

From the Headteacher

Hi all,

In the previous newsletter I mentioned the start of some new developments on site. If you have been here over the last couple of weeks, you would have seen some construction works and differences to the front of the school, these are on-going and hopefully will be completed over the Easter period. Below are some pictures of the developments to date.

A new climbing play frame



Thrive Pods



Forest school canopy



Forest school classroom



These additional spaces will allow us to start to deliver a full curriculum of forest school to assist in helping to develop our students in their:

- Personal and social development.
- Learn about the natural environment.
- Develop problem-solving skills.
- Strengthen positive relationships.
- Improve their communication skills.

I can't wait for it all to be finished!

## **The football match to beat all football matches!**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023

I could not be prouder to be Head of Dovecote school as we hosted our first ever school football match, at home, to Mendip school.

All students involved were magnificent, they represented their school with great pride and were able to demonstrate amazing teamwork and co-operation on the field. They greeted their opponents with respect and fought a tough match.

The final scores were 22 - 7 to us.

Well done team Dovecote!



# DOVECOTE SCHOOL



**DOVECOTE  
SCHOOL**

## **Dates for the Diary**

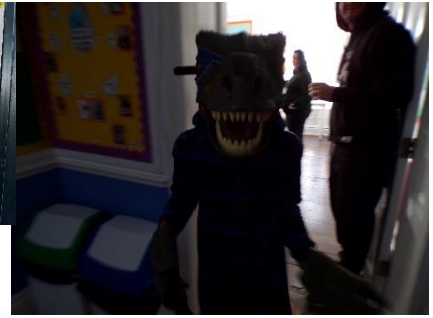
Friday 31st March:	last day of Spring Term school breaks up at 1:00pm.
2nd April	World Autism Day
Monday 3rd April - Friday 14th April:	Easter Holiday.
Monday 17th April:	Students return to school
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Somerset SAINT in - Meningitis ACWY, Diphtheria, Tetanus & Polio schedule for Year 9 pupils – separate e-mail has been sent
Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> April	Skiing meeting via Teams
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> May	Bank Holiday
Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	King Charles III's coronation
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank holiday to mark King Charles III's coronation
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> May	Equality and Diversity Day
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> May - Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	May half-term
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June	Inset day 4
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Inset day 5
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Students return to school
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Environment day
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July – Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Health Week
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Sports Day
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	School Show - Grease
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024	Skiing trip departs





## Roarsome World Book Day!

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March students arrived at school to

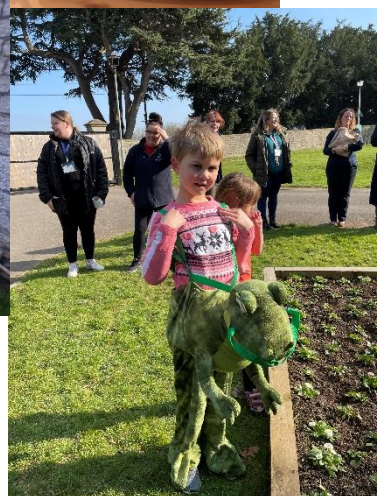


find that a dinosaur had escaped! Tom, the zookeeper needed everyone's help to try and find out where it had gone and which dinosaur it even was – he didn't have a clue which one he'd lost!

Students were sent around the school with maps looking for clues. They found loads of HUGE footprints and turned over furniture all over the place.

There were lots of literacy tasks for the students to complete throughout the day to help with creative writing, spelling and mark making as well as games, math activities, loads of fun dressing up,

designing and casting our own dino footprints and dinosaur trap building! The students had a fabulous day, and we look forward to more adventures soon!



***P.s. The dinosaur has still not been found...***



## National Autism Day

To celebrate National Autism Day, we would like you, your children, your family and your friends to explore and express what autism means to you/them.

This could be in the form of art, painting, crochet, knitting, poetry, video, voice recording, a paragraph, a story, a dance... anything you can think of! You can do it alone, with a partner or have the whole family together!

We would love to create a collection of work celebrating what autism means to our Dovecote Family and friends.



*Please find attached some links to information on World Autism Day. We are not affiliated with these companies and have no input into the information they choose to publish. We're simply offering you a way to find and share information.*

[World Autism Awareness Day - EN | United Nations](#)

[WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY - April 2, 2023 - National Today](#)

[About Autism Day for Kids and Children's Books for Autism World Day | Homeschool Super Freak](#)

## Springtime(?) in Skylark So Far!

Here we are again at the end of another busy term here in Skylark and unfortunately, we still can't bring any nice weather. However, some of our students couldn't be put off and still went out and played sports and other activities!

