

# Dawlish Federation of Special Schools

## NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2018

Dear Parents/ Carers,

On behalf of the two schools I would like to extend a warm welcome to our four new governors who we are very much looking forward to working alongside.

Having collected the views of our parents, pupils and staff on the name for our new school we are delighted to announce that the governors have selected the name for our new school.

Our new school will be called Orchard Manor School.

Thank you to all pupils, parents, carers and staff for coping so well with the unexpected snowy weather and subsequent school closures. This course of action was an absolute last resort, but thank you for the messages of support for the decision, and your co-operation. Let's hope that spring is now here to stay!

World Book Day, as always, was a huge success due to the effort and engagement of staff and pupils. Throughout the day, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the various activities based around books and reading, and many pupils and staff dressed up as their favourite book character. Thank you to parents, carers and staff who supported this with some stunning and creative costumes.

In addition to World Book Day our pupils have, once again, been able to take part in many different activities this half term. Pupils have braved the elements to continue to train for the Ten Tors and Jubilee Challenge events (a big thank you to the dedicated team of staff who support them). Visits to the mosque, our in house Botcha tournament and the Sport Relief Mile were other highlights.

The Wellbeing and Happiness Day being just one of the ways in which we promote positive mental health within our schools.

This term we say goodbye to a number of staff from across the federation. I would like to thank them for all they have done to support the pupils and wish them the best for the future.

With best wishes

Mark Rose  
Executive Principal



## **NEW GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN APPOINTED**

### **Maggie Carter – Chair of Governors**



Maggie is fulfilling the role of Chair of Governors.

She has been Chair of Mill Water Special School governing body since 2016. Professionally, she worked as a special school teacher and an educational psychologist, before becoming assistant director of Children's Services in Plymouth. She retired from that role in 2013.

She has always been passionate about the education of children with special needs and is pleased to have the opportunity to work with Oakland's and Ratcliffe at this stage in their development.

Personally, Maggie is married with two grown up children and loves singing.

### **Brenda Steel – Governor Representative for Safeguarding**



Brenda is a co-opted governor who has a background in school governance. She was the manager of Governor Services in North Tyneside prior to her move to Somerset County Council as Senior Adviser for School Governance & Leadership.

Since 2012 Brenda has been an independent consultant trainer on school governance. She is currently a Director of St Christopher's Multi-Academy Trust and a Member of the Vector Learning Trust.

Brenda lives locally with her partner. She enjoys singing, performing musicals and when her knees allow, playing golf!

### **Martin Callaghan**



Martin began his career in the manufacturing industry before becoming a director and partner of several small consulting firms in the field of IT-led business change.

In 1988 he joined London Underground and worked in business planning, corporate strategy and change management, before becoming a Board member responsible for major commercial contracts. From 2004-2011 he was a partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers working mainly on large public sector infrastructure projects.

Martin has held a number of non-executive director roles, including chairing finance and audit committees, mostly in the public sector. Most recently, he was chair of the Green Deal Finance Company, a government-funded business to help householders improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Martin has been active in school governance for over 25 years both at local level, and nationally as a governor of the National College for School Leadership from 2006-2012 and currently as a National Leader of Governance. He is chair of South West Schools Federation (which includes Woolacombe, Combe Martin and Bampton primary schools) and chair designate of Alumnis, a six school MAT (including the SWSF schools )currently being formed. He is also a governor and chair of the Resources committee of Mill Water Special School.

### **Dr Paul Gray**



Paul was Deputy Chief Education Officer for Devon between 1990 and 1996. He went on to be CEO and DCS for Surrey for the following decade. He set up the UK's first integrated children's service and also the first public/private partnership for school support services which developed into Babcock.

He had many national roles including chair of the influential QCA Curriculum Committee and board member of the National Youth Agency. He was Lord Dearing's personal adviser on Education and Social Care.

In 2006 he was invited to be part of the (then) Prime Minister's Delivery Unit and led interventions in underperforming Councils.

