



# Newsletter 6

18/12/2025

## Dates for your diary!

### AUTUMN TERM 2025

18<sup>th</sup> Dec - Last day of term

19<sup>th</sup> Dec - TEACHER TRAINING DAY

### SPRING TERM 2026

5<sup>th</sup> Jan - Term starts

16 - 20<sup>th</sup> Feb - HALF TERM

23<sup>rd</sup> Feb - TEACHER TRAINING DAY

27<sup>th</sup> Mar - Last day of term

### SUMMER TERM 2026




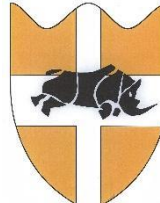
13<sup>th</sup> Apr - Terms starts

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your family are well.

### Attendance

As we reach one third of the school year, our attendance competition is getting quite close. Still plenty of time ahead – hopefully without all the nasty bugs that tend to go around during the Autumn Term.

			
95.4% ↑	95.3% ↓	95.3% ↑	94.2% ↓





The NHS offer [guidance here](#) about when it is ok to send your child to school.

I hope to see our overall attendance improving towards our target of 97%. Remember that you can really turn around school attendance over the course of the year as the table below shows:

Attendance after 10 weeks	Attendance at the end of the year if 100% attendance is maintained from this point
100%	100%
95%	99%
85%	96%
75%	94%
70%	92%

### House points

It is a strong start for Kiwi in our House Point Competition.

			
54	55	70	49

## House Songs

Hopefully you had the chance to hear the splendid House Songs which I shared on Seesaw. It was a lovely House Assembly where we could celebrate the hard work the children had put into learning their songs.







Finally, our Piano Teacher, Mrs Henesey was the official judge in our **House Christmas Tree competition**, with the results being as follows:

1. Falcon
2. Kiwi
3. Jaguar
4. Rhino

Next term's House Competition is for a Poetry Recital.

### **Choir singing for local people**

Castleman House Care Home contacted the school to thank the choir for singing Christmas Carols to their residents last week. They commented about how much their community loved it and were still talking about it the next day.

Special thanks to Sue Henesey & Hannah Gillespie for working with the choir and accompanying them.



## **FODS Christmas Fundraising**

Thank you to parents for all their support during our Christmas fundraising events. The Christmas Disco, Family Quiz, Great Downlands Bake Off and other associated competitions raised over £1000 for FODS, funds which are spent entirely on resources that improve the school life for the children such as the FODS Hideaway.

The next project is to put an outdoor speaker system so that children and families can enjoy music on arrival to school. If anyone has any advice about what we would need to purchase to make this happen, please could they get in touch with the school.

Moving forward, we would like to increase the parent/carer representation in FODs to help strengthen community ties as well as aid fundraising efforts. This is being led by Hannah Gillespie who will be hosting a termly coffee afternoon starting on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January, in school, for any parents who would like to volunteer and join FODs.

Hannah has also set up a Facebook page for parents and carers of pupils at Downlands – Downlands Parents (Blandford). This will be used to showcase events and activities run by FODs as well as insights into the school day. The page can be found by scanning this QR code –





## Christingle Service

Thank you to Padre Carl for allowing us to use All Saints Church and for leading our annual Christingle service.

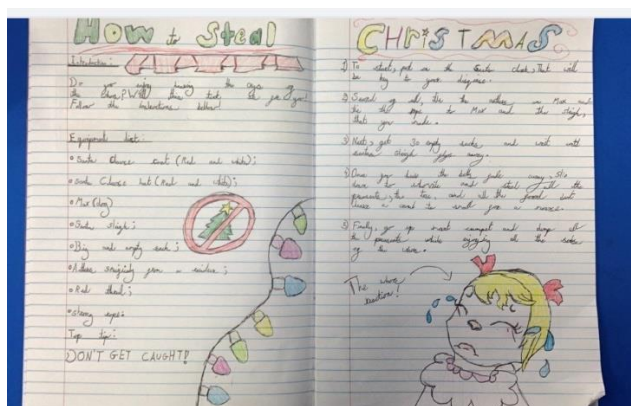
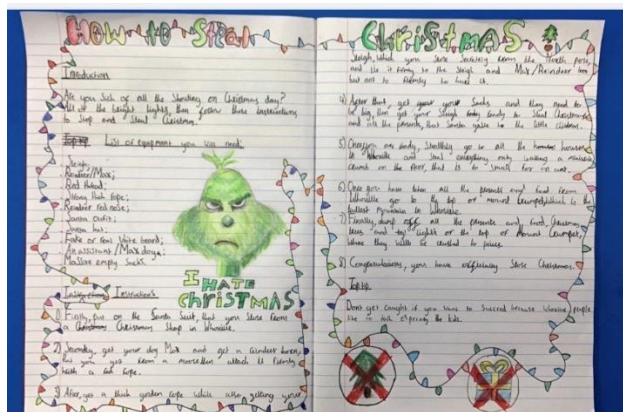


## **Christmas activities for our Reception Class**



## Year 6 writing

Year 5 and 6 have been inspired by the Grinch during English this week and have written instructions on how to steal Christmas, that they then decorated. Here are two examples of the excellent writing that has been produced.



### **Road safety before school**

There have been some recent incidents of children running out in front of cars whilst playing before school opens. Please could all parents talk to their children about road safety and the importance of making sensible choices whilst waiting for the school gates to open and not partake in activities that are unsafe and could lead to injuries and arguments.

Please can we also remind parents about not parking in the school drive in front of the safety gate as it is blocking staff exits and obscuring visibility for leaving safely.

Have a happy and healthy Christmas holiday. We look forward to welcoming you and your family in 2026.

Mr Rielly  
Headteacher

### **Supporting you and your child**

The school is ready and able to support your family and help every child do well in school, build confidence, and have the skills they need for a bright and successful future. We understand that from time to time, families face challenges which might require the support of other agencies. The school has strong links with **Family Help** which is a new way that Dorset Council is offering support to families who need more intensive help and support. It brings together different types of help into one service, so families don't have to keep repeating their story to several workers. You can find out more [here](#).

All staff in school are trained on matters relating to safeguarding and child protection, but the following members of the team have more specialist training and are here to listen and help if needed:

Mrs C Goodall (Designated Safeguarding Lead - DSL)

Mr J Rielly, Mrs J Loveless, Mrs Y le May, Mrs A Robinson (Deputy DSLs)

Alternatively, you can contact the Family Support and Advice Line on 01305 228558. A friendly team member will listen to your concerns and help you decide what kind of support is right for you.

Lines are open:

- Monday to Friday: 8am to 10pm
- Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays: 9am to 10pm

Speak to a practitioner today if you have any worries or concerns about a child or young person.