### Classwork:

This term we have embarked on a trip to outer space in Science and have wondered if there is any life on other planets. Skylark have also gone back to 1937 in English and studied the characters and story of "Of Mice and Men". Our Skylarks are now fully equipped with how to manage money and complete a food shop...with change. Pictured is one student's meal plan for when he is older 😊

	Monday	Tuesday	wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast	toast + honey	Toast + marmalade	Toast + Raspberry Jam	Toast + Vegimite	Toast + Nutella
Lunch	Bacon Sarni	Chicken Salad	Cheese Toastie	Chicken lettuce cucumber Mayo wrap	ham Pizza
Dinner	Knocci Bake	Sish Singers + chips	Mac + Cheese	Salami Pasta	Chicken Korma



### Our Outdoor Adventures this Term:

This term we have seen a few staff changes in the outdoor education department.

We have recently, however, embarked on some adventures. Tom and Georgie have taken us all to the "Hangar" in Exeter. The students have all taken part in the challenge of bouldering up the 4.2m high wall, as well as completing speed challenges

and then of course ending the day with a well-deserved cuppa!

Well done to you all!



happy and settled.

### **Another New Member of the Dovecote Team:**

We would like to formally introduce to you all FRANK – Frank is a Bull python, and he has now joined us. He resides in Lynne’s Science Lair/Zoo!

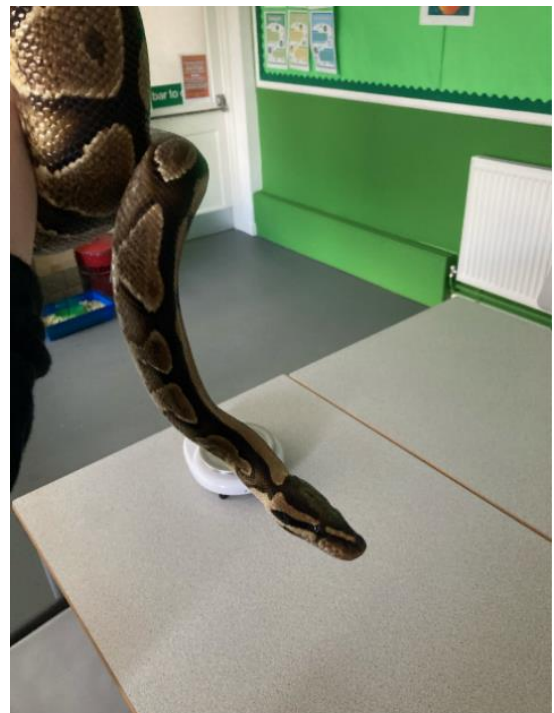
Frank has now settled into the science room and has been meeting and interacting with both staff and students. He can still be a little jumpy if we move too quickly, but he enjoys being around people.

Since coming to live with us here at Dovecote school, Frank has eaten which means that he is

### **A Final Word:**

As we end this term, we have had many positive and enjoyable moments. We hope you all eat many Easter Eggs(!) and find some time to relax as we get ready for the next lot of adventures!

See you soon from all the Skylark team!!!





## Forest School

Firstly, I must say how very excited I am to be leading forest school here at Dovecote School.

I joined Dovecote School in late January, arriving from my previous Job as a Forest school leader/LSA in a secondary school located in Bridgewater. Thus after 15 years there I decided to have a change!

I live with my family and two cats. We all absolutely love spending time outdoors, walking, jogging, paddleboarding & E Biking across somerset and along the Dorset coast.

Here at Dovecote school, we will all have the privilege of using a brand new purpose-built outdoor forest school area! On completion it will host a fantastic all-weather outdoor shelter with a fire pit, additional areas including a multifunctional cabin hosting a stove for those wintery days!! All these fantastic facilities nestled amongst a woodland area that together we can explore, forage and chill within!



The benefits of attending Forest School; promotes, individuals levels of self-esteem, our creativity, confidence and independence. It is a series of long-term sessions that are built on the needs and development of the young person. It enables supported risk-taking, child-centred learning, exploration and play with that essential connection with nature and I could not wish for a better

location than here at Dovecote school.

We aim to teach our young people, your child, how to keep themselves and others safe by practicing a “safe hand guide” for a range of tools enabling them to partake in a range of bushcraft skills. We also teach fire safety and fire lighting competence, again skills that enable use of safe campfires & cooking. We practice knots to host a range of den building skills.

