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Tuesday 9th January 2018

Headteacher Update

Thank you, Miss Dickenson!

We are both equally sad but delighted for **Miss Rachel Dickenson** who is currently on secondment for this academic year at Dunnington Primary School. Rachel, who has been a valued member of the Lord Deramore's community for over ten years, was permanently appointed as Dunnington's UKS2 phase leader just before Christmas. This means that she will not be returning to Lord Deramore's next academic year. On behalf of everybody at our school, may I congratulate Rachel and thank her for the valued contribution she has made over the years.



Mrs Jach's Maternity Leave

Following a robust recruitment process, we are pleased to inform you that **Mrs Katy McNichol** has been appointed to cover Mrs Jach's maternity leave – due to begin after February half term. Mrs McNichol is a highly experienced primary practitioner, having worked part-time at St Peter's School in Harrogate for over ten years now. She brings with her a passion for computing, science, sport and 'fun' and promises to be a real asset to the team here at Lord Deramore's. Good luck and best wishes to Mrs Jach for her final two month countdown.

Welcome to the team, Mrs Wilson!

I am pleased to inform you that **Mrs Sue Wilson** was appointed to our Inclusion Team, working alongside Mrs Hitchon – our Inclusion Leader – to support those pupils with additional or specific needs. Mrs Wilson has been a regular volunteer at Lord Deramore's for several years now and has recently qualified with her NVQ in supporting teaching and learning within schools.



Guitar stars

Well done to all of our guitarists! It was wonderful to host a concert to celebrate the wonderful progress and achievements of our budding guitarists. Many thanks to Peter Richmond, our resident guitar teacher, and to all those children whose efforts and hard work are making them into very capable musicians.

York Minster School – Choral Project

Our Year 5 class have been working with the Minster School's Director of Music, Alison Forster, over the past term and took place in an evening of superb choral singing at the York Minster. Many congratulations to the children who were incredibly impressive and did themselves proud.





Making a positive contribution to the community

We were pleased to make two visits this term to one of our local residential homes for the elderly – Heslington Lodge. The children not only showcased their musical prowess but also showed just how caring, kind and considerate they are through the way in which they interacted with the residents.



Christmas 2017



As a school community, we took part in a wide range of activities this festive season. These included a whole-school panto visit to the Grand Opera House to see *Beauty and the Beast* (including ice-creams and coaches kindly provided by the PTA), a delicious Christmas lunch prepared by our talented kitchen team, a carol concert at our local parish of St Paul's, another carol service at the York Minster and two superb infant and junior nativity and reflection services. Thank you to absolutely everybody – especially the children and staff – for the hard work that goes into preparing such events. They were greatly enjoyed by all!



Little Red Riding Hood

As part of our school priority of improving writing across the school, every single child from Early Years to Year 6 wrote their own version of the traditional tale *Little Red Riding Hood*. I had the pleasure of reading through 207 versions and, along with my colleagues, spent time talking about each child's creative flair, their strengths and next steps. It was lovely to see such great progress taking place.

PTA Quiz and Curry Night

At my first PTA meeting, I promised to help organise a quiz and curry night to raise funds for the school. This will be taking place on **Friday 26th January 7-10pm** and promises to be a fun, social event for parents, friends and staff alike. Tickets are **NOW** on sale from the school office and cost £10 per adult – which includes entry to the quiz and games, homemade curries and sides plus one free drink (wine/beer/soft). Further drinks will be on sale on the evening at £1 for soft and £2 for alcoholic drinks. Tickets are **strictly** limited so please do buy one while you can. The event is for adults only – so make sure you book those babysitters. Teams can range from one to eight persons and access to mobile phones will be strictly prohibited :)



Thank you, PTA!

Thank you to everybody who organised and attended our annual Christmas Fair. An impressive **£1800** was raised which all goes directly back to providing your children with resources, activities and experiences.

Debating, Democracy and Parliament Day

Mrs Jach organised a wonderful enrichment day last term all linked to improving children's skills, knowledge and understanding of democracy. They took part in a range of workshops and really impressed the Rt. Hon. Lord Mayor (Cllr Barbara Boyce) who visited us for the day with their questions relating to how local government works and the role of the civic party. The event was even featured in the York Press:



http://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/15689197.Lord_Mayor_is_quizzed_about_the_perks_of_role/

School Attendance

Last term's whole-school attendance was **96.74%** As a school, we are aiming for 97% this academic year.

May I take this opportunity to gently remind families about the legal requirement for children to be in school during term time. Family holidays must not be taken during term time and will always be recorded as unauthorised. I am legally only allowed to authorise absence which are classed as 'exceptional'.



Please also remember that school begins promptly at **8.50a.m.** The playground gate will close at 9a.m. and any arrivals after this time will be marked as late and will have to enter via the school office.



Road Safety

I have received some correspondence from parents, sharing concerns regarding our new pedestrian entrance to school and its vicinity to the busy road on Field Lane – in particular the narrow footpath and the 30MPH traffic. I have personally contacted the locally authority to discuss options in helping to make this area safer for us all, particularly during drop-off and collection times. In the meantime, please can I ask you to be aware of how busy this path gets in a morning and to keep a very close eye on children, particularly toddlers, whilst walking along it.



Photographing school assemblies and performances

Please remember that some of our children do not have parental permission for their photograph or face to appear on the Internet – including social media (even on protected accounts). Feel free to take photos and videos for your own personal memories but do not put them onto the World Wide Web. Thank you for your cooperation.

New School Update

During the successful asbestos removal in October half term, the contractors discovered further traces of the substance under the current tarmac. Whilst we could have moved forward with the playground creation, the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) recommended complete removal of all potential asbestos before the resurfacing commenced. Because of this, further asbestos removal is now taking place during February half term, with ground works being completed for a final 'hand over' in May.



As you can imagine, this is not ideal but as a school, the situation is completely out of our control. Our main priority is to receive a new school and its grounds without comprising pupil safety. Please be rest assured that we are doing everything in our power to provide enjoyable playtimes and outdoor learning experiences for all. The virtue of patience is certainly required for all parties at the present moment – particularly poor Mrs Scholes (our Business Manager).

Happy New Year

As you will appreciate, the past month has been a personally sad and hectic one. Following my dad's funeral on the 28th December, I managed to have a good rest before returning to school and feel genuinely thrilled to be back amongst the smiles and company of the children and staff. Thank you for all of the kind words on the gate, your emails and cards – they were very touching and proved (yet again!) just how special and caring the Lord Deramore's family is.

Wishing you all a very happy and prosperous new year. I am looking forward to working alongside yourselves and my colleagues to make 2018 a great year for all of our children.



Very best wishes,

James Rourke
Headteacher