



Well the rain eventually came but Spring Term has certainly been living up to its name with the school bathed in glorious sunshine for much of the week. No doubt the weather will send more coldness our way soon, but it has been lovely to see the children enjoying the outside play areas and activities. I have spent a good portion of the week getting myself back up to speed with life here at Duncombe. The children have been sharing with me about their holiday activities and I have greatly enjoyed listening to several musical practices including saxophone with Thomas in Year 6 and the Lower School pupils singing beautifully in the Old Hall. I have missed Duncombe's soundtrack and it's lovely to hear this anew.

I'm delighted to share that Duncombe has enjoyed significant successes over the past half term not least with the excellent Independent Schools 11+ offers made to our Year 6 pupils. I will be going into more specific detail soon. I wanted to highlight that, as in previous years, Duncombe has secured the highest number of offers and scholarships gained at 11+ when compared to our competitors. I'd like to congratulate our pupils, staff and families for such exceptionally good outcomes. I am also delighted that pupils across all year groups have been working so well with the recent reports showing most encouraging progress and engaging next steps to work towards.

I want to take a moment to thank Miss Sands for her excellent stewardship and work over the past half term as Acting Head. Miss Sands, the Leadership Team and the entire staff body have worked very effectively. As I experienced the school as Dad rather than Head, I was mightily impressed with how well things went. I did notice however, that at drop off and pick up that a number of people are not using the pedestrian access to enter the school. Please do not walk through the car park entrance gates.

I spoke with pupils on Monday about how touched we had been by the kindness and consideration of pupils and parents who often asked me how things were with Mrs Phelan. I was able to share with them that the outcomes of her treatment thus far have been very successful, and the medical team were delighted to share that the cancer is no longer present. Mrs Phelan is now undergoing Radiotherapy until the end of March and immunotherapy until July. There is still quite a road to be travelled and presently she is feeling very tired, but the continued support of everyone here at Duncombe has been such a blessing.

It was lovely to see some of you at the Woburn Charity Coffee and Cake Morning. The pupils were delighted with the display of cakes and I appreciated the opportunity for a catch up chat with you.

Next week is exceptionally busy with Book Week (look out for Book Week information in the newsletter), Year 4 Victorian Day, Nursery to Year 3 Parents' Evenings, Year 6 Normandy Parents' Info Evening, World Book Dress up Day, Science Planetarium Dome, 3K Assembly and Open Morning for new families. I think it's fair to say that there is plenty to look forward to and a good rest over the weekend will certainly set

the children (and this Headmaster) up for the odyssey that awaits! Have a lovely weekend. *Mr Phelan.*

## Diary Dates

- Monday 4th March** - Year 4 Victorian Day at Duncombe.
- Tuesday 5th March** - Nursery to Year 3 Parents' Evening. 6.30pm to 8.30pm.
- Wednesday 6th March** - Nursery to Year 3 Parents' Evening. 4.30pm to 6.30pm.
- Thursday 7th March** - Open Morning for Prospective Parents. 9.45am to 11.30am.  
Year 6 Normandy Meeting. 7pm start in New Hall.
- Friday 8th March** - 3K Assembly (Parents Welcome). 8.50am in New Hall.  
Dress up day for World Book Day.

## Looking Forward

- Monday 11th March** - 6TA Assembly (Parents Welcome). 8.50am in New Hall.  
Year 6 to Crucial Crew. 9.45am at Morgans School.
- Tuesday 12th March** - Lower School Bake Off. 2pm in New Hall  
Year 5 Parents' Evening. 4.30pm to 8.30pm in New Hall.
- Friday 15th March** - 6TH Assembly (Parents Welcome). 8.50am in New Hall.  
Upper School Bake Off. 2pm in New Hall.
- Monday 18th March** - 4V Assembly (Parents Welcome). 8.50am in New Hall.  
Shaking Up Shakespeare for Years 3 to 6.
- Tuesday 19th March** - Year 3 to Natural History Museum in Tring.  
Year 4 Parents' Evening. 4.30pm to 8.30pm.
- Wednesday 20th March** - Year 2 to Roald Dahl Gallery.  
Year 1 Parent to Lunch. Times TBC.
- Thursday 21st March** - Parent Information Evening on Nourish: Healthy Body, Healthy Mind. From 6.30pm in New Hall.
- Friday 22nd March** - Music Assembly. 8.50am in Old Hall.  
Nursery and Reception to Hertford Theatre to see Room on the Broom.  
Upper School (Years 4 to 6) Swimming Gala. 1.30pm at Hartham (Parents Welcome).

