



## Doncaster School for the Deaf Newsletter

**February 2025**



The first half term of 2025 has been a very interesting and inspiring one for pupils. Various trips supporting learning have taken place, younger pupils have been learning about shapes and African folklores whilst our older pupils have been revising hard for their upcoming GCSE exams with lots of mocks taking place in preparation.

### Speak Up project

This term the Speak Up pupils worked with Ian Byatt, a local graffiti artist. Pupils enjoyed practising different graffiti techniques and experimenting with different designs. They looked the part in their protective clothing and masks! Ian worked with the group over several weeks. They created some amazing work!



### Yorkshire Wildlife Park

Some of our Year 7 pupils visited Yorkshire Wildlife Park to get inspiration for writing poems in class. They were very lucky to get up close to the giraffes and one of the polar bears too. The lions were awake and they watched them climbing to the top of the rock and come out from hiding underneath it. Pupils are now ready to write some diamond poems in their lessons back in school. Some of their favourite animals were the lions, the sunbathing lemurs and the polar bears.

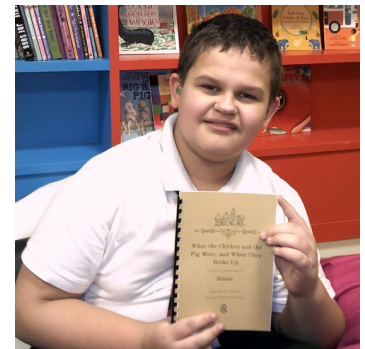


# Grimm & Co Workshop

Our KS2 and 3 pupils had a fantastic time visiting Grimm and Co in Rotherham for a story making workshop. They all worked together to create an amazing story which will be published into a book for each person to keep - we are all very excited for them to arrive in the post! Pupils came up with lots of ideas for the magical characters, setting and plot. We all really enjoyed looking around the Grimm and Co apothecary shop as well - there were so many unusual and interesting things to see. One of the most exciting parts of the morning was going down the beanstalk slide - that is a much more fun way to get downstairs! Thank you to Grimm and Co for a brilliant morning which got all of our imaginations working.



Following their trip to Grimm and Co in Rotherham, pupils were delighted to receive their own work published into books in the post! The book is called 'When the Chicken and the Pig Meet... and When They Broke Up'. Pupils worked as a group to create the very funny, doomed love story between a chicken called Ava and a pig called Jimmy. Then, they each wrote their own individual ending, making each book totally unique to them. It was so exciting for pupils to see themselves as published authors. Thank you to Grimm and Co for this wonderful experience!



# BOOK FAIR

Pupils have been really enjoying the Scholastic book fair. There are so many books to choose from including books about football, dinosaurs and even Taylor Swift! The Dogman books have been especially popular. There is also lots of fun stationery and secret diaries to buy as well! By selling books at the book fair, we are earning free books for school as well which is fantastic! We will let you know how many books we sell and how many free books we can get when the fair is finished. Thank you to everyone for supporting our book fair.



## Short Story Competition

We had so many fantastic entries for our short story competition - it was very difficult to choose the winners! However, after lots of deliberation, we eventually managed to choose our five favourites:

- Funniest story - Lacey for her story entitled "Big Trouble in School", about a group of pupils causing havoc for the teachers!
- Best pictorial story - Vova for his story about a slide which sends you into space!
- Story with the best tension - Samuel, for his story entitled "Saving the Ancient Villagers" about two siblings who stepped through a portal into an ancient world!
- Story with the best narrative - Seren, for her story about a robot teacher who breaks down and needs help from passersby to fix him!
- Story with the best cliffhanger - Harmony, for her story entitled "Not on the Map" about a mysterious town where people never age.

These pupils all received a £5 voucher to spend at the book fair - we can't wait to see what they choose! Well done to everyone who entered - there was so much creativity that we think we must have some future authors in our midst!



# Pupil of the Week Award



Ryan was chosen for the award for having an excellent attitude to his learning. He is working great in English and Maths and he has increased in confidence with his BSL signing. Well done, Ryan!

Congratulations to Deontay who has been amazing. Deontay has been a very kind friend and his writing has been fantastic!



Both Lacey and Keira were presented with the award for supporting each other at football and being good friends to others.

