

# Happy Half Term



Our school Book Week and World Book Day is coming up. All children are encouraged to dress up as their favourite character on **Thursday 2nd March**. There will be a parade at the beginning of the day that you are invited to stay for. Please don't feel that you need to go out and buy and outfit though as home made / recycled ones are wonderful.

Congratulations to the gymnasts that took part at the county event at Danes Camp last week.



## Healthier Child Programme

We have been regularly sharing information about how we can have a happy and healthy school. Focus has been on lunch boxes, our hot school meals, consumption of water, healthy snacks etc. Please be reminded that children should not be bringing in chocolate bars and fizzy drinks in lunch boxes. Our work has been supported the Paul Evans — Healthy Child Advisor.

We are delighted that Paul has agreed to hold a parent/carer meeting on **Thursday 9th March** at 2.30pm to talk about the project and how our initiatives fit into the government's drive for healthier schools. Please put the date in the diaries if you can.

## Safer Internet Day

Thank you to those of you that were able to attend the presentations led by Mr Russell on Safer Internet Day. Attached to this letter, you will find lots of information about keeping your children safe online and conversation starters.

## Film Club

We will be showing the postponed film 'The Secret Life of Pets' (U) on Thursday **23rd February**, 3.15pm -5.00pm. If your child would like a healthy snack/drink during the film, we will be providing refreshments (popcorn and juice/water). We would ask that you pay £1 via ParentMail (watch out for the mail after the half term break) so that we can order these snacks in advance. **If you have already paid your money because of the previously postponed date, you do not need to pay anything.**



## Diary dates

Year 6 Parent meeting :  
Tuesday 21st February at  
2.30pm and repeated at 6.30pm  
Parents' Evenings : Monday 27th  
and Tuesday 28th February.  
You will be able to book time  
slots as we return next week.

Parent volunteers wanted for a  
library upgrade day on **Friday  
10th March**. If you have a free  
hour or two to help out, please  
let us know. Many hands make  
light work!



## #BNTODPS

Up until this point, we have had a very active Anti-bullying Committee and programme within the school, but this is about to change. Following feedback from the PAG, we have now renamed! Thank you Owen Gower (Y6) for coming up with our new name - BNTO (Be Nice To Others).

As we return on **Monday 20th February** we will be holding a BNTO Awareness Day and we are delighted that Ben Smith from 401 Challenge will be joining us - (<http://www.the401challenge.co.uk/>) to lead an assembly for Y2-6 children. FS and Year 1 will also be having a special assembly with writing and art/drama activities running all day.

**We will be having a whole school parade sharing our art work at 3.00pm on the top playground if parents/carers would like to come down a little early to join us.**

## Optional Competition

Since September, we have been following the International Primary Curriculum. This curriculum not only covers all curriculum areas such as geography, history, music etc but each lesson focuses on key values. These values support our children becoming life-long learners as well as well-rounded members of society. These values are:

**Enquiry Adaptability Resilience  
Principled Communication Thoughtfulness  
Cooperation Respect**

To introduce these values, we will be focusing on them in assemblies and PSHE sessions to ensure that the children understand them and their importance. We would also like to create huge banners for the main hall to illustrate each value. This is where the competition begins:

We would like the children to design a poster for one of the values.

The best poster or posters will be made into banners for the school hall.

The poster should be on A4 sized paper, preferably portrait and in felt-tip colour.

The posters should be handed in to the office by Friday 24th February.

The School Council will decide the winners.

I have allocated a value to each year group however, if your family would like to work together on a value, you may choose either of their year group's allocations.

Foundation Stage Cooperation or Communication

Year 1 Cooperation or Communication

Year 2 Thoughtfulness

Year 3 Enquiry

Year 4 Adaptability

Year 5 Resilience

Year 6 Principled or Respect

Further information about the different values if available on ParentMail.

Have a lovely, creative holiday!

Many thanks, Mrs Ely

## SUMMER FETE

**A change from the original date**

**This will now be after school / evening**

**Friday 7th July**

**Keep the date free and spread the word**

In an after school writing club with Mrs Angela Smith, a group of children have been working on 500 word stories for a national competition. Enjoy a sample of their creative writing.

#### Flashback by Emily Rodrigo

I looked over at my big sister. She was hunched uncomfortably against the wall, staring into the inky black water flowing gently underneath the bridge. It was one minute to midnight.

I scrunched my eyes up tightly and waited for the bold booms of Big Ben to celebrate the New Year. Two months now. Two months on the desolate streets of London. People stare at us like a piece of litter that they want to kick out of their way.

