



# Newsletter 1

20/09/2024

## Dates for your diary!

### AUTUMN TERM 2024

Harvest Festival - 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct  
0900hrs

Flu Vaccinations - 8<sup>th</sup> Oct

Fraser Portraits (Individual  
photos)- 10<sup>th</sup> Oct

HALF TERM - 28<sup>th</sup> Oct - 1<sup>st</sup>  
Nov

TEACHER TRAINING DAY -  
Mon 4<sup>th</sup> Nov

Anti-Bullying week - 11<sup>th</sup> Nov -  
15<sup>th</sup> Nov

Last day of term - Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Dec

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your family are well and that the first two full weeks of school have progressed smoothly. It has been a busy time for us and there is plenty to reflect on and look forward to in this first newsletter of the year.

### KS1 reading morning

It was wonderful to welcome about 40 parents to our first KS1 reading morning. As well as listening to their child read in class, parents were presented with information on the extended code, and the reading system we use in Year 1 and 2. All parents, whether they attended the session or not, received a home learning pack, which they can follow with their child at home to support their reading, and a copy of the



slides were also provided on Seesaw. Parents who attended the session remarked that it was informative and helped them to feel more confident with how to support their child at home with reading.

### New Gold Book Assembly Time

Our first Gold Book Assembly at the new regular time of 0900hrs on Fridays was well attended. This year we will be awarding house points to children who receive any school-based award as well as values certificates.



In this first celebration assembly of the year, we highlighted those children that had put themselves forward for leadership groups:

<b>Pupil Parliament</b>	<b>Learning Champions</b>	<b>Bold Voices</b>	<b>Eco Warriors</b>
Hannah Henry Elijah Ivy Ava Robinson Jasper Caleb Amelia Kai Reuben	Daisy Kai Sianna Delilah Lola Arabella Chahannah Girvani Nirvana Layung	Lily-Grace Aaliyah Aashwi Elise Finlay Tristan	Parker Hope Lily Glen Sora Milo Gracie Henry L-J Luke Skyla Isabella
<b>E-safety Reps</b>	<b>Pupil Newspaper</b>	<b>Play Leaders</b>	
Atlas Esmee Elsie Frankie Stanley Louie Misam Mali Vidushi Natasha Evie Elsie	George Bobby Jessie Albie Frankie Olivia Wyatt Bonnie Niamh Hallie Jason Eadie Hannah Knettie Tristan Narsha	Emilie Elsie Cohen Sebastian Joshua	

## **BFBS Big Salute Fundraising**

**Jason from BFBS** has been in touch to advertise their 2024 charity fundraising challenge for the BFBS Big Salute which supports military charities.

What is the BFBS Big Salute?

The BFBS Big Salute is our annual fundraising campaign which donates grants to military charities who support armed forces communities. Since 2007 we have raised more than £1.5million and helped 54 charities to provide equipment, training and welfare to their beneficiaries. Every single penny that is raised by our fantastic fundraisers or donated by you is distributed to help hundreds of veterans, forces families and serving personnel.

Jason has invited our community to participate in our upcoming **Mile-a-thon** to virtually run, walk, cycle, row, swim or something unique to you, for as many or as few miles you can contribute to help us collectively reach 7,635 miles - the distance from BFBS Brunei to BFBS Canada.

From **Thursday 26th September to Thursday 3rd October**, they are asking serving personnel, veterans, school children, friends, families and listeners of BFBS to get involved and clock up the miles for a great cause.

All fundraising activities and actions will need to be led by parents in support of their children, but the school will celebrate achievement and print out certificates with mileage to give to participating children on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October. Jason from BFBS has provided these helpful instructions to anyone wanting to get involved:

### *How You Can Help:*

1. *Join Us: Throughout the week, whether your students are walking the dog, going for a swim or attending a fitness class, logging their miles to help us reach our target.*
2. *Fundraise: Help us fundraise for the BFBS Big Salute by spreading the word and collecting donations from friends and family. Plus you could host your own fundraising event with school cake sales, etc.*

### *How to get involved:*

*To register your miles, download resources such as posters, bunting, certificates for school children, sponsorship forms, mileage forms, please visit [bfbs.com/bigsalute](http://bfbs.com/bigsalute)*

The BFBS Mile-a-thon will be a fantastic opportunity to bring the community together and make a difference. We hope we can count on your efforts for this challenge and thank you in advance for your time and participation.

### **Signals Museum – Junior Scrapheap challenge (Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September)**

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, the Museum is hosting a visit by TV personality Dick Strawbridge - famous for his series 'Scrapheap Challenge' and 'Escape to the Chateau'. Dick was also a Colonel in the Corps.

As part of the event, the museum is intending to put on a **Junior Scrapheap STEM Challenge**, creating something from some STEM kits, with Dick helping. It is on a Saturday but they think it is a great opportunity for Downlands children and their families.

The "Scrapheap STEM Challenge" will start at **1400hrs** with teams / families to **arrive at 1330hrs**. The event will take about **90 minutes** in total and will comprise of two challenges.

Having consulted with the museum, we feel this challenge is best suited to Year 5 and 6 children and there are 5 places left. Parents of children attending must accompany them to this out-of-school event, but I will also be in attendance to help out. I will be grouping the children before the event and helping them to develop a strategy and team work skills before the actual day.

Please get in touch with the school office ASAP to reserve your child's place.

*(There will also be a Mercedes Car rally at the Museum from 1030-1200, on the same day, if anyone would be interested. There will only be about 12-15 vehicles and they are "just visiting")*

### **Harvest Festival – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 0900hrs**

Padre Stokes is leading our Harvest Assembly on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 9am and you are very welcome to join us. Space in the hall is limited and we ask that only 1 adult per family attends. Once again, we are supporting the Blandford Food Bank and would be grateful if food donations could be either given to your child for their teacher or alternatively dropped into the container in the School's Main Foyer prior to the Assembly on Monday or Tuesday of week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

The Food Bank is in need of the following items: tinned meat, tinned veg, tinned potatoes, pasta/curry sauces, tinned puddings, pasta, rice, biscuits, cereals, UHT milk

Any food however with an expiry date of more than 6 months will I'm sure be very welcome.

### **Adult Education at Downlands Community School**

I have recently been in contact with Dorset Council's 'Skills and Learning: Adult Education Department'. They have made me aware of several courses which are free and could be delivered on the school site if we have enough interest. The first offering we are proposing is as follows:

“Support your Child with maths” course (at key stage 2 level)

- to include tips for how parents can use everyday activities (such as shopping, cooking etc) to boost their child’s maths skills.

We are proposing that this course would be approximately 4x60 minute sessions on Friday mornings at 0930hrs (after Gold Book Assembly).

Please get in touch with the school office to express your interest in enrolling on this course which will be led by an external trainer.

### **Annual Data Collection**

Data collection sheets were sent out yesterday. Please could parents ensure that all information is correct. All the sheets need to be returned to the school office, signed and dated by the parent, with any necessary amendments annotated.

I hope you enjoy the weekend and we look forward to seeing you and your children next week.

Mr J Rielly  
Headteacher