He is a senior Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a Visiting Professor and in 2004 was honoured with the Freedom of the City of London for services to education.

Prior to that he was a senior officer in Cambridgeshire and developed the Local Management of Schools and Colleges. Previously he was an academic, teacher and college Vice-Principal.

He is mostly retired and devotes himself to voluntary work. Amongst other things he is Chair of the Exeter Council for Voluntary Service, a Governing Body chair and trustee of a number of charities.

He lives in Exeter with his wife and teenage son.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

Each term we focus on a safeguarding topic as part of our on-going training. We highlight this topic with staff and students where relevant and this is done by creating awareness, sending out information to staff, fact sheets and quizzes for staff.

This half terms topic has been Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) which is an increasingly high profile issue that affects children and young people of all backgrounds and from all communities. CSE is not restricted to urban areas such as large towns and cities, but does often happen in rural areas such as villages and coastal towns.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate, or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

In one month alone, Barnado's services work with on average 126 children who have been affected by CSE. If a child has a disability they are even more vulnerable to the dangers of sexual exploitation - up to three or four times greater, with young people with learning or communication difficulties thought to be at particular risk.

If you would like to read a case study on the subject please follow this link:  
<http://csethesigns.scot/case-studies/jessicas-case-study> .

Pace is the leading national charity working with parents and carers of sexually exploited children and if you have any concerns please follow this link:  
[www.paceuk.info](http://www.paceuk.info)

Last week, the safeguarding leads attended a conference on 'Safeguarding Children in the digital world' which has brought us many new ideas for next half-term's topic : 'Digital Safety'.

The school's Safeguarding Policy has been updated and is available on the website.

**By Rachel Addison**

## SCHOOL NEWS

### SPORTS NEWS

It's been another busy Half Term with pupils working hard in their PE lessons across both schools. Post 16 pupils and Chestnuts Class from Oaklands have been coming to Ratcliffe for New Age Curling and Archery sessions which have been very popular. Year 11 pupils at Ratcliffe have been working hard to finish PE Entry Level assessments and we hope for some really good results this Summer.

Exeter Chiefs have been involved with Ratcliffe pupils on a Friday afternoon. We have welcomed Aaron Struminski who has been our coach for eight weeks. Pupils have experienced progressive sessions starting with Tag Rugby type games and moving on to some carefully structured 'contact' drills and exercises. The sessions were very popular and we hope they will come back next year.

Last Friday both schools held their own Sport Relief Mile events. Pupils bought wrist bands and ran various distances set up on tracks around the school sites. It never fails to amaze me the grit and determination our pupils show when they take part in this activity. We had pupils from all key stages running distances from 1 mile to 6 miles which was brilliant. Between both schools we



managed to raise over £150. A very big well done to everyone who helped or took part in this event.



Finally Ratcliffe have been playing lots of Boccia which is an inclusive bowling game that requires not only skill but mental determination. This culminated in our annual Inter-Homebase Boccia competition.

As the Summer Term approaches I would like to ask parents and carers to remind pupils they will need their PE kit for all lessons and also to remember Sun Safety which includes using sunhats and sun screen if they are in sunlight for prolonged periods of time, not forgetting that we also need to keep hydrated and take regular drinks.

**By Fran Fox**

## **TREE PLANTING**



We have had a fantastic donation of 400 trees from the Woodland Trust which will be planted in various areas on the campus to help the environment. Pupils have thought of a name for their tree and made a colourful label to attach to it. We have a fantastic selection including Silver Birch, Wild Cherry, Elder, Goat Willow, Hazel, Rowan, Oak, Crab Apple, Dogwood, Holly, Hawthorne, Dog Rose, Downy Birch. They have come in little plugs about a foot high.

Pupils will be able to see their trees grow and we have planned more activities in the future to learn more about trees and woodland habitats through the Woodland Trust activities.

## **WELLBEING AND HAPPINESS DAY**

We had a great day across the school thinking about and helping our own wellbeing. We accepted a challenge to complete all ten of our 10-a-day Mental Health Activities, getting our sheet stamped and getting a gold medal each when we completed them.