Well done to Fatemeh! She always tries to help others, she works independently and is always polite to her friends.



Harmony was chosen for the award for working hard in class and being very kind to her friends. Well done, Harmony!

Congratulations to Vova who has improved his communication, has a good attitude to learning and is also a confident reader.



# Achievements and Recognition

Congratulations to Ms Laverack for successfully completing The National College Certificate in the Role of the Senior Mental Health Lead!



Well done to Mrs Kasperek for achieving the Signature BSL Level 2 Award!

We are immensely proud of our childrens' home, Dickson House for maintaining its 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating for the eighth consecutive year, cementing its position as a leader in specialised residential care. The report particularly emphasises how children develop self-belief and thrive through exposure to Deaf role models and the nurturing environment created by staff.



## Careers

Year 8 and Year 9 pupils visited Doncaster College. They had a tour of The Hub and looked at possible courses they would like to do after they leave us. They looked at sports, electricians, construction and beauty courses.

Lacey, a Year 11 pupil has enjoyed a variety of taster sessions in the Communication Specialist College this half term including catering, hairdressing and beauty.



Vicky and Sandy from The Children's Air Ambulance came to speak to the pupils about the amazing work they do to support the transport of very poorly children to hospitals that have the specialist equipment to support their care. Secondary pupils learned about the jobs that they could do to support the charity's work and voluntary opportunities they could do to help - they can help from the age of 16! What an amazing charity!

# Religious Education

As part of the RE curriculum, Year 7 have been learning about the specific features within different denominations of Christian churches. They went to find the features they had learned about Anglican Churches in the Doncaster Minster. Mr Wright gave us a tour and even let us see underneath the organ - did you know that Doncaster Minster's organ has 6,500 pipes? Wow!



## Visit to Mayflower Animal Sanctuary

Year 7 pupils had an exciting visit to the Mayflower Animal Sanctuary in Bawtry. They had a look around the sanctuary and met some of the animals. The sanctuary looks after cats and dogs; they even had a dog from Romania. Luckily, that dog has been reserved and was going to a new family soon. Everyone had the opportunity to meet and pet a large, long haired white dog and one of the little kittens. Pupils had a great time and asked lots of interesting questions. In fact, we suspect that there will be lots of requests at home for a new cat or dog!

## Panathlon

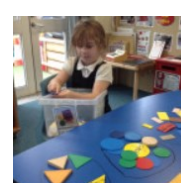
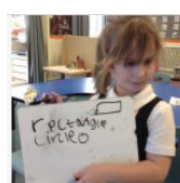
Primary pupils had a great time competing in the Panathlon with Active Fusion. Pupils put their best effort into every activity and worked together to get the best scores they could. Everyone had lots of fun and every pupil received a medal for all their hard work. They were an amazing team!



# Primary Year 1 & 2

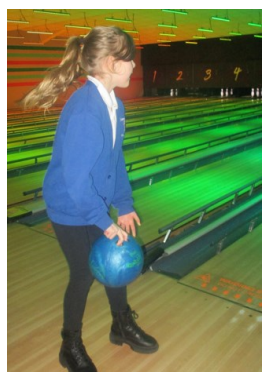
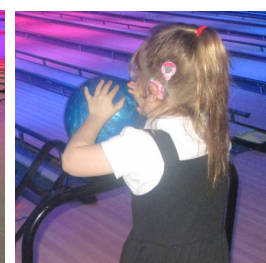
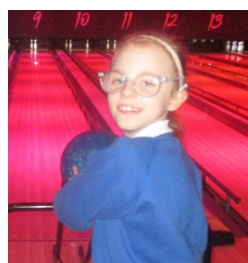
Deontay has worked really hard this half term. He is able to sort and match 2D and 3D shapes and he can identify how 2D and 3D relate. Deontay tries really hard to draw the shapes, counting the sides to make sure he has the right amount. He is able to find 2D shapes and 3D shapes in the environment. Well done Deontay!

Emily has demonstrated lots of resilience when learning about shapes. At first, she found the questions about shapes and their properties quite challenging. However, she now relishes the challenge. She is making amazing progress. Well done, Emily!



They have also been learning about African folklore stories and Chinese New Year and have worked really hard.

