



Key Stage One Newsletter – Spring Term 2025.

Welcome to Key Stage One at Downlands School. Key Stage One consists of two mixed Year 1 and Year 2 classes: Ash and Fir. The teachers in Key Stage One are Miss Burch (Ash) and Miss Alston (Fir), who are supported by Mrs Le May (Key stage one lead) and Teaching Assistants Mrs Montgomery, Mrs Hampson and Mrs Mead. We would like to use this newsletter to share the wonderful learning opportunities we have planned for your children this term.

Topic

Our topics this term are: 'What's the nurse that can happen?' and 'Wicked weather'. The first half of Autumn term will be based on the history topic of 'What's the nurse that can happen?' - exploring famous nurses from history, as well as the basic needs of humans and other animals. After half term, the children will be looking at the weather and how it affects our lives.

English

The reading and spelling of words is taught using the Sounds Write phonics programme. In Key Stage 1, the children will continue to build on their previous phonics knowledge. In Year 1, this term, the children will expand their growing knowledge of the 'extended code', recognising and accurately using sounds that are represented by more than one spelling, and spellings that represent more than one sound. In Year 2, the children will broaden their knowledge of further spellings of familiar sounds, as well as building on their fluency when reading more complex polysyllabic words.

Guided reading will continue to be taught through whole class activities focussing on: understanding vocabulary, sequencing text, making predictions and inferences. The Year 1 children will carry on with decoding their Sounds Write reading book in school, during guided reading, before taking it home on a Friday to read and further practise their skills. At Downlands, we want children to develop a love of reading and hope you share this with us. As well as reading at home to practise the skills taught in school, we encourage and hope the children will have opportunities to read for pleasure. In school, we have regular access to our library, where the children can take home a book of their choice to share with you, as well as the opportunity for you to accompany your child to the library in the mornings before the start of the school day.

The children's writing this term will focus on features of narrative writing including comic strips during the first half term where we will be looking at the stories of 'Zog and the flying doctors' and 'Nurse Clementine'. During the second half term the children will be taught the features of persuasive writing and poetry, producing their own persuasive leaflets and shape poetry. The children will continue to apply their growing phonic knowledge to their writing, through word building and focussing on simple sentence structure and letter formation.

Maths

At Downlands, we teach maths using the *mastery approach*, where children are taught through whole class interactive teaching, using a range of practical apparatus. The approach aims to enable all children to become masters of the basic principles needed in maths, to develop fluency and understanding of the more complex concepts. During a typical maths lesson, the teacher leads back and forth interaction, including: questioning, short tasks, explanation, demonstration and discussion, allowing children to

think, reason and apply their knowledge to solve problems. Each maths lesson begins with a fifteen minute 'mastering number' session which focuses on embedding and practising key knowledge. The sessions are aimed at strengthening the understanding of number and fluency for children in the first three years of school. Alongside mastering number, the children are taught through the White Rose maths scheme. In the Spring Term, the units of work for the children in Year 1 are: addition and subtraction within 20, place value within 50, and measurement: length/height & weight/volume; and in Year 2: multiplication and division, statistics, properties of shape and fractions.

Foundation Subjects

Science

Our science topic this term is 'Animal Safari'. The children will explore animals, including humans and look at their features and habitats, identifying which habitats are suitable for which creatures and why. They will also be identifying the basic needs of different animals and talk about what the animals eat, constructing food chains and using venn diagrams to share information.

Humanities

Our history this term is linked to our topic of 'What's the nurse that can happen'. We will be learning about the famous nurses: Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and Edith Cavell, exploring and answering the questions: What makes a great history maker? and Who is the greatest history maker? In geography, the topic of 'Wicked weather' will allow the children to explore how the weather affects our lives, looking at different climates including deserts and rainforests. We are hoping to host a 'rainforest roadshow' where experts will come in and share their knowledge and understanding with us.

Art/DT

In art this term, the children will learn about the Mexican festival 'day of the dead'. They will link this topic to our learning about our bodies and will explore various children's books like 'Day of the Dead' by Bob Barner. The children will explore clay skills and progress to designing and creating their own sugar skill based on a number of reference images and their new found knowledge.

Music

In Music, the children are following the "Sing Up!" programme. During the first half of spring term, the children will learn and perform a 'Grandma rap', exploring beat and rhythm work using crotchets and quavers. They will be introduced to stick notation and the children will go on to create their own 4-beat patterns, which they will loop creating an accompaniment to perform the rap to.

Computing

This term, children will develop their understanding of instructions in sequences and the use of logical reasoning to predict outcomes. They will use given commands in different orders to investigate how the order affects the outcome. They will also learn about design in programming. They will develop artwork and test it for use in a program. They will design algorithms and then test those algorithms as programs and debug them.

PE

Each week we will have 2 PE lessons – Monday morning and Tuesday afternoon. During the first half of Spring term we will be focussing on dance and gymnastic units. In dance the children will explore space and how their body can move to express an idea, mood, character or feeling. They will be given the opportunity to work independently and with others to perform and provide feedback beginning to use key terminology. In gymnastics the children will explore and develop basic gymnastics actions on the floor and using low apparatus. They will begin to understand the use of levels, directions and shapes when travelling and balancing. After half term, we will move on to the fundamental skills of balancing, running, changing direction, jumping, hopping and skipping; and invasion games involving two teams and two goals, such as football, handball, netball, hockey.

We ask, for health and safety reasons, that earrings are removed before school on PE days. If your child's earrings cannot be removed then please tape their earrings before coming to school on a Monday and Tuesday.

RE/PHSE

The RE theme this term is Judaism following the Discovery RE scheme. We will be learning about some Jewish practice, including the festival of Passover. Children will talk about the question: How important is it for Jewish people to do what God asks them to do?

In PHSE, we follow the Jigsaw programme and will be looking at the topics: 'Dreams and Goals' for the first half term and 'Healthy Me' in the second half.

Areas of provision and outdoor learning

We are extremely lucky to have space this year, both inside and outside, to provide more opportunities for child-led learning, alongside the direct teacher-led learning. This provision is carefully planned to enhance and embed the skills the children are taught, across all subjects. Challenges will be set up for the children to access both independently, and with adult support and guidance, thus allowing the children to explore and develop their knowledge and understanding.

Forest School

Children in KS1 will continue to have at least one Forest School session a fortnight. Forest School is an opportunity for children to explore the natural world whilst building on their skills of resilience, confidence, risk-taking and adventure. Children will be expected to wear the correct Forest School clothes for sessions and more details have been shared on Seesaw. Our Forest School area is on the school site.

Seesaw

We use this platform to share milestone moments with you, along with photographs of some of your children's learning. We also use the platform to share relevant information with you, including reminders and accident notes. Please let us know if you have any problems accessing Seesaw.

Homework

Reading - please continue to read regularly with your child at home and record this in the reading record.

One piece of either maths or English - this will often be a practical task to support and consolidate the learning that is taking place in school.

Other Information

Please remember that any messages such as absences, holidays, illness etc. are phoned in via the school office (01258 453348).

Please contact us if you have any questions.

KS1 Team