



THE ROBERT DRAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL

# NEWSLETTER

*FEBRUARY 2022*

## *NEWS AND INFORMATION*

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

**Welcome back** after half term to everyone in the Robert Drake community. Our pupils are back, picking up where they left off, working hard, and engaging in the fantastic learning opportunities across our broad, exciting curriculum.

Firstly, a thank you. **The guidance for living with COVID-19 is changing**, which means we must change our risk assessments and operational procedures again. I will update you of the details separately, but felt it was an appropriate time to thank you all for your endeavours to reduce and restrict the transmission of COVID-19 over the past two years. Going forward, it is through the continued vigilance of every member of our school community to keep everybody safe and healthy that we will be able to operate effectively and give our children the best education as the restrictions we have become used to are lifted. Thank you for your continued efforts and support.

One element that has not changed is the need to test and isolate if symptoms of COVID-19 are evident, and the DFE (Department for Education) have issued this advice: -

#### ***Should parents send their child to school if they think they have COVID-19?***

*If a child has any of the main symptoms or a positive test result, the public health advice remains unchanged and is to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Anyone with any of the main COVID-19 symptoms should order a test and is advised to stay at home while waiting for the result. If they test positive, they are advised to follow public health advice.*

For clarity, schools have been advised to refuse entry to any confirmed or suspected positive case of COVID-19.

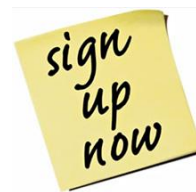
### *Educational School Trips*

One of the positives of lifting restrictions is that the school will move back towards some of the enrichment activities that have been reduced in recent years. As such, we are now starting to plan **educational trips** including Barleylands for EYFS, Stubbers for Year 5, Thorndon Country Park for Lower KS2, Hedingham for KS1 and the residential trip to Stubbers for Year 6. More details will follow separately, but I thought it was worth sharing that as the country opens back up, Robert Drake would take full advantage and enhance all our pupils experience.

### *Fundraising*

Speaking of enrichment, please take a moment to look at the separate **Fundraisers events** information that was sent with this newsletter. The Fundraisers do a *fantastic* job of raising money that all goes to resources for pupils, ranging from new equipment, new reading books, prizes for achievements, gifts to pupils... This is always done through events designed to be a positive experience for the pupils too, and I have seen first-hand how excited the pupils were to attend the Christmas bazaar as an example.

Thanks to everyone for their contributions on **non-uniform and cake day** at the end of the last half term. This generosity raised a fantastic £151.50 for resources for the school – THANK YOU!



An easy new way of contributing to the fundraising at the school is through easyfundraising...

Robert Drake Primary School Fundraisers are now registered with easyfundraising, which means you can raise **FREE** donations for us every time you shop online. Over 6,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!

These donations really mount up and make a BIG difference to us, so we'd really appreciate it if you could take a moment to sign up and support us. It's completely FREE and only takes a moment.

You can find our easyfundraising page by clicking on the link below: -

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/robertdrakepsf/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=gs-e1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/robertdrakepsf/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_medium=email&utm_content=gs-e1)

**Thank you so much!**

### *Breakfast and After School Club*

Before Christmas, a survey was sent out regarding potential interest in a **Breakfast and After School Club**. A paper summarising the results was shared with Governors last month, who are going to form a working party to look at options for how, when (and if) it is feasible for such a facility to be set up at Robert Drake. As soon as there is more news to share on this development, you'll hear it here first. Thanks again for all those who showed interest and completed the survey.

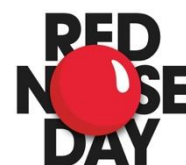
### *School Events*



Some other events we are holding to enrich the learning of all pupils that I wanted to share with you – next week sees **World Book Day on 3 March 2022** – information has already been shared about this eagerly awaited annual event, and as it's a dressing up opportunity, I wanted to flag it again. I'm looking forward to seeing some brilliant characters from books wandering the corridors!

Keeping to the book theme, on **5 July 2022**, M&M Productions will visit the school to deliver a production of **The Hobbit** to everyone in the school. We've had them visit before and it was a brilliant event that the pupils really enjoyed, so it's one we are looking forward to.

**18 March 2022** will once again be **Red Nose Day for Comic Relief** – our elected School Council are planning a number of events in which we can all take part, more details to follow...



For Year 6 pupils, parents will be contacted separately regarding a meeting in school on **Wednesday 16 March 2022**, in which we will tell you all about the **end of key stage 2 assessments (SATs)** which will be taking place on **9-12 May 2022**, and to brief you on the **Stubbers residential trip**.

Before half term, we had an **art and science-based theme week**, focussing on the skeleton. There were some brilliant pieces of art completed for our art challenge, so I thought I would share some work from across the school with you all – below are the masterpieces from: Erica in early years; Hivru and Lillie from key stage 1; Ellie, Mia, Hope and Charlotte from lower and upper key stage 2. These are just a small selection – the quality of the work across the school was fabulous.



Another separate letter will be sent to you regarding **parent consultations** which will take place between **21-24 March 2022**, again virtually following positive feedback about how well it worked previously. This is an opportunity to discuss each pupil's progress during a 10-minute conversation, so please look out for the letter, book an appointment using the link in the letter before 16 March 2022, and we look forward to speaking with you all.

## *Staff changes*

GOOD LUCK



Finally, some news that one of our long serving teachers is leaving to pursue the next challenge in her career. **Miss Maloney** has been at Robert Drake since September 2017 and is a fantastic teacher who is respected and appreciated by all in the school community. She takes up a post at another school next term, so will be leaving us on Friday 1 April 2022. A recruitment process is underway to replace Miss Maloney, and I will update you when I have more information to share in this regard.

Miss Maloney will be missed: she is a highly committed, caring, and enthusiastic member of staff who always has the pupil's wellbeing and learning at the forefront of her mind. I, for one, will always remember how on TT Rockstar's dress up day, she insisted I start assembly with a pink, disco light microphone to "complete" my own Rockstar look – thank you for that Miss Maloney... We all wish her the very best of luck in all her future endeavours.

## *GOVERNOR NEWS*

**Attendance** - The attendance for January was 94.2%. We expect pupils to be in school every day. Non-term time absence will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

## *REMINDERS*

### *Tying Back Long Hair*

Please be reminded that all long hair must be tied back whilst at school. This is not part of the uniform but for health and safety reasons, and therefore hair must still be tied back on non-uniform days. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

### *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.

## *TERM HOLIDAY DATES*

**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.