## Bowling Competition



Our primary pupils recently took part in the Active Fusion Panathlon Bowling competition. There were lots of schools competing, and the pupils definitely did DSD proud with a combined score of 541! A big well done to Emily, who scored the most points - 96! Everyone had a fantastic time!

## FICS and smILE Therapy

Pupils recently visited The Oakwood Surgery in Cantley as part of the FICS and smILE therapy programmes that they are participating in during PSHE lessons. Both programmes aim to support pupils to develop practical communication strategies and social skills for use in everyday life. As part of their visit the pupils role played a consultation with a GP, booking an appointment at reception and filling in a registration form. All pupils worked exceptionally hard and amazed us with their communication skills. Thank you very much to Dr Dean Eggitt and all the staff at The Oakwood Surgery for supporting this.



## Geography

Some of our pupils have been having a great time working on practical things to explore in Geography. Their first task was to make up the layers of our planet with plasticine. They cut up their models and labelled the different layers. Pupils then focussed on the outer layers and learned about tectonic plates.

There was a tasty treat to show how the plates move and how the different movements create earthquakes and volcanos.

We discovered how a volcano erupts and how the magma makes up layers of rock over time. Pupils did this experiment with play-doh and a reaction between vinegar and baking powder. They all think Geography is amazing! There are some interesting BBC bitesize videos for anyone interested - Plate tectonics - CCEA - BBC Bitesize.

Thank you to Miss Williams for all her special ideas and experiments, everyone had a “mag”- nificent time !!!!!



# University of Derby

A group of secondary pupils went to visit the University of Derby to explore career choices linked to Science. They learned about Biological, Forensic and Biomedical Science. Pupils engaged well with the sessions, the university lecturers presented their topics in an interesting and intriguing way. The sessions were also attended by other Deaf pupils from Deaf schools from around the country and BSL interpreters were provided by the university.

During the Forensic Science hands-on session, pupils had to press their fingers onto glass bottles, then brush the bottles before scrutinising them for patterns of fingerprints. Everyone felt as though they were in a CSI (forensics) programme as it felt so real!

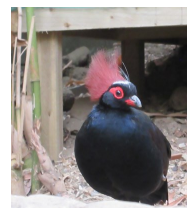
In Biomedical Science, real blood was examined in a careful, progressive way before using the latest technology in microscopes to look for rounded, enlarged cells. The lecturer was impressed with how quickly our pupils found the cells.

The hospitality of the university was fantastic, the staff were friendly and knowledgeable. Pupils were all given a university goodie bag on leaving the event. Everyone had a great time and found the day very inspiring! Thank you, University of Derby!



## Tropical World visit

A group of Y7 pupils visited Tropical World in Leeds. They were excited to see lots of different animals, some that they have never seen before. Pupils loved the stingray, the birds, the huge catfish and the meerkats. They got a little scared when they saw some of the animals, especially the tarantula and the snakes! Pupils did lovely work looking at how the animals move to help them get ready to create some performance poetry over the coming weeks.



# Message from the Headteacher

*Dear Parents*

*I am saddened to inform you that after over 30 years at the school, I will be retiring in August 2025.*

*I am incredibly proud of the amazing staff and pupils who will continue to drive the school forward.*

*The Trust is currently in the process of recruiting a new headteacher for September 2025.*

*Thank you for all your support over the years.*

*Jane*

(2008)



## Exam dates- advance notice

Year 11 GCSEs will take place from 30 April to 16 June 2025.  
(Contingency date—25 June 2025).

### IMPORTANT DATES

Friday 14th February 2025	School closes for half term
Monday 24th February 2025	School re-opens
Friday 28th March 2025	School closes for half term
Monday 14th April 2025	School re-opens
Thursday 17th April 2025	School closes for Easter
Tuesday 22nd April 2025	School re-opens
Friday 2nd May 2025	School closes for bank holiday
Tuesday 6th May 2025	School re-opens
Friday 23rd May 2025	School closes for half term
Monday 2nd June 2025	School re-opens
Friday 18th July 2025	School closes for summer
Monday 21st July 2025	Training day (school closed to pupils)
Tuesday 22nd July 2025	Training day (school closed to pupils)
Wednesday 23rd July 2025	Training day (school closed to pupils)
Wednesday 3rd September 2025	School re-opens