

by Simon Banks

**OLD McDonald had a farm...and now so do pupils at De Lucy Primary school.**

They are the only children in the borough to have their own farm and their animal attraction is inspiring pupils with all aspects of their learning.

What started as a project where children supervised eggs and baby chicks has turned into a full working farm.

Headteacher Linda Cohen wanted to give pupils something unique and, looking out of the window one day three years ago, imagined a farm right in the middle of the grounds.

Debbie Woodger, the farm manager, said: "We started with the eggs and chickens and that led to ducks and a pond, then we got the goats and we built this space for the animals."

The farm has large pens for a Shetland pony, two pygmy goats, two kunekune pigs and a small pot-belly pig.

There are smaller pens for chickens, rabbits, guinea pigs and hedgehogs and a separate pen and pond for ducks.

"A few of the animals here are rescued, we found our newest animal, Chops the pot-belly pig, running around Abbey Wood and we gave him a loving home.

"We have also taken baby ducks on in the past who need some care and attention before we let them back into the wild," added Mrs Woodger.

The farm has been teaching the children very valuable lessons in taking responsibility for animals and how to behave around animals as well as much more.

Wayne Bushell, aged 9, said: "Every year a different year group gets to do a farm topic and you get to draw and sketch the animals. I drew the pony and my favourite animal is the hedgehog."

Year 6 pupil Alfie Fowler, aged 10, said: "I would like even more animals, perhaps a sheep." Wayne, from Year 5, said: "I would like a giraffe or maybe a zebra."

Mrs Cohen added: "The farm is a very important part of our school curriculum, and where children throughout the school can experience outdoor learning that enhances their life experiences.

"Working closely with the animals helps

# Telling porkies!

## Primary school sets up a farm



**INTRODUCTIONS:** pupils and a pot-bellied pig are introduced to kunekune pigs (main picture) and (inset) Debbie Woodger explains how to look after pygmy goats



the children to appreciate the care and understanding that goes into looking after them. It also assists their social skills. The pupils thoroughly enjoy having lessons on the farm and the animals respond very well to the children."

## Councils launch fire cuts battle

From page 1

and will do everything in our power to stop these fire stations from closing, and to stop fire engines from being lost."

The councils' legal challenge says the cuts are unlawful, budget-driven and will have a

serious effect on some residents' lives. Facing closure is Woolwich fire station along with Belsize in Camden, Bow in Tower Hamlets, Clerkenwell in Islington, Downham in Lewisham, Kingsland in Hackney, Knightsbridge in Kensington and

Chelsea, Silvertown in Newham, Southwark and Westminster.

The capital would also lose 14 fire engines along with 552 operational posts.

If the plans were to go ahead the fire stations would close on January 9 next year.

## Family fun day

A DAY for families to have fun together is being planned for Saturday, October 19, at the Greenwich Heritage Centre on the Woolwich Arsenal.

There will be singing, story-telling, and craft work such as making moon rocks from modelling putty and story-telling. Street dancing lessons, for older children and young teens, will take place on Drill Square. Youngsters between nine and 15 years, accompanied by a parent, can also bring a bike to the 'VeloCity' workshop for a checkover.

The event, part of the Family Learning Festival 2013, is free. It runs from 11am to 4pm. For more details visit [www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/heritagecentre](http://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/heritagecentre)

## Twins group sale

GREENWICH and Lewisham Twins Club Plus is holding a Nearly New Sale on Saturday (October 12) to raise funds for its work with families who have twins and triplets.

It is at St Michael's and All Angels Church Hall on Pond Road, from 3-5pm. Entry is £1.

Anyone who wants to book a stall for £20 can contact [twinsclubplussales@gmail.com](mailto:twinsclubplussales@gmail.com) The group provides support to about 30 families locally who have twins or triplets.

The group has a regular play and stay meeting at the church hall at 10am on Mondays, costing £3 and there is an annual fee to join formally.

Members offer support to expectant couples, organising an informal gathering to meet others

## Apprenticeship opportunities

**GLLaB**

Have you ever considered working within the fast paced environment of a leading London restaurant?

There are apprenticeship opportunities available right now for Chefs and Front of House roles.

You don't need to have worked in a kitchen before, as full training is available. You will also gain professional NVQ Level 2 qualifications. These are 12 month apprenticeships, and can lead to further career development and long-term opportunities.

Come and find out more at GLLaB's information and application session.

**Call 020 8921 2440 to book a space!**



**GLLaB**  
Greenwich Local Labour and Business

ROYAL Borough of GREENWICH