As soon as I closed my eyes, I knew it would be difficult to keep my New Year's resolution: to be grateful for what I have. Just then a tiny patterned snowflake drifted calmly onto the ground, finally followed by many others. They created a thin, white blanket over London, making it look magical and mysterious. I closed my eyes. The snow reminded me of the wisps of cotton back at the factory in Syria. My parents worked hard, 24/6, just having Friday off. It was all we had, our dilapidated old cotton factory and each other.

Suddenly everything changed. At first I did not understand what was happening. Being only 9, I wouldn't would I? My parents only said, 'Amira, we're going somewhere safe, where we will all be together'. Then I saw the devastation, bombs, guns. Suddenly I knew what was happening. War. Some people fled, some stayed, some went to refugee camps, but we went to London.

Dad described London as bright, sunny and magical. It is not. The grey, dull sky. The murky, chilling river, pale, expressionless faces that never smile, the toxic smell of cigarettes and graffiti on every wall possible.

Underneath the bridge was some graffiti of colourful swirls, shapes, all connecting a man and a woman. There was a big pink love heart in the middle. It reminded me of mum and dad. If you haven't guessed already, my parents are dead. The gunshots, screams of horror still echo inside my brain, each time sending a shudder down my spine making me feel uncomfortable.

I look over at my sister and then close my eyes once more. I loved our old house. It was somewhere I felt safe. And my school also. And now it's gone. I wanted to be a doctor, save people's lives. I say 'wanted' because now all my dreams will probably never come true. It feels a waste to live my life every day, an exact repeat of the last. I wonder if anything will ever change ...

Just then, my sister stirred from her deep sleep and murmured something quietly. Her gentle eyes blinked open, great dark bags underneath from restless, sleepless nights. Her hazelnut hair, strands that hadn't been brushed for weeks.

Big Ben strikes. Midnight. Fireworks fill the dull cloudy sky. Bright colourful explosions. I turn to my sister. She smiles. I smile back and we share a moment of happiness and joy. Pure delight fills the air, suddenly making everything seem perfect ...

#### 500 word competition entry by Elise Young

##### Life of a lost Elephant

Sunny was the night a chilly breeze filled the air. Emma and her parents had just arrived on the African plain. They found their cabin easily and quickly set up the mosquito nets. Emma was the first in bed because she wanted to explore in the morning.

Emma was woken by a loud wail of an elephant, she rolled over, mum and dad were still asleep. She put on her shoes and took her football outside. It was magnificent, the beautiful elephant stood tall in front of her. She knew to keep her distance as she didn't want to agitate it.

Hesitantly, she passed the ball to it. It looked at the ball with wonder, her eyes filled with curiosity. She snuffled it with her trunk, her front right leg lifted and she passed the ball back. Emma was amazed!

She had to get closer but how. Slowly, she knelt down and picked the ball up, she held her hand out towards the elephant. Before Emma knew what was happening the elephant had snatched the ball and ran off.

She couldn't lose that ball it was hers. She sprinted after the elephant just managing to catch up. The elephant stopped. It gave Emma the ball and used her trunk to put her on its back. Emma was petrified, then the elephant started to run. She screamed but they had gone so far that no one could hear.

She held on for dear life, but gradually loosened her grip. She started to enjoy it and sat up. Then she realized something, she was lost and had no way to contact anyone. She started to cry her tears fell onto the elephant, I seemed to realize and came to a halt.

Its trunk reached for Emma's hand and curled around it. That's when she realized it was lost too. Somehow this cheered her up, she wiped away her tears and rested on the elephant. Suddenly, the elephant put Emma back on its back and ran. In the distance Emma saw a forest and could tell that was where they were heading.

A bullet shot past her head as she turned round, there were two figures about 300m away running towards them with guns in their hands. She urged the elephant on.

There was lots of trumpeting but not from Maya (that's what she called it). She looked behind her and saw a stampede of elephants running over the two figures. Unfortunately, they ran away from her and Maya. Maya stopped running and plodded over to a stream as if nothing had happened.

Maya started taking long sips when an explosion of water shot in the air and a snapping crocodile attacked Maya, she swiped her trunk grabbed Emma and ran. Emma knew that Maya had been through this many times.

Beeep! Emma looked up and saw her mum in a van. They drove back to the cabin. After Maya was seen to by a professional. A herd onsite was now her family.



Friends of Deanshanger Library will be holding a drop in Valentines session on Thursday 16th Feb 3.00pm-5.00pm at Deanshanger Library.

Crafts using heart shapes.

Danish Heart Decorations.

Story Time with a loving theme.

All children up to 12 years welcome.

Under 8's need adult accompaniment.

It's free!



We are pleased to have a new suggestion box outside the main entrance for all your ideas and comments. These can be anonymous or named—your choice. Please also continue to share openly in person or via emails.

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