Year 1 to Year 6. This is an opportunity for children to explore new ways of learning and we have already seen some budding actors and musicians discover their previously unknown talents.



Black History Month

During October our assemblies have focused on the significant contributions that inspirational black people have made to the way we live. Each year group learnt about one person including Benjamin Zephaniah, Katherine Johnson and Septimus Severus and children from each class shared their learning with parents this week. A Year 6 pupil at Oakhill child said that he had been so inspired by Katherine Johnson's life that he wrote a poem about her in his own time to share with his class.



Sports Events

Rugby Festival Newport

The Year 3 and 4 pupils enjoyed an afternoon in the sunshine developing their rugby skills with help from the Monoux College young leaders.



Hockey Tournament Thorpe Hall

On the 2nd of October some of the year 5 s went to watch a hockey match. It was Belgium v England. When we got there it was full of people, we sat down on the grass and ate a snack. Then it was time to watch the match. We found our seats and sat down, they showed all the players we watched them have a knock about, and then the match started...

In the first half it was 1-1, whilst the game was happening we ate our lunch. At half time, the mascots came on the pitch and played. In the second half, GB went on to scoring 1 more goal and Belgium went on to scoring 2 more goals. At the end of the game they had a penalty shootout and Belgium ended up winning 2-4 it was a fun trip.

By Leah and Declan

Boys' Football Thorpe Hall

On Thursday 4th October the boys' football team went to a football tournament.



We went and wore a special kit and then we left and walked to goals. It took us about 20 minutes to arrive, once we arrived there, a man called out all of the groups and the schools in the groups.

Next it was our turn to play and unfortunately we lost 7-0. After that, we waited a couple of minutes until we played our next game.

We were up to play and drew 1-1 to Yardley. We waited a couple of minutes until our next game. Our last game was against Newport and we drew 2-2. Next, someone called out the teams who went through to the next round. After that, we ate our lunch and then walked back to school. This was the first time the new team had ever played together.

By Arthur

Cross Country - Oakhill

Oakhill received a special mention from the Waltham Forest Sports Network for sending the most runners to the KS1 cross country event at the Peter May Centre. The event was opened to all KS1 children and it was wonderful that so many chose to take part. Keep up the running!



Cooking Year 4 Newport

During our cooking lesson we were looking at all possible ways you can cook eggs. We also discussed which options are healthier and why.



Pupil Parliament

Members of the Pupil Parliament from each school came together for two mornings this half term to think about bullying. They explored the difference between bullying and unkind behaviour and reviewed the pupil charter which they produced last year. The group were supported by Camilla, a Psychotherapist and Play Therapist who was able to help the children to consider and organise their ideas. The Pupil Parliament are planning a number of activities for their classmates to take part in on our Anti Bullying Day on 12th November. This year's topic is 'Choose Respect'.

On Monday 1st October, the members of pupil parliament went on a trip to Dawlish Primary school. The other children from our Federation were also there. Together we discussed the topic of bullying. Everyone came up with great ideas to prevent this in our schools. It was good that we got to work with the other schools in our federation. Great job everyone!
By: Frankie and Jada, Thorpe Hall

Dawlish Pupil Parliament have been very busy this term getting ready for our UNICEF Outright Project. This exciting project is helping all the pupils at Dawlish to learn more about air pollution. Air pollution poses a direct threat to children's rights to health, to survive and to thrive in a clean and safe environment, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This year at Dawlish, our Pupil Parliament will be involved in measuring the air pollution in our local environment and speaking out about matters which affect them.



In this photo we can see Pupil Parliament installing their air pollution diffusion tubes. This is an easy way for children to see how bad air pollution in our local area. We will be sending the diffusion tube back to UNICEF after half term and we look forward to sharing our results.



Most children who attend Dawlish, Newport, Oakhill and Thorpe Hall schools live within 1km of their school. We encourage everyone who can to walk, cycle or scoot to school each day; this is a great way to improve fitness and to improve our air quality.



Thinking About Bullying Workshops

In addition to working with the Pupil Parliament representatives, Camilla also once again led sessions in all the schools for parents/carers to help develop understanding of what bullying means, how we can support children who experience it and those who perpetrate it. Thank you to the small number who attended these sessions, we were pleased to hear that you found it useful.



