



Newsletter 05

10/11/2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your family are well. Welcome to our first newsletter of Autumn term 2.

Remembrance

I was proud to be able to accompany our Values Ambassadors pupil leadership group to the Field of Remembrance service at Blandford Parish Church. All the children wrote thoughtful messages on wooden crosses before planting them in the fields next to the church. All local schools were represented at the service and we all observed a period of silence to remember the services and sacrifices which the Armed Forces make on our behalf. Thanks to all the parents who supported their children and transported children to the town centre. Our values ambassadors (pictured below) are: Matilda, Henry, Ostara, Hope, Harper, Millie, Milo, Aashwi, Emilie P, Sora, Emeli B, Emily W, Jessica and Darcy.



Dates for your diary!

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Odd Socks Day for Anti Bullying week - Mon 13th Nov

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

Arts Week - Mon 20th to Fri 24th Nov

Cedar class assembly - Thu 30th Nov 9am

Downlands Xmas Fair - Fri 1st Dec

EYFS Xmas performance - Tues 5th Dec 9.45am & 1.45pm

Christingle Service (KS2) - Thu 7th Dec

KS1 Xmas performance - Tue 12th

Dec - 9.30am & 2pm

Last day of term - Fri 15th Dec

SPRING TERM 2024

TEACHER TRAINING DAY - Tue 2nd Jan

Spring term starts Weds 3rd Jan

HALF TERM 12th - 16th Feb

Last day of term - Thu 28th Mar

SUMMER TERM 2024

Summer terms starts Mon 15th Apr

HALF TERM 27th - 31st May

Odd socks

Next week is anti-bullying week. Our Bold Voices pupil leadership group will be delivering an assembly on Monday to raise this important issue: advising children how to spot the signs of bullying and making clear who and what is on hand to support the young children at Downlands Community School. To show our unified message that bullying is never acceptable, we ask your children to wear odd socks so that we can get some meaningful class photos to mark the day. You can find a copy of our [anti-bullying policy here](#).

Cinema

KS1 & KS2 children were invited to a private screening of The Super Mario Bros movie at the Forum Cinema this week as part of the Into Film Festival. This is a festival that offers free film screenings to schools and youth community groups and is a fantastic opportunity to remind children how great the cinema experience is! FS2 children will be

visiting next week to watch Paw Patrol; The Mighty Movie. Thank you to Mrs Apau-Dankyi for helping us organise a trip that was enjoyed by all.

Life skills

Learning to apply maths skills to everyday situations is a rewarding experience. In the last couple of weeks, several pupils have been accompanied by staff to visit the local shop and ensure that they receive the correct amount of change for their purchases. Aarin and Jaxon are pictured here on one such occasion. Thanks to staff at Costcutter for playing their part too.



New staff

In recent weeks we have welcomed the following people to the Downlands Family:

Becky Wright – Key Worker

Emmie Casey – Lunchtime Supervisor

Hollie Peckham – Lunchtime Supervisor

I am also pleased to say that the school has recruited a new caretaker – Mr Robert Le May – who will be start his duties w/b Monday 13th November.

Finally, as many of you know, Mrs Robinson will start her maternity leave after Christmas and I am delighted to announce that we have recruited an experienced primary practitioner, Miss L Fountain, who will assume Mrs Robinson's class teacher responsibilities.

E-safety

During a recent meeting, the E-safety Reps (pupil leadership group) discussed '[Social Media Kindness Day](#)'. They wanted to share the message of leaving kind imprints online. We know that for some of the younger children this might not be as relevant but the message of kindness online or through messaging is an important one and this has been reinforced through class discussions too. You can see our E-safety Reps below but can you figure out what the sign language means?



Winter coats

The cost of living has hit all of us recently, but no child should be cold this winter. If you are experiencing financial hardship and would value support to purchase a winter coat for your children, please make enquiries at the [Blandford or Shaftesbury Children's Centre](#).

KS1 Reading morning





We would like to invite KS1 families in for a reading coffee morning next Wednesday, 15th of November. The morning will begin at 8.30am when you drop off your child. Parents are invited to come into the classroom and sit and read with their child/children. Children may wish to show you their classroom, too! After this, parents be served a hot drink and biscuit whilst they hear from school leaders about our new systemic phonics reading programme. The morning will be finished at 0930hrs. Please see separate email for more details and if you intend to come, please email the school office (office@downlandsschool.org) to register your interest.

A welcome from Blandford Forum Parish Church

Revd Chris Beaumont led our assembly this week and he and his team will be leading collective worship in school at several points across the school year. Chris has warmly invited any member of the camp community to attend services every third Sunday of the month (see picture).



Attendance

			
96.8% ↓	96.5% ↑	96.9% ↑	97.3% ↑

Well done to **Rhino** who are meeting our school target of at least 97% attendance after 8 weeks of school. We know that this term is the most vulnerable to flu-like illnesses, but we encourage parents to use the NHS guidance presented here [Is my child too ill for school?](#)

After 10 weeks of school and in accordance with our school policy, we will issue letters to all parents of children whose attendance is already below 90% (this includes absence authorised by the school). The aim of the letter is to offer support, invite parents to start a conversation with the school and as a reference point so that we hopefully celebrate improvement in attendance rates over the next few weeks. A copy of our [attendance policy can be found here](#).

Have a great weekend and we are all looking forward to seeing your children next week.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Rielly