



Newsletter 04

20/10/2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your family are well.

Attendance

Dates for your diary!

AUTUMN TERM 2023

HALF TERM - 23rd to 27th Oct

Halloween Disco (more details to follow) - Mon 30th Oct

Year 1/2 trip to Portland Bill -

Weds 1st Nov & Fri 3rd Nov

Non-school uniform for gift raffle - Fri 3rd Nov

Non-school uniform for bottle tombola - Fri 17th Nov

Arts Week - Mon 20th to Fri 24th Nov

Downlands Xmas Fair - Fri 1st Dec

Last day of term - Fri 15th Dec

SPRING TERM 2024

TEACHER TRAINING DAY - Tues 2nd Jan

Spring term starts Weds 3rd Jan





HALF TERM 12th - 16th Feb

Last day of term - Thus 28th Mar

SUMMER TERM 2024

Summer terms starts Mon 15th Apr

HALF TERM 27th - 31st May

			
97.2%	96.0%	96.8%	97.1%

Well done to **Falcon** and **Rhino** who are meeting our school target of at least 97% attendance after 7 weeks of school.

Attendance really matters and over a full year (39 school weeks), the following table illustrates how many days and lessons could be missed if good attendance is not maintained:

What does the attendance percentage really mean?		
Attendance %	Days Lost	Lessons Missed
100%	0 Days	0 lessons
97%	1 Week	20 lessons
94%	2 Weeks	40 lessons
90%	4 weeks	80 lessons
85%	6 Weeks	120 lessons
80%	8 Weeks	160 lessons

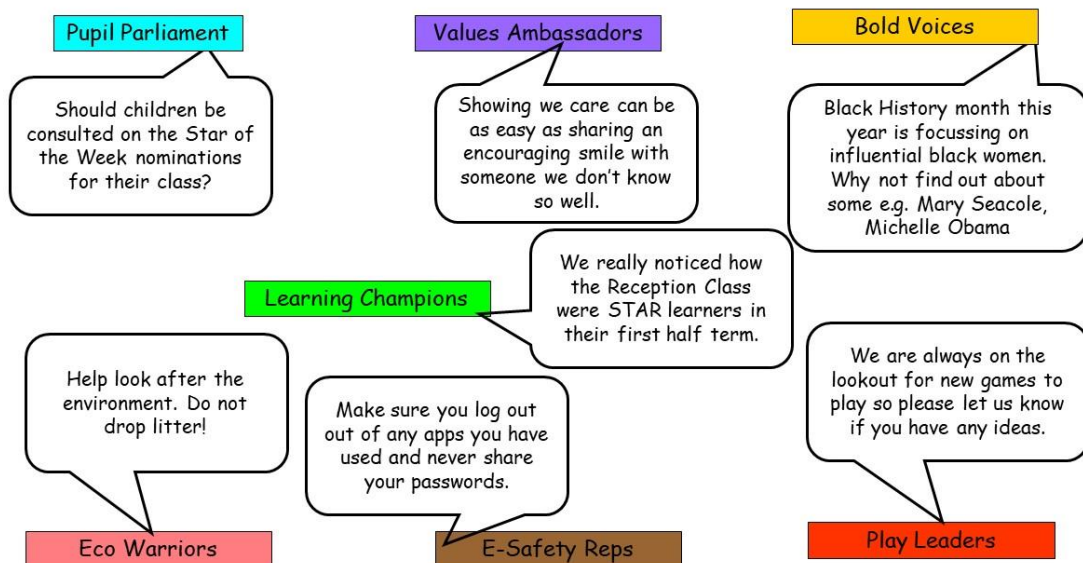
School Improvement – Reading

Since the summer of 2023, Downlands Community School has invested considerably in training staff on the latest approaches to teaching early reading. 15 members of staff have been trained in using the DfE approved Sounds Write methodology. This is underpinned by saying the sounds of words, before reading the spellings of those sounds. You can hear a child saying the simple one letter phonemes, following the alphabet, [on this clip](#).

Many of Reception and Years 1 and 2 children may be bringing home books that children will be able to decode using the Sounds Write methods taught in class. Parents can find out more about these decodable books [here](#). Practicing reading by decoding words into their composite sounds is essential, so parents can really help out with their child's progress.

This half term, several parents of reception children were invited into school to learn more about how their children are taught to read and this opportunity will be extended to the parents of KS1 children next half term.

Pupil Voice –an insight into what our pupil leadership groups have been thinking about



Gold Book Assembly

It was a particularly special Gold Book Assembly this Friday. As well as the Gold Book Nominations and Values Awards to be celebrated, several children were also named as prize winners in the Halloween and Bonfire Poster Competitions. Thanks to the BGSU for their generous prizes.

We also had two special performances from last weekend's Dashain party (see pictures below).



Dandelions – celebrating culture

Thanks to the generosity of parents, children in the pre-school also experienced a flavour of the Dashain celebrations.



Have a great half term and everyone in the Downlands' Family can't wait to see you and your children after the break.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Rielly