## Well done to this week's Lower School Stars of the Week



### Sports Fixtures

**Wednesday 6th March** - U10 Rugby v Westbrook Hay (away). 2.30pm start.

U10/U11 Netball v Ralph Sadleir (away). 3.45pm start.

**Monday 11th March** - U10 Rugby v Manor Lodge (away). Time TBC.

**Tuesday 12th March** - U9 Netball v St Edmund's Prep (away). 1pm start.

**Wednesday 13th March** - U10 Netball at Haileybury. 2pm start.

U11 Rugby v Heath Mount (away). 2.30pm start.

**Saturday 16th March** - U11 Netball Tournament at St Francis College. 9am start.

### Parent Information Evening

#### Nourish: Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

#### Thursday 21st March 2019 - 7pm to 8pm

Join us for the next event in our programme of parent information evenings where we will be focusing on the impact of food and nutrition on children's development, learning and well-being.

We will be joined by early childhood nutrition experts Julia Hayes and Matt Steadman from Thomas Franks Catering as well as our own Chef Manager and 2018 LACA School Chef of the Year Michael Goulston, who will be discussing:

- The nutritional needs of school children
- The sugar battle
- The impact of food on children's mental health and well-being
- Positive body image and the food debate.
- Incorporating healthier options into the school menu.

There will be a Q&A session at the end, and a chance to sample some of the meals on offer from our current school lunch menu.

Tickets are free, and can be booked by following the links on the school website.



### Nursery to Year 3 Parents' Evenings

#### Reception Parents' Evening

We would like to inform you that Parents' Evenings for Nursery to Year 3 will take place in classrooms on both Tuesday 5th March and Wednesday 6th March. You will have received confirmation of your time slot before Half Term.

#### Karen McCombie's Author Visit

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February, Karen McCombie came to school and told the children about her history and interesting facts about her life and her friends. She had dyslexia and a virus at a young age which turned into a hearing issue. Lucas H, 5Sa

We enjoyed her bubbly personality, humour and lifestyle. As well as that, we think that she is very kind and thoughtful about people who have dyslexia. We found it was a helpful tip that you can use a diary or notebook to jot down memorable times! Isla, M and Leah B, 5Sa

She talked about her new book, *Little Bird Flies*. Also Bengoeo school joined us. Charlie R, 5Su

This book was inspired by a book she loved as a child about travelling the world to find a home. This main character is a girl called Bridie. Karen was a really nice lady and she inspired me to become an author. Reece H, 5Sa

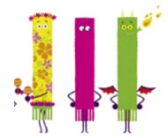
She was a massive inspiration to becoming an author and preparing us to be one. She was so down to earth and able to talk to children. The best part is the fact she has written 93 books! William S, 5Sa

*By our Year 5 Roving Reporters*





## Duncombe School Book Week



A reminder that next week is Duncombe's World Book Week. We hope to encourage our pupils to pick up a book, share their favourite stories and develop a lifelong love of reading. This year we will be celebrating all things good, evil and in-between through our '**Heroes and Villains**' theme.

### COMPETITIONS

#### Book in a Jar Competition

As part of our celebrations for World Book Day, there will be a competition to represent a beloved book in a jam-jar. The closing date for the competition is **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019**.

#### Hunt the Heroes and Villains

In their classes, pupils will navigate their way around the school and grounds finding celebrated heroes and villains from the world of children's literature. They will then be challenged to recall the book in which the character appears.

#### Guess the Hero or Villain Competition

Pupils will have the opportunity to watch some staff read aloud a character description written by a mystery author. Can they work out who the hero or villain is by using the clues from the text to deduce the answer?

### EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

#### Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March

##### D.E.A.R

Children and staff across the school will be encouraged to participate in our D.E.A.R event (Drop Everything and Read) and will be dropping their activity when the special whistle sounds and picking up a book to celebrate the importance of reading.

#### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March

##### Book Swap

If you have any children's books that are no longer age appropriate, then please feel free to donate your books for our book swap on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March. Please bring them to the Old Hall and leave them in the relevant area on the tables provided. Children will be given the opportunity to swap books throughout the day.

#### World Book Day Token

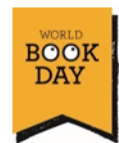
Each child will receive a World Book Day token in their book bags.



#### Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March

As well as enjoying a variety of World Book Day activities and quizzes, such as designing book marks, pupils will also be learning how to write fantastic character descriptions about a real or imagined hero or villain.

Pupils in Years 5 and 6 will participate in a book-themed quiz.



#### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March

##### World Book Day Fancy Dress

To enter into the spirit of celebrating World Book Day, we are inviting both staff and pupils to dress as a book character on **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March**. This year's theme is Literary **Heroes and Villains**. The outfit can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish! Some ideas can be found on the following website:

<https://www.worldbookday.com/ideas/dressing-up-gallery/>

Children and staff will be invited to participate in a Costume Parade at breaktime to showcase their efforts. Please could children bring in £1 on the day, as a donation to our House Charity.

We look forward to seeing the children in character and on the playground catwalk!

### Music Newsletter - Spring Issue

Attached this newsletter is the Spring edition of the Music Newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it.

*Mrs Sutton, Head of Music.*

### Duncombe Sports Kit

Could we please ask you to return any Duncombe sports kit to the School Office as quickly as possible. We have a lot of fixtures coming up this term and we need to ensure we have enough kit for everyone.

### REMINDER: Swimming Changes

In preparation for the Upper School Swimming Gala on Friday 22nd March, Years 5 & 6 will be swimming at Hartham on the following dates:

Friday 8th March - Years 2 & 3 as normal

Friday 15th March - Year 5

Friday 22nd March – Swimming Gala

This means that Years 2 & 3 will not be swimming on the 15th March and 22nd March.

### Main School After School Teas

Following an analysis of the feedback from our Voice of the Parent Survey, I am pleased to inform you that Michael Goulston, our Chef Manager, is currently trialling a slightly different and enhanced food offering for our Main School After School Club so that there is more variety across the week.

*Ian Thomas, Business Manager*

### February Half Term Works

Over the Half Term break, we have continued to invest in the facilities and fabric of the school and have completed a number of essential works including:

- Various lighting replacements
- Review and update to the Asbestos survey
- Repair to ground in Treetops Garden
- Professional Tuning of Baby Grand Piano in Old Hall and upright piano in Music Studio

*Ian Thomas, Business Manager*

## Warren Restaurant Menu for the week commencing 4th March 2019

**Monday**

- The Soup Kettle**  
Seasonal soup with 50/50 homemade bread
- Tasty Entrée**  
Flaked Tuna in tomato sauce with 50/50 pasta
- Flexitarian**  
Roast tomato with cannellini beans and basil sauce with 50/50 pasta
- Jacket Potato Bar**  
Cheese or BBQ Beans
- On the side**  
Roast peppers with kale and sweetcorn
- Tasty pudds**  
Peach and strawberry topped yoghurt

**TUESDAY**

- The Soup Kettle**  
Seasonal soup with 50/50 homemade bread
- Tasty entrée**  
Chicken Rogan josh with onion salad, mango chutney and raita
- Flexitarian**  
Cheese layered potato bake
- Pasta Bar**  
Tomato and peppers
- On the side**  
Basmati rice or naan  
Garden peas
- Tasty pudds**  
Fudgy chocolate brownie bites (reduced sugar recipe)

**Wednesday**

- The Soup Kettle**  
Seasonal soup with 50/50 homemade bread
- Tasty entrée**  
Beef Ragù with penne pasta
- Flexitarian**  
Stuffed sweet potato with Borlotti beans and plum tomatoes
- Jacket Potato Bar**  
Tuna Mayonnaise
- On the side**  
Corn on the cob  
Spring greens  
Coleslaw
- Tasty pudds**  
Homemade berry and swirl smoothie

**Thursday**

- The Soup Kettle**  
Seasonal soup with 50/50 homemade bread
- Tasty entrée**  
Roast chicken legs with homemade gravy
- Flexitarian**  
Lentil and vegetable polenta slice
- Pasta Bar**  
Vegetable Chilli
- On the side**  
Rustic roast potatoes  
Baked parsnip and carrots
- Tasty pudds**  
Mandarin in jelly

**Week Commencing 4th March 2019**

**FRIDAY**

- The Soup Kettle**  
Seasonal soup with 50/50 homemade bread
- Tasty entrée**  
Grilled chicken fillet burgers with gherkins and relish
- Flexitarian**  
Squash and chick pea burger with gherkins and relish
- Jacket potato bar**  
Cheese
- On the side**  
Oven chips  
Garden peas  
Baked beans
- Tasty pudds**  
Raspberry ripple ice cream