

EYFS Information Letter Summer 2022



Our curriculum themes this term are
How Does Your Garden Grow?
The Best Show of Your Life



Welcome back. We hope you had a restful and healthy Easter. A warm welcome to any new families - we hope you find Downlands to be friendly and fun. The EYFS unit consists of **FS1 Dandelions (Pre-School)** and **FS2 Chestnuts (Reception)**. If your child is in Dandelions, they will be/have been allocated a Key Worker from the FS1 team. The teacher in Chestnuts is Mrs Loveless who is supported by 3 full time adults. We continue to believe that building relationships with you as parents and carers is pivotal to caring and educating your child and we look forward to communicating with you in this final term of the academic year. We would like to use this information letter as an opportunity to share with you the wonderful opportunities and experiences we have planned for your children this term (our curriculum) to ensure that they grow, develop and flourish in our care. General information about our rules and routines and any parent messages will be shared with you via our online platform – Seesaw. Please get in touch if you do not have access to this yet or are having difficulties.

Learning in the EYFS

In the EYFS, children learn through a play based curriculum. Through play, children develop language skills, their emotions and creativity and social and intellectual skills. We plan activities and experiences for the children for both indoors and outdoors to encourage them to develop skills in all areas of learning. Some of these activities they will be able to access independently and some will be adult-led. A more structured approach is used in FS2 Chestnuts (Reception) which incorporates phonics, maths, topic themed activities, PE, Music, RE and PSHE sessions, as well as attending some assemblies. This approach has been built on throughout the year alongside our play-based curriculum.

The EYFS Framework explains how and what your child will be learning to support their development. Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- **Communication and Language**
- **Physical Development**
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **four specific areas**. These are:

- **Literacy**
- **Mathematics**
- **Understanding the world**
- **Expressive Arts and Design**

These seven areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. The curriculum is designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow the children's interests. Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outdoors. We try to incorporate as many of the children's ideas and interests as possible by 'planning in the moment'. We believe that the child's voice is important to capture their interests and allow them to take ownership of their learning. We plan activities which allow children to revisit, practise and consolidate previously learning skills to allow them to become secure and confident learners. We will be recording the wonderful things your children do using Seesaw and in FS2 through the use of a class 'floor book' which is a bit like a giant scrapbook!

Please visit this link which explains the EYFS Framework in more detail:
https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2014/08/EYFS_Parents_Guide-amended.pdf

Curriculum themes this term

This term we have planned the following themes:

- How Does Your Garden Grow? – Key texts include Billy's Sunflower, Jasper's Beanstalk, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Tiny Seed. We will be growing plants, flowers, fruit and vegetables and thinking about what they need to grow as well as naming the parts of the plant.
- Queen's Jubilee – We will be celebrating the Queen's Jubilee in many ways both in EYFS and as a whole school event.
- The Best Show of Your Life – This theme is all based around The Circus! We will be learning circus skills, becoming more confident with performing, making instruments and lots more which will build up to a performance for our families to come and watch! We even have a circus performer booked to come and teach the children some new skills (more details to follow).

Communication and Language

This area focuses on the child's ability to speak, pay attention, listen and understand. In FS1 and FS2, we provide a language rich environment which will help them to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves. We give them a range of situations to speak and listen such as circle time, group time, stories and rhymes, snack time, carpet time and through play. We promote a love of language and are always introducing new words to include in our vocabulary. We model good spoken English and encourage the children to speak in clear extended sentences.

Physical Development

This gives the children the opportunity to develop their skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. It encourages the development of both gross and fine motor skills. Both FS1 and FS2 have allocated time slots for PE in the school hall. Here, we practise the skills of movement, dance, gymnastics, ball skills and games. We continue to work with the children on their fine motor skills during our Finger Gym activities which include pencils, pens, threading, tweezers, small tools such as scissors, pegboards and lots more. The children are encouraged to think about keeping healthy and active. We are very lucky to have access to trikes, balance bikes, scooters and other wheeled toys and the space to ride them freely. We access the outside climbing frames daily so that the children have opportunities to practise climbing and develop their coordination, strength and balance. In PE this term, children in FS2 will learn some traditional dances for our annual whole school Country Dancing festival (more details to follow). EYFS will also take part in our annual Sports Day event (date TBC).