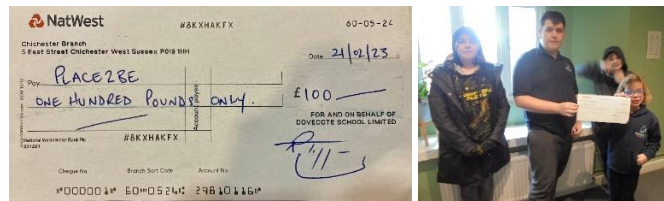
It is very important to me that your child can access and enjoy these sessions, I will endeavour to facilitate their interests and creativity. Thus, my aim for all young people here at Dovecote at Forest school is to enjoy themselves, and to be able to create opportunities that fulfil their interests.



Makaila



## News from the Student Council



We sent off our cheque to the Place2Be charity for the very successful Pet Photo Competition that we organized. We raised an awesome £100! We were overwhelmed with the number of entries and people's generosity! We were also impressed by people's efforts in dressing up and the buzz around the school that day was amazing! The photos from the competition are starting to look great displayed in the café area; thank you Sam, Erica, Luke and Peregrine class for organizing this!



We would like to say a warm welcome to our new members Rob, Maisie, Josh, Cameron and Bradley. They have made some great contributions so far and we look forward to hearing more amazing ideas from them.



Our recent discussions in student council have included...

Talking about how student councillors can be involved in an exciting video tour of the school to go on the website and that will help people to get to know our school before visiting.



Organising a sweet survey to find out if students would like a tuck shop in school and what should be sold. Watch this space for more information about when the tuck shop will start!



Our councillors have some great ideas for the development of the school and ideas for the year ahead. SLG would like to encourage **ANY** student in the school with an idea to write a letter to SLG, which they will read and consider.



Over the next few weeks, we will be planning how the councillors can be involved in welcoming new students to the school (e.g. a welcome letter, being a buddy etc...)

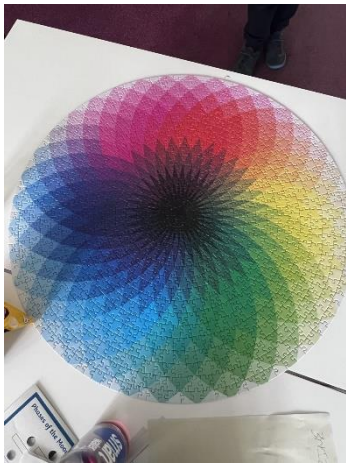


We will also be focussing on how our school councillors can be more involved with recycling around the school. Watch this space for more information!!



## Welcome Peregrine!

This term, we have started on a high note with the birth of our new class Peregrine! We may be smaller than some of the other classes, but we have achieved so much already!



As we are a new class, we have focused on making our classroom a home to be proud of and getting to know each other a little better through playing games, struggling with puzzles, organising our class and decorating. We have been creating and deciding on our new Topic/Discovery themes and lots more.



As the weather is brightening up, we've spent a lot more time playing outside on the grass and around the school grounds. Of course, we have lots of time playing with our four-legged friends along the way 😊

Whilst this has been going on we've been looking at portrait skills during art and design, joining Sid in the tunnel for Horticulture and making great progress in our Maths, English and Science; nose plugs were involved!

Flick, Sammy and Lynne are hugely proud of how well Peregrine have adjusted to their new class, and we're truly excited to see what they will produce next.



Well done Peregrine!

- Flick

## Otter Class

We have spent the last 3 weeks getting to know each other and settling in with our new friends and staff.

Our Otters have enjoyed time together on the farm, especially seeing the new babies and lots and lots of outside play.

Science experiments have been great fun for us all to engage in, we have had a go at making fireworks in a jar, volcano eruptions and doing some bath bomb dissolving.

We have had a great half-term as a group and wish you all a Happy Easter – see you soon!!





## Stoat Class

Stoat Class have had a great few weeks! We have been on lots of adventures, a massive thanks to Georgie for organising our Outdoor Education. We have been to Brean, Stourhead, the Marshes as well as starting the half term off with some cycling!

Lots of these trips seem to have ended up with the children getting VERY muddy - much to their joy!

We went to do some investigation, collecting ideas for the farm and horticulture, to The Magdalen Project near Chard. For a certain young man - this also ended up a muddy experience! We decided he has a future career in ice-skating!

We saw some great ideas for new plants to grow as well as the Eggenator 3000, a machine that sorts eggs into sizes, a very satisfying experience - we definitely need one here!

