

# EYFS Information Letter Summer 2024



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 have been/be allocated a Key Worker from the FS1 team. The teachers in Chestnuts are Mrs Loveless and Mrs Le May who are supported by 2 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.

## Curriculum themes this term

This term we have planned the following themes:

- How Does Your Garden Grow? – Key texts include; Billy's Sunflower, The Enormous Turnip, Jim and the Beanstalk, The Tiny Seed, The Secret Sky Garden. 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.
- 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). Key Texts include: You See a Circus, I see... ,The Fabulous Foskett Family Circus, Circus Train.

## 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 have access to the outside climbing frames where the children have opportunities to practise climbing and developing 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. This term we will 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 Sounds-Write phonics scheme. 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. For those moving into Reception in September, a focus will be put on children hearing initial sounds in words, particularly their name, as well as recognising and beginning to write their first name. In FS2 this term, we continue to learn sound-spelling correspondences for sounds that can be represented by 2 letters. Towards the second half of the term, we move on to learning some sounds that can be represented by different spellings and identifying the correct sound-spelling correspondence for a variety of words containing these sounds. We will begin to read and write more words during each phonics session, as well as reading/writing more than one sentence in a session to continue to help develop the children's understanding of the sounds and words in context. We also continue to teach the high frequency words which children read and write without sounding out. **Please continue to practise building, reading and writing words with the sounds we send home, along with the high frequency words. We also expect you to listen to your child read some of their phonics book 4 times a week (as the books get longer and more complex, this can be broken down into a few pages a day).**

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 'our favourite books' displays. The children in EYFS also have regular story sessions with various adults in the school including Mr Rielly!

### **Writing**

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. In FS2, we will continue to focus on letter formation and sounding out words using our phonic knowledge. We will be writing short captions and sentences based on our books of the week encouraging the children to use their growing phonic knowledge to work towards writing these sentences independently.

### **Maths**

In maths, we continue to follow the whole school approach of 'teaching for mastery'. Mastery maths strategies allow pupils of all ages to acquire a deep, long-term, secure and adaptable understanding of the subject.

In FS1, we will match and sort objects, sing number rhymes, read number stories, count objects, actions, pictures and sounds and recognise basic shapes. FS1 also take part in weekly cooking activities involving the language of maths. In FS2 this term we will continue developing a deeper understanding of numbers to 10. We will further develop the children's skills of subitising, counting, cardinality and ordinality, the composition of numbers and comparing quantities. We will also be exploring length and height; and learn about 3D shapes and their properties.

### **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.

### **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.

**Other events to watch out for this term:**

- FS2 School Trip - date TBC
- Forest School Weekly sessions for all EYFS children
- Transition events for all of EYFS to get to know their new classrooms/teachers
- Country Dancing Festival (Thursday 11th July)
- House Sports Day (Tuesday 25th June)
- Circus Skills Visit (Date TBC)
- Circus Performance (FS2 Only - Date TBC)
- Summer Fair (Thursday 11th July)

**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.

EYFS Team



FS2 Chestnuts

FS1 Dandelions