Newsletter 4

20/11/2026

Dates for your diary!

AUTUMN TERM 2026

27th Nov – Downlands Christmas Family Quiz Night
3rd Dec – KS2 Christingle Service – 2pm
7th Dec – EYFS Christmas Play– 9.30am
9th Dec – KS1 Christmas Play – 9.15am
10th Dec – Downlands Christmas Disco
15th Dec – Downlands Christmas Party
16th Dec – Foodlinks Christmas Meal
(More details will follow regarding the above Christmas events.)
17th Dec – Last day of term
18th Dec – TEACHER TRAINING DAY

SPRING TERM 2027

4th Jan – First day of term

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you and your family are well.

Attendance

Thank you to parents and carers for their support in reinforcing messages on attendance and punctuality. With over 10 weeks of school having elapsed, we will shortly be writing to parents of children for whom their attendance is below 90%. The purpose of these letters is to raise awareness and offer support, encouraging parents to start a dialogue with school if children are experiencing anxiety or problems in school.

97.3%	**95.2%**	**97.0%**	**95.3%**

The NHS offer guidance about when it is ok to send your child to school.

Here is a guide for parents and carers on keeping kids healthy this school year.

House points

There is still a long way to go so the message has to be for all children to keep trying their best. Remember, all Gold Book Assembly mentions are worthy of a house point.

47	**65**	**55**	**50**

Speak out, Stay safe

Last week, all children received advice in the form of a special assembly developed by the NSPCC. It is the 3rd year that Downlands have taken part in this charity's Speak Out, Stay Safe programme which aims to help children understand abuse in all its forms and to recognise the signs of abuse. Children are taught to speak out if they are worried, either to a safe adult or Childline.



Remembrance

To mark the annual acts of remembrance, members of the pupil parliament represented the school whilst attending the Fields of Remembrance service at Blandford Church, placing wooden crosses in the designated area outside.



On Armistice Day, we read a picture book called 'Where the Poppies Grow' and fell silent at 1100hrs. The ambiance of this special assembly was enhanced by the remembrance jars made by KS1 pupils.





Antibullying Week

This week was anti-bullying week. Our Bold Voices pupil leadership group spoke during assembly on Monday and Wednesday. They emphasised the importance of the key message for this year which is 'Break the silence'. They spoke to children about how to be kind and who they should talk to if they noticed others being unkind. The children were also reminded of our child friendly anti-bullying policy (see below).

Anti-bullying week began with odd socks day to celebrate diversity in our school community. Thank you for your support with this - can you spot your child's feet?













Year 5/6 DT project

Thanks to the parents who were able to support children in Year 5 and 6 as they made miniature dens based on designs they had made in the lesson beforehand.







Larmer Tree Gardens

For the second year in a row, our Year 5 pupils took advantage of the Larmer Tree Gardens setting as they work towards the Winter Pageant Project. The Larmer Tree Gardens have long been a location for community pageants. The essential feature of pageantry through the ages has been the element of drama, in which a particular theme of a procession is illustrated with spoken word, costume, poetry, music and song. The origins of the gardens make the space a perfect venue for a community school project such as this. The Winter Pageant on December 8th will consist of a parade through the gardens where there will be pop-up performances from individual schools of poetry recitals culminating in an indoor ensemble performance to celebrate the gardens and the children's responses to it.







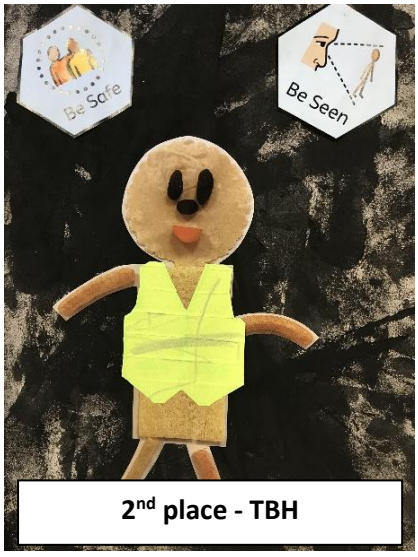
Road Safety

We were very grateful to Stephen Scarborough and Milan Thapa for organising the annual Road Safety Poster Competition. As well as awarding prizes to the winners (see below) they also led a terrific assembly reminding children about key safety messages including: Stop. Look. Listen. Think.

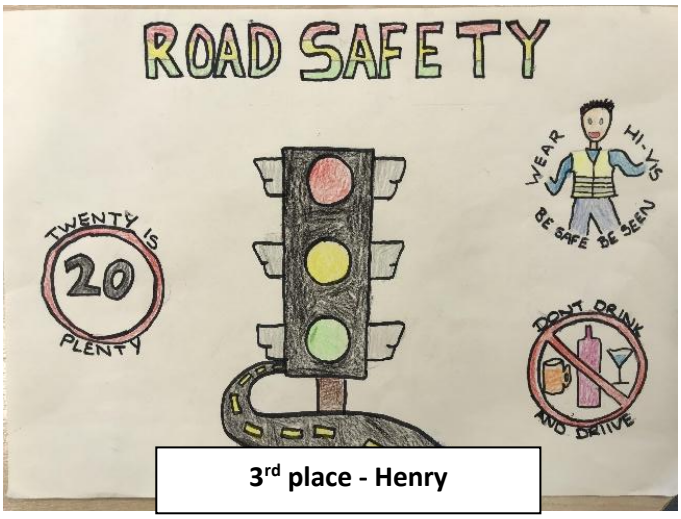




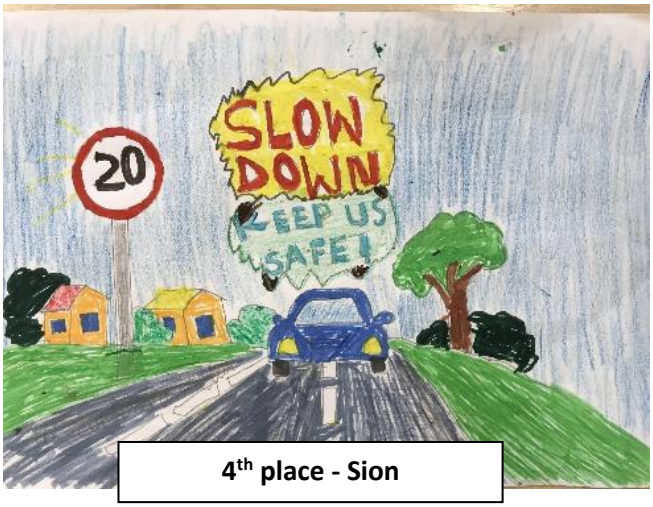
1st place - Reuben



2nd place - TBH



3rd place - Henry



4th place - Sion



5th place - Mangenna

Have a lovely weekend

Mr J 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, Mr Jolliffe (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.

Details on all of our policies, including attendance, complaints and uniform, can be found at https://downlandsschool.org/policies/