



Newsletter 06

24/11/2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Dates for your diary!

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Downlands Xmas Fair - Fri 1st Dec
EYFS Xmas performance - Tues 5th
Dec 9.45am & 2pm
Christingle Service (KS2) - Thu 7th
Dec
KS1 Xmas performance - Tue 12th
Dec - 9.30am & 2pm
LFL Christmas Dinner - Wed 13th
Dec
Christmas Party Day - Thur 14th
Dec
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

I hope you are well. It has been a busy fortnight for the school which I will summarise below.

Arts Week and visits to Lighthouse Poole

This week, all children have been enjoying extra art activities as part of our annual Arts Week as you can see in some of the photos below. Art makes a significant contribution to our society through human innovation, imagination, and thought so we feel this week further underlines our commitment to this curriculum area. You will have the chance to see your children's art work as part of the exhibition which will be presented in corridors on the same day as our Christmas Fair – Friday 1st December.



All children in Y1 to Y6 visited Lighthouse Poole to learn about The Arts in broader terms. They enjoyed drama workshops and creative writing tasks as well as having the chance to learn from the drawings of Quentin Blake.



Y1/2 English morning

Around 30 parents chose to attend our KS1 Reading morning last week. They spent time listening to their children read in class before hearing more about our approach to teaching phonics through the 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 will bring 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.

Lantern making

On Friday 1st December, Blandford Forum Town Centre will host the annual Yuletide Festival (see separate flyer). All schools in Blandford have been invited to take part in the lantern parade and we have invited interested families to come along on Wednesday 29th November (1515 to 1615hrs) to make a lantern in the friendly and festive environment of the school. Please note that this activity is now **fully booked**, but we would remind parents who have signed up already that children must be accompanied by their parents to this making activity.

Christmas Fayre

On Friday 1st December, the school will host its annual Christmas Fayre from 1500 to 1630hrs. There will be lots of stalls and chances to win prizes so we warmly welcome you to come along and support the fundraising efforts of Friends of Downlands School.

Finally, please can parents ensure that they inform the school if they have asked another parent to pick up their children. Also, parents of Y1 and 2 pupils are reminded that they must meet their children from the classroom exit, contacting a member of staff. Safeguarding your children at the start and the end of the day is an important matter for us.

Have a great weekend and we look forward to seeing your children next week.

Kind regards

Mr J Rielly
Headteacher