



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2022

## GOVERNOR NEWS

### *Attendance*

*The attendance for December was 88.1%.*

## **NEWS AND INFORMATION**

### **MESSAGE FROM MR ARCHER, ACTING HEADTEACHER**

Happy new year to everyone in the Robert Drake community! We have returned and got straight back into our learning for all pupils, giving them access to a fantastic curriculum that challenges and helps them to progress the skills and knowledge that they will need for life. It has been brilliant to be a part of the community for a few weeks, and I can confirm that I have been asked to continue to support the school in the absence of Miss Redpath and Mrs Coe until 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

I wanted to thank you all for your support of the children over recent weeks, following the guidance that is again changing frequently, and testing where necessary to ensure that asymptomatic cases of COVID are identified and dealt with through isolation. It is a challenging and constantly evolving time for all schools, and I am grateful for all you do as parents and carers to contribute to a positive school life for all our pupils, ensuring that they are attending school regularly and learning.

It is a short half term, but an important one for our pupils. We will, of course, continue to do everything we can to support them to focus and concentrate on their learning and give them the best experience and opportunities in school and are grateful to you all for your role in supporting us. It is appreciated.

### **BREAKFAST AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB**

Before Christmas, a survey was sent out regarding interest in a **Breakfast and After School Club**. Thanks to everyone who completed it. Initial analysis has been completed and shared with our Governors, who will discuss it at their next meeting. As soon as there is further feedback, it will be shared through the newsletter.

### **CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING LEARNING EVENTS**

There are a few events we are holding to enrich the learning of all pupils that I wanted to share with you – this week has been **handwriting week** when we focus on improving handwriting through revisiting targets and really focussing on them in our writing. I have been extremely careful when writing with the pupils to make sure my own handwriting is at the standard required!

On Friday next week (**28<sup>th</sup> January**), we will hold a **Random Acts of Kindness Day** for the whole school. It really is as simple as it sounds – everyone in the school community does kind things because this impacts positively on everyone's wellbeing and starts habits that last far beyond the day itself. The acts of kindness do not need to be complicated, difficult, or expensive. Examples might be being polite, asking how someone is, saying something positive about someone, drawing a picture or making a card as a gift, offering to help someone, playing with someone if they are on their own... The effect of everybody doing kind things across the entire day is

such that these are always among the best days at school for everyone, so it would be brilliant if pupils could start thinking about what they will do on **28<sup>th</sup> January**.

There will be a new **TT Rockstars Battle of the Bands** during the week commencing **31<sup>st</sup> January 2022**, so we are encouraging all pupils to get onto TT Rockstars and really practice those multiplication and division skills, helping their teams in the process. To add to the maths fun, we will have a TT Rockstars dress up day on **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022**. The idea is to come dressed as a rockstar to celebrate the battle of the bands, and there will be opportunities to practice the skills they have learnt in class.



As Early Years (Reception Classes) children have not yet started using TT Rockstars we would like them to dress up as their favourite Numberblocks character. This could be as simple as dressing in the colour of their favourite Numberblock. Please see the attached picture. We hope that the opportunity to dress up and celebrate maths for the day will really enthuse all the pupils and be a day to remember. I am hoping to see staff get involved in the dressing up too...

### ***CELEBRATION ASSEMBLIES***

**Celebration Assemblies** are up and running, and every Friday the entire school meets virtually to congratulate those pupils who have been chosen by their class teacher for a merit, and to reward the best attendance in the school with our attendance mascot, who the children have named Geraldine. It is brilliant to see just how happy each class is to win the attendance award – one teacher who is clearly extremely competitive does a lap of the class if they win!

### ***HOUSE WINNERS***

The House team point winners for Autumn Term were the Dragons with an amazing 511 points. Well done to all the pupils on achieving such a great score!



### ***ONLINE SAFETY***

Finally, on **8<sup>th</sup> February 2022** we will take part in **National Safer Internet Day**. All pupils will take part in age-appropriate activities designed to help keep them safe when using technology, which is part of our approach to safeguarding all pupils. Thank you all for actively monitoring your own children's online activities too, one of the key actions parents can take to ensure safe use of the internet.

## ***INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS***

Please be advised that individual photographs are due to be taken in school on **Tuesday 8th February 2022**. A letter will be circulated to parents and carers shortly.

## ***SCHOOL CLOSURE NOTIFICATION***

If the school has to close for any reason, ie, adverse weather conditions, notification will be put on the school website and parents and carers will be sent a message via ParentMail. In addition, a list of closed schools will appear on the Essex County Council website at the following link:

<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>

## ***CONTACT DETAILS—TO BE KEPT UPDATED***

In the event that your contact details change, please ensure that you complete a new contact detail form and send it in to the Main Office. Please call or e-mail the school office if you need a copy of the form to complete.

## ***PUPIL PREMIUM / FREE SCHOOL MEALS***

Pupil Premium Funding is allocated to children from families who are currently known to be eligible for free school meals and children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months.

You may register your child for Free School Meals if you receive a range of benefits with qualifying conditions such as Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance and Child Tax Credit (provided your annual income does not exceed £16,190), Working Tax Credit run-on, and Universal Credit.

If you think you may be eligible, registering is quick and easy.

**If your child is in Year 2 or below**, please call the School Office and we will send you through a form to complete.

**If your child is in Years 3—6**, Essex County Council has an online application form on their website: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/free-school-meals>.

If you meet the eligibility criteria, registering for Free School Meals will bring more money to the school which will benefit your child. Our Pupil Premium Funding is used to provide support for pupils in a number of ways. As well as enabling your child to have the option of a free, healthy meal at lunchtime, other benefits may also be available for registered children, such as help with the cost of school trips. Further details are available on the school website.

Please be assured that registering for Free School Meals is completely confidential. Please contact the school office if you have any questions or require help with your application.

## ***WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING***

### ***CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES***

It was amazing to have parents and carers back on the school grounds to enjoy the performances of each class. The pupils worked hard to make the performances as polished as possible and performing outside really added a lovely atmosphere to the events.



It even allowed the pupils to shine despite having to sing over the traffic in Church Road! The series of performances really did make it suddenly feel very Christmassy around the school and set the scene for what I hope was a lovely break for everyone.

### ***SCHOOL COUNCIL***

The School Council had their meeting last week and discussed where to plant 50 trees that have been donated to the school by the Woodland Trust. They also discussed Comic Relief, which this year takes place on **22nd March 2022**—details to be circulated closer to the day.

### ***TERM HOLIDAY DATES***

**Monday 14 February to Friday 18 February 2022—half term**

**Monday 4 April to Monday 18 April 2022—Easter holiday**

**Monday 2 May 2022—Bank Holiday**

**Monday 23 May to Friday 3 June 2022—half term**

**Friday 8 July 2022—non pupil day**

**Friday 22 July 2022 —first day of summer holiday**

**PLEASE NOTE ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

**ROBERT DRAKE IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL**



The Governing Body of The Robert Drake Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.