There were lots of fun interactive tasks all day and even a bouncy castle in the hall to bounce around on. All of the classes received a gold medal certificate for a positive and happy day.

## **WORLD BOOK DAY**

We celebrated World Book Day by dressing up as our favourite characters from our favourite books. There were lots of brilliant costumes and we had a big parade in assembly.



## VISIT TO EXETER MOSQUE

On the 27<sup>th</sup> our classes who have been studying Islam paid a visit to Exeter Mosque. We met the Imam who told us about the 5 Pillars of Islam and about his life as a follower of the Muslim faith. We had lots of great questions and answers and our behaviour was excellent. We really liked the big dome and the thick carpets and the quietness of the



place. Some pupils were able to recognise the Minarets and their meanings from outside the building. We also asked questions about the moon shapes on the outside of the buildings which the Imam was able to explain is a representation of the months in Islam and is in fact shared with Chinese and other calendars. We were able to have a look around the Mosque and after we took off our shoes we could go in the wash area (Wudu) and the Grand Hall. We saw the classrooms (madrassa) and were given some orange juice and biscuits!

**By Will Stevens and Year 8 Pupils**



## **RESIDENTIAL NEWS**

Even with the snow making us close for a weekend, we have had a fantastic half term, packed full with exciting activities.

### **CINEMA TRIPS**



Cinema trips are forever popular and this term the young people have been to the cinema to see Black Panther, the American superhero film based on the Marvel Comics character of the same name. We will be going again before the end of term to see the newly released Peter Rabbit – just in time for Easter!

### **SWIMMING**

Keeping fit is always high on our agenda along with having fun. We have our own pool here at Oaklands and we have been using our own pool alongside regular trips to nearby Cofton Park and the Dawlish Leisure Centre.

### **LASER TAG**

The most popular game in the Residences at the moment is Laser Tag. We have just bought this fantastic piece of kit with of 6 “lasers” which shoot light beams to targets on the other handsets on each team. Each handset has three lives, so dodging your opponent and trying to tag them is the aim of the game. There have been lots of fast paced battles with the contestants running all over the houses, they have even taken to the woods with them! When the weather really starts to improve it will be a fantastic way to get out and run around in the sunshine.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Birthdays never go by without some sort of celebration here, and this term has been no different. One young person’s special day was celebrated by having a really lovely local walk in the evening followed by a take-away Fish and Chip supper.

On another trip everyone went to Buffet City in Exeter to enjoy delights from the Chinese Buffet. There was an amazing array of puddings for afters, including a chocolate fountain and we were surprised with a free birthday cake and everyone singing happy birthday.



Exeter's Clip and Climb was the location of another Young Person's celebrations for their birthday. Everyone had a great time trying out all the different walls – safely attached to a harness. The Care Staff also had a great time.

## **LEAVING PARTY**

All the residents and residential staff at Ratcliffe and Oaklands have been holding events to mark the end of term before going into our new residential provision. Fantastic food was enjoyed by all. These positive events have enabled us to say goodbye to some of the staff team.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Monday Night is Social Night! The young people from Oaklands and Ratcliffe have been spending time together before becoming one merged school. We have had some really fun evenings including clay modelling. We had some fantastic models made - from elephant faces to dragons and there were also some amazing bowls and cups too. The creativity of our young people is really great to see.

Of course, who doesn't love a trip out to the shops? There were a number of special shopping trips out, to get bits and pieces for young people to personalise their rooms and to get occasional treats.

We have also had a DVD night when a couple of our young people chose Paddington 2, so we all settled down to watch the adventures of the little bear. However, we didn't have popcorn. We had something even better: Homemade cookies! Especially made by one of our young people for the all of the residents - they were delicious!

FOOTNOTE TO ALL PARENTS



Please be reminded that school starts for all pupils on

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

and not on the Monday as this will be an inset day for Staff.

School will start at the usual 'start of new term' timings for both schools.