School Newsletter- End of Term 1

Danecourt School



A Message from the Headteacher



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of a long and busy first term, I would like to thank you for your continued support. It has been wonderful to see how well all the children have settled, particularly those who are new to Danecourt. We are so proud of the positive start they have made!

The children have loved exploring our new outdoor learning environment, including our forest school and horticulture areas. These spaces provide fantastic opportunities to explore, play, learn and develop independence, and we look forward to making even more use of them next term.

I am delighted to share that we have successfully retained our Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence status. This recognises the dedication of our staff and our commitment to ensuring every child feels valued, supported and able to achieve their potential.

We were particularly pleased with the feedback shared by our parents and carers during the review. One parent described the support from Danecourt as "life changing", while another praised our communication as "nothing short of amazing". It means so much to hear how we make a difference to your children and families. Thank you to everyone who shared their experiences.

Our wraparound care and holiday provision continue to grow in popularity. We are pleased that, following positive feedback from families, our breakfast club is now open to all Danecourt pupils. We are delighted to be able to offer more families access to this familiar, welcoming provision.

We have some fantastic news to share! Yesterday, we received the green light from the Department for Education for our proposed new secondary school. The school will provide places for 250 pupils aged 11-19, creating exciting opportunities for our children as they move into secondary education and beyond.

We are continuing to work with Medway Council and Bailey Partnership on the building design so that we can move to the next stage of the process. We will keep you updated as this exciting project progresses!

As we head into the half-term break, I hope you all enjoy some well-deserved time together. I look forward to welcoming everyone back for Term 2.

Cathryn

Ant's Class Blog

Ants class have had a great start to the new school year. The children have settled into their new routines extremely well and have built lovely relationships with the adults. We have been focusing on communication and the use of communication boards to make requests and comments. We have also been working on following visuals during transitions and some children are now independently requesting and taking themselves to the toilet. Ants class have had the opportunity to explore our extended learning environment, with some children visiting Tesco to choose their favourite biscuits for snack time; they all transitioned extremely well and were able to make their choices. We are looking forward to an exciting term ahead focused on fabulous festivals as well as continuing our community outings to build life skills.





The Engage Track had a fantastic memorable experience session with Poppy Pop's. The children were able to immerse themselves in a variety of sensory experiences. A favourite was definitely the balloon igloo, where the children loved being inside with the balloons swirling around them. Next term, we have some festive donkeys making an exciting appearance!

Lion's Class Blog

This term, Lion Class took their learning out into the community with an exciting Experiential Learning Education (ELE) trip to Tesco!







Equipped with their shopping lists and budget, the pupils explored the aisles to search for, compare, and purchase fresh ingredients for an upcoming hands-on cooking activity. It was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to put their functional math, communication, and practical life skills to the test in a real-world setting—and they did a brilliant job taking full charge of their shopping experience!

Getting To Know Our New Leadership Staff



Candice Smith - Deputy Headteacher

I am proud to join the Danecourt family and the wider Maritime Academy Trust as Deputy Headteacher.

As a dedicated SEND practitioner, my passion lies in fostering independence and supporting the personal development of every child. I firmly believe that true inclusion means giving pupils the confidence, life skills and self-belief they need to navigate the world around them and achieve their full potential.

I look forward to getting to know you all, immersing myself in school life and contributing to Danecourt's ongoing success. Please do stop and say hello if you see me around the school!



Judi Beggs - Assistant Headteacher for Outreach and Inclusion

I am pleased to introduce myself as the new Assistant Headteacher for Outreach and Inclusion working with Danecourt School and the Maritime Academy Trust.

I am an experienced SEND practitioner who is passionate about inclusion and about working collaboratively with schools, staff, children and families to help ensure the best possible opportunities and outcomes for every child.

I am very pleased to be joining the Danecourt community and look forward to working with the team, getting to know the school and contributing to its continued development.

A Message from our Occupational Therapist - Tasmin

The Occupational Therapy Team have enjoyed welcoming the children back and supporting them to settle into their new classes, which has included sensory circuits and sensory diets.

We have been making therapy programs to be delivered in our sensory rooms next term including the lovely Meadow Room.

We are pleased to host our first parent workshop of this academic year and look forward to hosting more. If you have any requests for parent workshop topics just let us know and we will be happy to arrange these.

A Message from our Therapy Team

It's been a busy term for the Danecourt Therapy team. In term 1 we spend lots of time ensuring that all resources, equipment and knowledge about children is handed over and implemented in their new class and with new class team members. We are also busy reviewing progress made over the summer, and assessing the children who are new to school:

Watch out for Makaton monday every week - Arriving on Class Dojo and social media every Monday morning.



Intense planning is underway for our children who have physiotherapy plans and are starting hydrotherapy next term.