School Nurse drop-ins

Each half-term there is an opportunity for parents to come along to NHS nurse drop-in session to discuss any health and well-being related issues or questions they have in regards to their child/children. Check your school bulletin for dates and times. Email reminders will always be sent to parents informing them of the upcoming drop-in sessions. Be on the lookout!



Congratulations

New Arrivals

We would like to congratulate Anne Norton (Dawlish) and Imola Batki Racz (Newport) on the arrival of their new-borns - to Anne a baby girl and Imola, a baby boy. We welcome these new additions to the Opossum pouch. Kate Roughley (Newport) left us at the end of last week to commence her Maternity Leave and we wish her well in this new chapter of her life.

We have also welcomed many new children, families and staff to the Opossum Federation; thank you to the wider school communities for making them all feel welcome. The new Nursery and Reception class children have settled in very well and are already busy learning. Children who have joined classes across the school have also settled in quickly and are already well and truly part of their class teams.

We welcome you all and hope that your time at the Opossum Federation will help you to be great and happy learners.

Awards

Congratulations to Dawlish Primary School, which has been awarded the Gold Games Mark for provision and participation in PE. The assessors noted:

'The sport offer is supplemented by a strong leadership programme in which the Sports Ambassadors are heavily involved in the planning and organising of School Games, and students are given opportunities to learn to lead during both curriculum PE and extracurricular activities. The Sports Ambassadors attend the School Sports Leadership Conference for the Borough offered by the SSP.'

Well done to everyone at Dawlish and thanks to Mr Nelson who also supported the application process.

Visitors

We welcomed Cllr Rosalind Dore at Oakhill and Thorpe Hall and Cllr Grace Williams to Dawlish this half term. The councillors toured the schools and had an opportunity to talk about learning with some of the children.

Save The Date

A number of exciting events and important dates are coming up next half term. Keep a close eye on your school website and the weekly bulletins to find dates for your diary.

Friday 23 November - All schools will be closed to children as this is a staff training (INSET) day.

Friday 14th December – School Christmas Dinner for children, Christmas Jumper Day and Winter Bazaar for all schools, details to follow

KS2 Saturday School will commence for children in all schools in Autumn 2.

Communication

This term we made the transition to Parentmail. This platform enables us to communicate and manage many aspects of school life, for example - school dinners, trips, letters, booking open evening, using one system. We understand that some parents experienced frustration with the new system and that there have been some 'teething problems'. These are almost all now resolved and we thank you for your patience and understanding. Our IT technician runs a Cyber Café at each school regularly and can help parents who are having any difficulty using the system. Please ask for an appointment at your school office if you would like support.

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 year group pages.

Autumn Half-Term Activities

Looking for fun local events and activities over the Autumn half-term? Please follow this link to the Waltham Forest council events page <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/events>

Find us on:
www.dawlishprimary.co.uk

Find us on:
www.newport.waltham.sch.uk

Find us on:
www.oakhillschool.org.uk

Find us on:
www.thorpehallprimary.com

Find us on:
www.opossumed.org

Term Dates 2018-19

Autumn Term		
3 rd September – 19 th October	Autumn term 1	
27th September 2018	Open Evening – Early closure 1:30pm	
28th September 2018	INSET Day	School closed
22nd October – 26th October	Half term break	
29 th October – 21 st December	Autumn term 2 Closure times on the last day of term- Newport & Dawlish (1:30pm) Oakhill (3:25pm)	School closed
23rd November 2018	INSET	School closed
21st December	Nursery Closed	Nursery Closed
24th December – 4th January	Christmas break	School closed
Spring Term		
7 th January – 15 th February	Spring term 1	
25th January 2019	INSET	School closed
18th February- 22th February	Half term break	School closed
25 th February – 5 th April	Spring 2 Closure on the last day of term- Newport & Dawlish (1:30pm) Oakhill (3:25pm) ,	
8 th April – 22 nd April	Easter break	School closed
Summer Term		
23 rd April- 24 th May	Summer term 1	
6th May	Bank Holiday	School closed
27th May – 31st May	Half term break	School closed
3 rd June- 19 th July	Summer term 2 Closure times on the last day of term- Newport & Dawlish (1:30pm) Oakhill (3:25pm)	
22nd July	INSET	School closed
23rd July	INSET	School closed