The children have worked incredibly hard in all aspects of their learning and should be incredibly proud of themselves. Each one of them has pushed themselves out of their comfort zones, challenged themselves and achieved fabulous things.

You are AMAZING young people!



## Hedgehog Class

This term in Hedgehog Class we enjoyed the little bit of snow we had and created some wonderful mini snow people. The children have explored the forest school area and have begun to use tools safely.



In topic subject was 'Day and Night and we explore nocturnal and diurnal animals, we explore where they lived and create fact file to record information that we found.

We have been creative and investigating materials and how they can be used in different ways to create pieces of art work. We also enjoyed a pottery workshop, where we made models out of clay.

The children have also been transitioning into their new classes and have started developing new friendships. The children have enjoyed helping the adults to develop their class environment and are looking forward to learning in them next term.

From all the staff in Hedgehog class we hope you all have a wonderful Easter holiday and don't eat too much chocolate (only joking).

## Thrive

This term has brought lots of weathers ideal for Thrive. Snow days for building snowmen, rainy days for puddle jumping, windy days for kite flying and sunny days for bubble blowing. Every day is an opportunity for learning with Thrive.



**thrive** 



As you can see, we have been busy creating pieces of art, settling down with snakes, spa afternoons and even a spot of shopping for Mother's Day, with a sneak trip to Whitards.







Thrive Ambassador School  
with Excellence in Relationship  
2023

This term we are proud to announce that here at Dovecote School we have been awarded with the Thrive Ambassador School of Excellence award in Relationship.

We know we don't get it right 100% of the time and actually, us getting it wrong enables us to model the repairing of relationships, so families and young people understand the inevitable cycle of relate-rupture-repair. To meet the standards for excellence, we have provided evidence for some of the following criteria:

Evidence of the Vital Relational functions and PACE in our relationships with young people, each other and families.

Family involvement and Family Thrive courses.

Modelling containment and regulation.

Developing policy in line with Thrive Key principles – our Building Positive Behaviour Policy is nearly ready for sharing. Our Curriculum Policy includes reference to readiness to learn and students will have access to the accessible versions of our safeguarding and behaviour principles.

To attend a meeting, share fundraising ideas, or offer your skills for the benefit of group, please contact  
LRoberts@dovecoteschool.co.uk



## Welcome to Dovecote Family Support Committee

“ LEADING THE WAY FOR RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL ”

CHAIRPERSON:  
ALEXANDRA LUCAS

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON:  
HANNAH ARDRON

TREASURER: TASHA  
SAYERS

SECRETARY: WENDY  
JONES

A message from your Chairperson:

The DFSC has now been formally constituted. Its purpose is to provide support to the students and advance the education and environment, by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities/equipment/activities.

It will achieve this through organising social activities to develop relationships between staff, parents and others associated with the School, raising funds through these activities, not just for the forthcoming ski trip, but for the longer term.

Dates for future meetings:

- 26.04.23 @ 19.00
- 24.05.23 @ 19.00
- 28.06.23 @ 19.00
- 19.07.23 @ 19.00

## WHAT ARE WE DOING NEXT IN DOFE ?

What will the lessons look like?

- Preporation of food in kitchens
- Learning how to cook using trangiers
- Constrution of tents
- Practice walks and cycles with back packs on
- Planning maps and routes
- Continuing with volunteering skills and physical activities
- Learning how to work within a team environment



## DOFE NEWS

Exciting news!!!!

We have received all our DofE equipment ready for our amazing expedition in October. This is perfect timing for our preparation in getting all the DofE students ready for their overnight stay. Lessons will now be focused on getting the children familiarised with all the different types of specialised equipment that they will have chance to use!



## Where did we go and what did we do?

Last term we focused on learning about military equipment from 1939 to modern day and the development of technology to now.

We visited places such as: the Tank museum, Air Force museum and The Royal Navy museum.



Whilst there the children had some tasks to complete as they explored the museum.

## This terms project focus

This term we have looked at projects with a Geography/Science focus.

We have been exploring our local beaches and aquariums. Whilst doing this we have looked at the human and natural geographical features of our surroundings and have been imagining what the landscape would have been like 100 years ago.

We have also been looking at human impact on our beaches and the issues with pollution and littering.

We have then linked this knowledge to our visits at the aquariums and have been looking at the impact of littering and pollution on our sea wildlife and the impact it has on the food chain.

## Project Work

What is it and why?

Completing project work is a way to help to make our children feel safe, special and secure.

This then helps them to prepare themselves to work successfully in a class environment.