# Parent Newsletter October 2026

Tany's Dell Primary School

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## Message from Mrs Penney

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*Dear Families,*

*How quickly a month has flown by since the last newsletter. We have been very busy in school; staff and children alike are working so hard every day. Since last time, I have got to put more names to faces and have really enjoyed getting to know the families of Tany's Dell.*

*Along with our Phonics Lead, Mrs Mukherjee, I attended some training this week. We are changing to a different provider for our phonics resources and it has certainly given us a new injection of enthusiasm and excitement for the delivery of phonics. It is engaging, thorough and*

*has had great results, both Nationally and in schools I have worked in previously. We are sure that the children will like it just as much as we do. The phonics system itself is the same: children learn sounds, then start to blend those sounds together to make short words, before progressing onto reading sentences fluently. The books that will soon come home look a little different, and the children may come home and tell you all about Fred the Frog, who is a cute character that appears and helps them with their learning in phonics. We have a workshop planned, so that you can learn more about phonics - do check the dates section.*

*Another piece of training we had recently was our workshop with the 'Two Johns'. These guys have been around for years and there is nothing they don't know about Internet Safety. I hope the children enjoyed their talks with the Two Johns and that some of you were able to dial in to the parent workshop too. After discussion with the team, we think the most important takeaways were:*

Making childhood memories: *We all have childhood memories, good and bad, and this is such an important part of growing up, but every hour on a phone is time lost. Connections and experiences in the real world can be be balanced with time on screens, but making meaningful memories should be prioritised.*

Cameras: *It was quite scary hearing the statistics about very young children who have a a device in their bedroom (unsupervised) that is connected the internet and has a camera on it. All of our children are young and vulnerable and unfortunately, the risks are very real. Do supervise your children or limit their access to cameras and the internet to ensure their safety. We need to remember that we would not let our children stay in a bedroom with a stranger; essentially the device with a camera could be worse.*

My Happy Mind: *The lessons and resources known as 'My Happy Mind' have been really good for teaching children in simple terms, about the science of how to stay healthy and about how the strategies really work. I hope your child has told you about the work they do in school in their 'My Happy Mind' sessions.*

Privacy settings: *although we don't advise you to allow your child to use Whatsapp, the reality is that some of our children are already using it. If you have made the decision to allow it, there is some really good advice on how to set up Whatsapp privacy settings so that your child cannot be added to groups they don't want to be a part of. Take a look in: WhatsApp, settings, privacy, groups.*

Just innocent gaming? *Evidence shows that games like Roblox and Minecraft, among others, are hotspots for children being targeted, exploited and groomed, which can lead to real harm to your child. Please be aware of the minimum age and always supervise your child, ensuring that they are not communicating with strangers within the games or accessing inappropriate content. They may not tell you directly if something happens, as they don't want you to take their game or device away, but we as the adults have a duty to protect children from potential harm via these games. You could try setting some ground rules, such as if they are on the game, the bedroom door stays open for regular check-ins and that they always inform you if an unknown person makes contact.*

*Lastly I want to thank you for helping us with our commitment to providing a phone-free environment for our children. After a long day of learning, children are released onto the playground and it must be strange and unsettling for them to see a sea of people staring at phones. The school is a much improved, healthier place now that parents and children are engaging and making eye contact with one another. I know that phones are addictive and can be a 'safe space' for anyone who is feeling social anxiety; I also appreciate that many of us rely heavily on our phones for work purposes. So I mean it from the heart when I say THANK YOU for making this effort. The children directly benefit from this change and it is a much safer, happier place.*

*Best wishes,*

*Mrs Jennifer Penney*

*Headteacher*

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## Notices

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- APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL SPACE RECEPTION 2026-27*: Do you have a child that is due to start Reception in September 2027? We have a tour on Friday 16th October at 2.30pm. Please let the office team know if you would like to book to join. Applications for a primary (reception) school place starting September 2027 can be made between 9*

*November 2026 and 15 January 2027, please use the following link to apply via Essex online Primary school places | Essex County Council*[1]

- PTA and school fundraisers: *The dates calendar has been sent to you in an email. As the year progresses, we would love to add more fun events to the diary, so that we can raise money for projects in school. We now need to set up a proper PTA to move forward. One parent has made me aware that she is interested in officially starting a PTA, so that is a great start. There is a coffee morning in December (check the dates section) specifically to talk about this so do attend if you can seriously commit to setting up a new PTA. If there is enough interest, we can set up an AGM to 'vote in' members before Christmas and plan some exciting events for the Spring and Summer term. Looking forward to seeing you there.*

