

Welcome back
mini newsletter
September 2022

It was fantastic to see how ready and eager our children were to return, or for some new children how confidently they have started with us at Dame Catherine's. A special warm welcome to our new children in Squirrels and Rabbits!

Our News

New baby: Bria has had her little boy. The date had been fixed but we were wondering about the clash with the Queen's funeral. But things went to plan. It took a while to agree on a name, but Bria has now announced that he is called Tommy. Hopefully we will see him soon.



What's been happening in school?

We love birthdays: thank you to Charlie for celebrating his birthday with us in style with an ice cream van. Blue sherbet seemed like a popular topping choice. The weather was also perfect for an ice cream too.



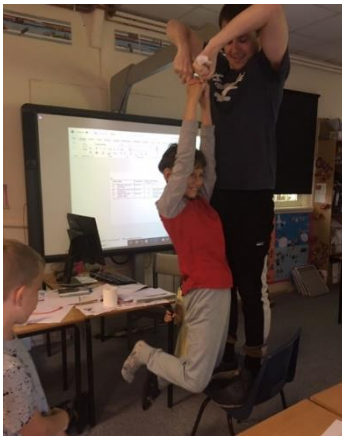
Our learning

We wanted to keep the start to our year quite flexible so that we could work around the children's needs. Where we have new children to our groups, we are developing activities around getting to know them a little better too. Some of our Squirrels are being referred to as 'Squabbits' at the moment as they are exploring a bit of life in Rabbits but with the security of not letting go of Fay. This name came after Wildcats were learning about portmanteaus and making some up, so Fay joined in.

The groups will begin their main curriculum question / theme for the term around the start of October. Planning overviews will be sent out in a couple of weeks.

The whole school started our term with a bear themed week. For Squirrels and Rabbits, the week was Teddy bear themed. This included sharing their own special teddies, looking at different types of bear, reading bear-themed stories, and playing in our teddy hospital role play area.





Wildcats (7-11 year olds) joined the bear theme but took it off in a different direction. They learnt about Haribo and did their own investigations to find out which ingredients would make the best gummi bear. Did you know that the name Haribo is a portmanteau? **Hans Riegel Bonn** – the name of the person who created them and the place he lived. The children also read about bears around the world and learnt about how carbon dating helped us to work out when cave bears existed. Learning about pandas led to investigating bamboo products such as bamboo kitchen roll, which we found was so strong that a child could hang onto it and be lifted off the ground (Chris' idea – we couldn't find any weights to use.)

Rabbits and Squirrels are now enjoying the book 'Super Duper You' and thinking about what makes them special and unique. Both groups are using the same book to help our Squabbits. It's been lovely to hear about each others interests and to share what they love about their friends.

Wildcats have gone 'off piste' before even starting their question for the term. We came back to the news that Chris had written a children's story (historical fiction) about Vikings which he is hoping to publish. It is aimed at 7-11 year olds, so there is no way we miss an opportunity to be the first to read it. So, in true Dame Catherine's spirit, we have changed course and are developing a mini theme for this month with the question 'How cool is it to read Chris' Viking story?' The children are already asking whether they can have a copy, but they'll have to wait a while. As we read it and develop ideas for our learning, Chris is making a few edits. How exciting for children to be involved in this. Of course,



Chris has researched the history carefully, so children are finding lots out about life in Viking times. They have made oil lamps and tested them, and made glue from milk, which may or may not be strong enough to make a shield (we don't know yet.)



Of course, we have been discussing the events of the past 2 weeks too. Our Wildcats class spent the summer term learning about life throughout the 70 years of the Queen's reign, with our question being 'The 2nd Elizabethan Age: a good review?' and we were so pleased we did. Last Friday we reflected again on the work she had done and the roles our Queen played. Children read and listened to some tributes from around the world and some children wrote their own tributes which they were able to share with other children in school. We want to share some of their comments below.

"Thank you, Your Majesty for being our Queen for 70 years."

"Everything you did still keeps in our heads."

"Thank you for your humour and your sense of calm. You will always be with us and be a treasure to our people."

"We hope your spirit will stay here in Britain."

"Thank you, Your Majesty for doing so much work for our country and for opening schools, buildings, and meeting people. You gave honours and you didn't give up."

"Thank you for everything you did for the country and the world too."

"You met Paddington Bear. You lived to 96. You had lots of jubilees, and you were always there for our country."

"Thank you, Your Majesty for being so happy in the darkest times. Thank you for making the world better. Your Majesty, thank you for being you!"

Fundraising news

Art Show: Jane is still sorting out final payments for the art show, but we are hopeful that it will have made in the region of £5,000 for the school. We are so very grateful for everyone who had a hand in this, to our staff and trustees/ governors who gave up so much time, and to parents who came along to help before the event and to help to sell art. There is a write up in the Melbourne Village voice to anyone who wants to read it.



Reminders

Medicine: if your child has been prescribed any medication or if you feel they might need Calpol etc. at some point during the day, ask a member of staff and we will complete a medicines form in advance to make sure we have the information. Even with our oldest children, medication should be handed over to a member of staff so that we can ensure it is stored safely and monitor when taken, rather than giving children pain relief medication in their bag.

Indoor shoes: As mentioned in our end of summer newsletter, it is important that all children have a pair of indoor shoes in school. As we have some new children too, we have included the information sent out at the end of term below.

We ask children to come in their outdoor shoes and take them off before coming into our carpeted classrooms. As these need to be stored close by, outdoor shoes should not be wellies. (Wellies are kept in storage areas for outdoor learning.) We would be grateful for special consideration on Wednesdays, those children who join us on that day. The footwear children come in should be suitable for PE, unless they bring additional footwear on this day. Coming in wellies and having indoor shoes as fluffy slippers poses somewhat of a challenge in how to do PE and even we aren't that creative, so considering the whole package of what children have on their feet is important. If indoor shoes are pumps, these are fine for PE. If the shoes children come in every day are trainers, these are also OK for PE. If they have neither, this poses a problem when it comes to PE.

Book bags: could rabbits who have a black book bag please remember to bring them into school.

