



NEWSLETTER

January 2023

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Message from Miss Redpath

I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year. It was lovely to welcome the children back to school. I have been going into all of the classrooms to look at the children's behaviours and attitudes towards their learning. The Robert Drake children continue to amaze me every day! Their concentration and resilience has been so pleasing to see.

I have been showing visitors round the school with Mr Jackson (Chair of Governors) over the past few weeks. They have all commented on how well-mannered and friendly the children are, which makes me very proud.

There is so much to look forward to this term. This week we have Steve Clifford, an author, visiting the school. Other activities and events include the Y6/5 visit to Royal Gunpowder Mills, the Dance Festival at the Palace Theatre (Year 3 pupils are representing the school at this event), a visit from an Olympic athlete and a range of sporting events and fixtures.

We are also looking forward to welcoming Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) parents and carers into school to work with their children on 20 January.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents and carers for their continued support for the school.

Miss Redpath
Headteacher

Forthcoming and Previous Events – please note all dates are subject to change

Christmas Performances

All the children did so well in the Christmas performances – herewith a couple of pictures of the full cast in both Early Years and Key Stage 1.



Census Lunch – Thursday 19 January

The Spring Census Lunch is taking place on Thursday 19th January. The receipt of funding from the Government per year is dependent on the uptake of meals on census day, and we would therefore encourage pupils to have a school meal on this day. Jacket potatoes and grab bags will be available.

The menu will be: chicken or veggie goujons, with potato criss cuts, baked beans and sweetcorn. Dessert is arctic roll with peaches / strawberry milkshake. Details have been circulated.

Junior Dance Festival – Tuesday 24 January

Some pupils in Year 3 will be taking part in the Junior Dance Festival at the Palace Theatre on 24 January. Details regarding purchasing tickets have been circulated.

BATIC Got Talent – Wednesday 25 January

Pupils from Years 2 and 3 will be taking part in the BATIC Got Talent show at the Palace Theatre on 25 January. They will be performing an act created by Mr and Mrs Poulton. Details regarding purchasing tickets have been circulated.

Year 5/6 Trip to Gunpowder Mills - Wednesday 25 January

Years 5 and 6 will be taking a trip to the Royal Gunpowder Mills on Wednesday 25 January, as part of their history curriculum. Details have previously been circulated.

Class Photographs - Monday 6 February

Please be advised that class and Year 6 photographs will be taken in school on Monday 6 February.

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| 9 – 11 January | Author week, CS Clifford |
| Friday 13 January | Evergreen Folk Festival |
| Monday 16 January | Multicultural Week |
| Thursday 19 January | Census Lunch |
| Friday 20 January | 9 am Key Stage 1 Parental Involvement (details to follow) |
| Tuesday 24 January | Junior Dance Festival |
| Wednesday 25 January | BATIC Got Talent Show |
| Thursday 26 January | Mr Bye's Class Assembly |
| Monday 30 January | 9 am Fundraising Meeting |
| Friday 3 February | Year 3 Home Fire Safety Workshop |
| Friday 3 February | Year 6 Cyber Safety Workshop |
| Monday 6 February | Class and Year 6 Photographs |
| Friday 10 February | Visit by an Olympic Athlete |
| Thursday 9 February | Miss Bradfield's Class Assembly |

GENERAL

Baby News

We are delighted to inform you that Mr and Mrs Chaplin welcomed a baby daughter this week. We are sure that you will join with everyone at Robert Drake in wishing them every happiness with their new family.



New Intake 2023

A reminder that for children due to start school in September 2023, all applications need to have been submitted to Essex County Council by 15 January 2023. Information can be found online at www.essex.gov.uk/admissions

Dinner Money Arrears

As you will be aware, The Dinner Money Debt Recovery Policy was circulated in the summer and again in October last year. It was set up due to the increasing numbers of dinner money arrears, and so the school could adopt a consistent approach. It is a parent's / carer's responsibility to ensure that their child is provided with either a packet lunch or a school meal, and the school meals should be paid for in advance. Unfortunately we are still seeing large numbers of dinner money arrears.

We would be grateful if parents and carers could please keep an eye on their accounts and ensure that they are topped up when required. It is possible to create a free email alert on ParentPay when there is a low balance and we will recirculate details on how to do this.

This policy does not affect those children who qualify for Free School Meals, nor those in Key Stage 1 who are all currently entitled to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals. If parents or carers have any queries then please contact the school office.

FUNDRAISING

The next Fundraising Meeting is due to be held on Monday 30 January 2023 at 9 am. Everyone is welcome.

GOVERNOR NEWS

Attendance - The attendance for the month of December was 91.3%. The attendance in December was disappointing and reflected the high levels of illness that month. We expect pupils to be in school every day. Non-term time absence will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

Could all parents and carers please also take note of the attached document regarding punctuality.

REMINDERS

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.

A reminder that all children in Year 3 and above have to pay for their school dinners unless they qualify for, and have been accepted for, Free School Meals.

TERM HOLIDAY DATES

Monday 13 to Friday 17 February 2023 – half term holiday

Monday 20 February 2023 – return to school

Friday 31 March 2023 – last day of Spring Term

Monday 3 to Friday 14 April – Easter Holiday

Monday 17 April 2023 – return to school after Easter Holiday

Monday 1 May 2023 – Bank Holiday

Monday 22 May to Friday 2 June 2023 – May half term holiday

Monday 5 June 2023 – return to school after May half term holiday

Friday 7 July 2023 – non pupil day

Friday 21 July 2023 – last day of Summer Term

PLEASE NOTE ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

ROBERT DRAKE IS A NUT FREE SCHOOL



A reminder that Robert Drake is a nut free school. There are children within the school who have severe air borne nut allergies and all parents and carers are reminded that no nuts of any type should be brought in to 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.