- *We annually update our Behviour Policy and you can find it on our website.*

- *We have made the school a mobile phone free zone. Thank you for helping us by conducting all calls, messaging, emailing, use of socials and browsing* ***off site****. Please keep your phones in bags or pockets when you are on the school grounds. Staff, children, visitors and parents are expected to follow this expectation, to help us keep all our children safe and phone free throughout the school day. Many thanks for your support.*

- *Snacks: Please remember that a free snack is provided for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. All other children are welcome to bring a fruit or veg snack from home into school each day if they wish. Also, please remember that you r child needs a refillable water bottle every day.*

- ***Spelling Shed is here!*** *We've introduced* ***Spelling Shed from EdShed*** *to help children become confident spellers. It supports step-by-step learning across the school, with regular practice to help spelling patterns stick. It also helps teachers spot where children need extra support.****What happens each week?****Children will learn a spelling rule or pattern and a set of focus words in their spelling lessons. Teachers will then set online assignments with fun games to practise these words at home.****What do families need to do?****Please help your child complete their assignments* ***each week as part of home learning****. Their login details will be in their* ***reading diary****.****How do we access it?****Visit www.edshed.com*[2] *using an internet browser on a phone, tablet or computer. Access*

[1] https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/primary-school-places
[2] https://www.edshed.com/

*through your child's school login is **free**.An optional £2.99 app is also available and allows offline play, but **there is no expectation to buy it**.Need help logging in or accessing the games? Please let your child's teacher know—we're happy to help!*

- *PE days this term are:*

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Year 3 - Monday and Thursday

Year 4 - Wednesday and Thursday

Year 1 Amber - Tuesday and Friday Year 1 Coral - Wednesday and Friday

Year 2 - Tuesday and Friday

Year 5 Navy - Monday and Thursday

Year 5 Indigo - Tuesday and Thursday

Year 6 - Tuesday and Friday

Reception - Scarlet - Monday and Wednesday Ruby - Tuesday and Friday

*Please remember to remove any earrings on the morning of your child's PE day if your child is not able to do this themselves.*

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## Attendance Updates




*1 - Attendance matters*

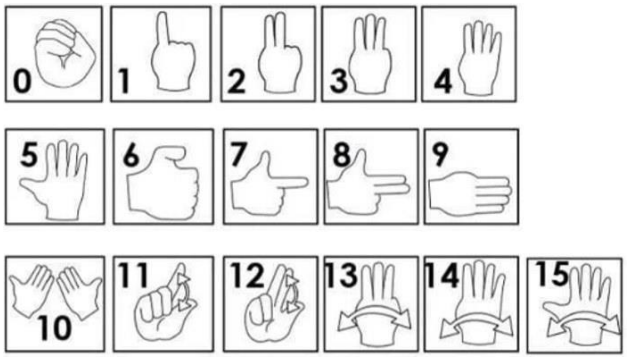
## Inclusion

**BSL** As part of promoting inclusive practice across the school, at Tany's Dell the children are taught new British Sign Language (BSL) signs in assembly, every week. They also have the weekly signs displayed on a poster in their classroom. In the newsletter, we will share with you the latest signs of the week with a link to a video to show you how to sign them correctly. You

may notice that there can be more than one sign for each word. Signs can change depending on the area of the country. At Tany's Dell we use the Essex/ London signs.

This  month we have been focusing on signing numbers from 0-15.

This link will take you to a video that shows how to do the signs correctly. How to sign numbers 1-20 in British Sign Language[3]






**Widgit** We also use Widgit symbols across the school to support communication, understanding and independence for all children. Widgit symbols provide visual representations of words and concepts, helping pupils to access learning, follow routines and develop their language skills. You will often see these symbols displayed in classrooms, around the school and within resources that are sent home.