Our workshops have been really well attended this term, and feedback has been great. Parents were able to take home their child's sensory circuit plan and had the opportunity to learn how to use the equipment effectively to deliver a circuit at home, as well as having the opportunity to try therapeutic brushing.

A Message from our Therapy Team







The Interoceptive curriculum

This term, Spider class, Stingray class, and Turtle class have joined in activities to explore their sense of interoception - our body's system for recognising and interpreting the body signals that help your brain understand how your body feels and what it needs to stay balanced.

We have just completed week five of the interoception curriculum - noticing how our ears feel. This follows observing feelings in our hands, feet, mouth, and eyes.

The ALERT programme

This term has been extremely successful for the Alert programme , Robyn and Eliisa have spent all term completing the alert programme with the children in hedgehog and owl class, We have also completed staff training with all the explore track staff to support them in this further.

SCERTS assessments are underway for all new starters at school and an intensive therapy 'two weeks' at our Featherby site has been completed. The therapy team spent time getting to know and understand the needs of all of our new children across the two classes. The SCERTS approach is used to













Discover Memorable Experience

The Discover Track children were very excited to welcome Little City Mobile Role Play on Tuesday 13th October!

It was wonderful to see the children's enthusiasm, creativity and confidence shine as they learned through play and enjoyed this exciting experience with their peers!

The children thoroughly enjoyed immersing themselves in a variety of imaginative role-play experiences.

They explored different scenarios, interacted with their peers and worked together, developing their communication, social and teamwork skills along the way.

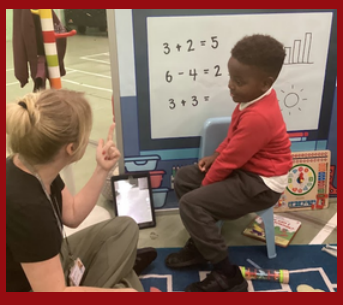













Wraparound Care

Our wraparound Care provision offers a fun, safe and supportive environment for children before and after the school day.

Breakfast club runs from 8-9am and costs £6
After school runs until 4:30pm (£9) and 5:30pm (£15)

Children enjoy a range of activities and everything is tailored to meet the needs of our children!

For more information or to book in a space please email - clubs@danecourt-maritime.org
If you are in receipt of universal credits you may be able to claim back some of the fees. You can also use short break grants & tax free child care accounts to pay for wrap around



Charlotte Morgan
Community Ambassador



Carly Tydeman
Parent Partnership Lead

Thank you to all the Parent's who attended our coffee mornings this term. It was so lovely to see so many of you. We hope you found the information from Short Breaks and Medway Parent Carer Forum Helpful.

We also enjoyed a collaborative coffee morning with Featherby Primary School which was lovely.

Our coffee mornings provide a space for parents to connect and for us to provide information regarding community services, please keep an eye on Dojo for next term's dates.

Thank you for all your contributions for our Harvest Festival collection which will be used to support our school community. We hope to see you next term.





Community Events

















A Message from FADS

well done!

We are pleased to announce that the project to install an embankment slide on the hill on the field at Danecourt@Gillingham is now complete. Please see the artwork below showing what it will look like. **FADS raised a huge £7000** towards this project, an achievement we are really proud of.

We have also got the Christmas Grotto planned for the **11th, 12th and 13th December**. You are able to book a slot using the QR code below. There are still slots available, but please ensure you book early as we will be opening this up to the wider community.

We are Delighted to welcome an incredible 10 new members to FADS. They have all gained the same excellent ideas as to how we can support the school, so it has been an amazing start to the new year.





Year 6 PGL!









Year 6 PGL Adventure!

Our Year 6 students recently set off on their much-anticipated PGL residential trip, and what an unforgettable weekend it was!
From paddling through the water during canoeing sessions to soaring high on the trampolines and navigating the thrilling sensory trails, the children threw themselves into every challenge with enormous energy and enthusiasm. Alongside these highlights, they tackled a host of other exciting outdoor activities, pushing past their comfort zones, building incredible team spirit, and creating memories that will last a lifetime.
We are so proud of the bravery, resilience, and support they showed one another throughout the trip.















Our new And Improved Forest School









A huge thank you to Alice for creating such an amazing outdoor learning space for our children.

As a team, we were completely overwhelmed by how our students interacted, engaged and were motivated throughout all the activities you have provided our pupils with opportunities to explore, develop their confidence and experience learning in such a wonderful, natural setting.

From reading, colouring and music, to the mud kitchen, water potions and bug exploring... just WOW!

Every activity offered something special, and seeing our pupils so engaged and motivated was truly amazing. Today was a beautiful reminder of how meaningful and powerful learning can be when children are given the space, time and opportunities to explore at their own pace.













