



Year 5/6 Newsletter Autumn 2026

Welcome back to Downlands - we hope that you all have had a restful summer break. We are excited to welcome you all back to school for the start of a brilliant new school year.

English

This term we will be focusing on sentence structure and handwriting presentation. This will include the development of sentence structure with subordinate clauses, fronted adverbials and relative clauses. We are starting by writing non-chronological reports on a made-up animal inspired by the non-fiction book *Flanimals*. We will also look at the text 'Who let the Gods Out' which ties in with our history curriculum this term (Ancient Greeks).

Year 5 writing, spelling and grammar will be taught by Mr Jolliffe and Mrs Garton will teach Year 6. During the year, children will produce various assessed pieces of writing, and we will be covering a range of genres, such as: poetry, information texts (non-chronological reports), narratives, a diary, and a letter. Before writing, children will learn the grammar and structure of each genre. They will then have the opportunity to engage in whole-class writing, shared writing and drama activities before independently producing their final piece.

Reading

To help foster a love of reading and help children build rich and varied vocabularies, we ask that children read at least three times per week at home with adult support and two other times independently. This should then be recorded in their Reading Records which will be sent home with pupils in the next couple of weeks. There are also multiple opportunities during the school day for pupils to independently read their reading book. As well as this, we also explicitly teach reading comprehension skills such as inference and retrieval in lessons.

Spelling

This term we will continue to use a range of strategies to teach spelling, including EdShed and Sounds Write. Children will have set spelling lessons per day, where they will practise the spelling rule for the week. They will also bring home a list of spellings that use the spelling rule, in their homework book. Children are encouraged to practise these with their parents at home and to help support this, children can log in to the 'Spelling Shed' on any device with internet and play spelling games. Some children will also have access to Nessy as an intervention for spelling. A login card which includes details for 'Spelling Shed', as well as various other accounts will be given to them in the first few weeks.

Mathematics

Year 6 pupils will be taught by Mr Jolliffe and Mrs Garton will teach Year 5s. Each day will start with Early Bird Maths; this is an independent activity, focusing on arithmetic skills, that is completed between 8.30 and 8.50am so it is important for the children to be in school promptly. Maths will be taught daily, primarily following the White Rose Maths programme and will include opportunities for children to practise core skills and then apply these to a range of real-life reasoning and problem solving questions. This combination of activities is designed to refine skills, support individual needs and build up a wealth of understanding, confidence, independence and competence through a stepped approach using concrete, pictorial and abstract processes. Pre-assessments will be used at the start of each new topic in order to personalise children's learning. Over the next few weeks, we will cover the following topics: place value and calculations using the four operations.

We encourage children to practise their times tables on Times Tables Rock Stars.

Mathletics can be logged into at home on a PC or tablet/iPad/smartphone and we encourage children to practise the skills they have been learning.



Science

This half term we are studying materials and their properties. Children will carry out investigations and develop their scientific thinking skills and vocabulary. After the October half term, we will be studying Earth and Space. We also aim to include elements of STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) into our investigations.

Art

This half term, we will work on developing pupils' understanding of colour and sketching skills, before moving on to develop a piece inspired by the Ancient Greeks.

Humanities (History & Geography)

In the first part of the Autumn term, we are focusing on history, where we are learning about the Ancient Greeks. We will look at significant events from this period, including an enquiry into the story of the Trojan Horse. Geography, in the second half of the Autumn term, will cover mountains. In this unit, we will explore a range of case studies, including a mountain on Mars!

PE and Games

This term, our **PE days are Mondays and Tuesdays**. On these days, **please can pupils wear their PE kit to school**. They will not be getting changed in school. PE will often be taught outside, so please make sure your child has sensible footwear. Please can all jewellery (including earrings) be left home on PE days.

Autumn 1: On a Monday, both Year 5 and Year 6 will be doing Cricket. In this unit, pupils develop their understanding of the principles of striking and fielding. They expand on their knowledge of the different roles of bowler, wicket keeper, fielder and batter. On Tuesdays, we will be looking at fitness skills.

Autumn 2: In this half term, we will be completing units focussed around Football and Handball.

Computing

This half term, we will be looking at Systems and Searching. In this unit, learners develop their understanding of computer systems and how information is transferred between systems and devices. Learners consider small-scale systems as well as large-scale systems. They explain the input, output, and process aspects of a variety of different real-world systems. Learners discover how information is found on the World Wide Web, through learning how search engines work (including how they select and rank results) and what influences searching, and through comparing different search engines.

In the second half term, we will be completing a 'Creating Media' unit, where we will be producing and editing videos.

PSHE

Between now and Christmas, we will complete two PSHE units from the JIGSAW scheme of learning:

- 'Being Me in My World', where pupils will look at how their choices can have an impact on people in their immediate community and empathise with others.
- 'Celebrating Differences' where pupils will explain ways in which difference can be a source of conflict or a cause for celebration.

Music

Over this term, pupils will be looking at sea shanties as well as developing their songwriting skills.

Homework

Homework will be set weekly. We will set homework on a Monday and expect it back completed on a Friday. Children will be given a homework book to stick their assignments in. Each week, they will complete an English, maths and reading task. They will also have a spelling sheet where they can practise these each day. Each piece of homework will be designed to be thirty minutes or less. Children are encouraged to look at their homework early on in the week and if they feel they need support, tell their teacher. We are more than happy to help children in school if they are stuck.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us via seesaw or the school office.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Garton and Mr Jolliffe