[3]https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOlOHg6djSE

## Dates for your Diary

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***October***

*Flu Immunisations - Tuesday 13th*

*Parent Teacher Consultations - Thursday 15th* ***(children finish school at 1.30pm)***

*Half term - Monday 19th - Friday 30th*

***November***

*Children return to school Monday 2nd*

*Coffee morning 9am Phonics - Tuesday 3rd November*

*World WOW day - Friday 6th*

*School Photos - Wednesday 11th*

*Christmas Panto - Thursday 19th*

*Nursery Christmas Art Day - Friday 27th*

***December***

*Catch up Flu immunisations - Thursday 3rd*

*Coffee Morning 9am  Fundraising  and PTA  - Wednesday 9th December PLEASE COME ALONG IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SETTING UP A NEW PTA.*

*Christmas Dinner Day - Wednesday 9th December*

*KS1 Nativity Performance 2pm Thursday 10th*

*Reception Christmas songs - Friday 11th*

*Merit Assemblies - Monday 14th*

*Nursery Nativity 10:45 and 2.30 - Tuesday 15th*

*End of Term - Children finish at 1.30pm - Thursday 17th December*

***January***

*INSET DAY - Monday 4th*

*Children return to school Tuesday 5th*

*Essex road safety AM reception PM Year 5 - Monday 11th*

*Coffee Morning 9am 'How can I help my child at home?' with Mr Whitbread, Mrs Clifton and Mrs Monrowe - Tuesday 12th January*

***February***

*NSPCC Number Day - Friday 5th*

*Parents Evening 1.45-7.30 - Thursday 11th* ***(Children finish school at 1.30pm)***

*Spring Half Term - 15th-19th*

*Children return to school - Monday 22nd*

***March***

*World book WOW day - Friday 5th*

*Science week - 8th-14th*

*Merit Assemblies - Monday 22nd March*

*Easter Bonnet Parade EYFS and KS1 - Wednesday 24th*

*Y3-Y5 Music Concert - Wednesday 24th*

*2026-27 Full Term dates can be found here: Term Dates | Tany's Dell Primary School*[4]

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## News




*2 - **HARVEST FESTIVAL***

Thank you for all of the kind donations for our Harvest Festival Assembly. We were very fortunate to have a volunteer in from the Food Bank to explain to the children how all of the donations are distributed.



*3 - **MACMILLAN CAKE SALE***

[4] https://www.tanysdell.essex.sch.uk/news-events/term-dates

Our cake sale was a huge success, so much so, we held it over two afternoons. Without your very generous donations of cakes we would not of been able to raise over £193.00

It was great to have members of the school council help out. I am sure they enjoyed the selling as much as Mrs Martin did!

Macmillan events raise vital funds to support the almost 3.5 million people in the UK living with cancer.

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***Good Beginnings***

***Parent/ Carer Sessions***

***This course for parents and carers of children aged 5 or under, who are autistic or have social communication needs.*** *A diagnosis of autism is not needed to access the course.*

*This 8 week course covers:Week 1 – Introduction to Autism*

*Week 2 – Understanding Social Communication*

*Week 3 – Stages of Communication*

*Week 4 – Sensory Processing*

*Week 5 – Play*

*Week 6 – Emotional Regulation*

*Week 7 – Eating, Sleeping & Toileting*

*Week 8 – Moving on*

***Various Locations across Essex, and an on-line offer:Autumn Term Venues:***

*Alderton Junior School, Loughton.*

*Tanglewood Nursery, Chelmsford.*

*Megacentre Rayleigh*

*Jaywick Community Centre*

***Spring Term Venues:***

*Chesterfords Community Centre*

*Maldon Town Hall*

*Barleylands, Billericay*

*Online*

***Summer Term Venues:***

*Latton Bush Centre, Harlow*

*Spring Lodge Community Centre, Witham*

*King George Playing Fields, Brentwood*

*Kingsland Church, Colchester*

***To register your interest and to find out more details please visit:***

***https://send.essex.gov.uk/search-support-groups-and-activities/good-beginnings-course***

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## Contact Us

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*Tany's Dell Primary School*

*Mowbray Road*

*Harlow*

*Essex*

*CM20 2LS*

*For all queries please contact parents@tanysdell.essex.sch.uk*[5]

*All emails will be forwarded to the appropriate member of staff (please note that we do receive a high volume of emails daily and endeavor to respond within 48 hours).*

*01279 866230*

*Visit our website at Tany's Dell Primary School*[6]

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[5] mailto:parents@tamysdell.essex.sch.uk
[6] https://www.tanysdell.essex.sch.uk/