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

PSED is recognised as one of the building blocks of success in life. It supports children's development by helping them to interact effectively and develop positive attitudes towards themselves and others. We help them to develop their self-confidence and self-awareness, manage their feelings and behaviour and give them the skills they need to form healthy relationships. We promote PSED in everything we do in EYFS but we teach it explicitly through a scheme called Jigsaw which is followed by the rest of the school. In FS2, we teach vocabulary needed to solve problems. The vocabulary is progressive as they move through the school and will help them to solve problems with conflict, relationships and emotions as well as teach them self-regulation skills. This term we will put a greater focus on the changes that are to come in September. There will be upcoming changes for all of our EYFS children, whether it be a new classroom, new teacher, new school, new house and preparing them for this will be embedded in our curriculum this term.

Phonics, Reading and Writing (Literacy)

We use the Letters and Sounds scheme throughout all of the EYFS. In FS1, the focus is on speaking and listening and the children play lots of games to support this such as exploring the sounds of instruments, animals, the environment and body percussion. They listen to stories, sing rhymes, use puppets and props for role play and lots more to widen their vocabulary and help them to develop their skills in communication. In FS2 this term, we put a much greater emphasis on writing. The children will have weekly handwriting sessions on top of their daily phonics sessions. Now that the children have the phonics skills needed for reading and writing, we will be practising to write sentences for many different purposes e.g. story writing, instructions, descriptions etc. **FS2 Parents - please continue to practise letter sounds, letter formation, tricky words (reading and spelling) and daily reading of their reading book.**

In FS1 we encourage the handling of a range of books which are freely available in many areas of the base, including our outdoor area. We share our favourite stories regularly and plan activities around them. We continue to offer the children opportunities to choose books that they would like to read in our weekly library slots. We celebrate our class favourite

books through 'books of the week' and extend vocabulary through 'words of the week'. The children in EYFS also have regular story sessions with various adults in the school. In FS1 we encourage children to practise pre-writing skills such as gross motor movements (making circles in the air, using brushes to sweep) and fine motor movements (manipulating playdough, lego, mark making with sticks, brushes, chalks etc.) For those who are ready, we will begin introducing more formal methods of mark making where children can explore making marks using a range of writing implements such as pencils, crayons, felt tips, pastels, chalk. The children are taught the 'pick and flick' method to help with a secure and correct pencil grip and those who are starting school this September will begin practising to write their name.

Maths

This area of learning includes counting, matching, sorting and finding patterns through working with numbers, shape, space and measures. In FS1 we will match and sort objects, sing number rhymes, read number stories, count objects, actions, pictures and sounds and recognise basic shapes. In FS2 we will continue to develop a deeper understanding of numbers to 10. We will focus on the composition of numbers, comparing quantities, 1 more and 1 less, number bonds to 10, ordering numbers, 3D shapes, money, time, weight, height and capacity. We will also explore addition and subtraction, doubling and halving numbers.

Understanding the World

This area involves providing experiences for children to make sense of their world. Children will learn about similarities and differences between people, cultures and beliefs and communities. This is mostly taught through our PSHE curriculum (Jigsaw) and in FS2 only – Discovery RE. We will be exploring our world in the past and at present, as well as looking at the natural world around us. Our themes for this term will provide plenty of opportunities for children to develop their understanding of the world by observing plants growing and looking at seeds as well as investigating the signs and changes in Spring and Summer. Our Circus theme will allow us to look at how the circus has changed over time and the Queen's Jubilee will enable us to explore British Values.

Expressive Arts and Design

This area includes singing, making music and performing as well as telling stories and being imaginative. It also includes creating with materials such as building using construction, painting and drawing and modelling with dough, junk and other materials. The children will have plenty of opportunities to perform in music and movement sessions as well as our weekly slot in the Music Room. We are always promoting creativity in the EYFS both indoors and outdoors and will provide opportunities for child-led creative sessions as well as more structured sessions where they will be taught the skills needed for cutting, joining and assembling materials.

We will be sharing our wonderful curriculum with you through Seesaw and our Floor books, as well as celebrating the end of term with you through our circus performance.

Other events to watch out for this term:

- Forest School Weekly sessions for FS2
- Transition events for all of EYFS to get to know their new classrooms/teachers
- Country Dancing Festival
- Sports Day
- Circus Man visit
- Circus performance
- Summer Fair
- FS2 Class Assembly

Other Information

Please remember that any messages such as absences, holidays, illness etc. are phoned in via the school office (01258453348)/Dandelions direct line (01258489914) rather than sent via messages on Seesaw.

Please ask any member of the team if you have any queries.

