



# The Downley School

“Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together”

## September 2022



### Interim Headteachers Update



Wow, what a busy start to the year, it is hard to believe it has only been just over 3 weeks since the start of term. The staff and children have settled really well to our routines and expectations and on our daily walks around the school we are seeing pupils who are engaged in their learning, participating well in the lessons and working collaboratively with their peers.

Mrs Best and I continue to develop the curriculum and ensure we have the resources we need to support learning. This week we have been working on the phonics curriculum and with staff on ensuring SEN plans are in place and being implemented.

You will have seen an overview of the school improvement plan that I sent home last week, and these are the areas which we are continuing to develop across the school.

As this is the first newsletter of the new year, we have asked each year group to write a short piece on what their classes have been learning this month. Please see below.

It was lovely to meet so many parents at the recent coffee morning and we hope you found the information useful and enjoyed the opportunity to meet your child's class teacher and see the classroom. A further opportunity has been planned for **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 3.15-3.45pm** when we will hold our first 'drop-in' session of the year. This is an opportunity for **your child to invite you into school** to look at their work and they can show you something they are proud of. These events are not parents' evenings but an opportunity for you to share your child's learning with them. Please don't worry if you can't attend, your child will go home as normal, and we look forward to seeing you next time! All children will be dismissed as normal at the end of the school day through the normal exits and then your child will bring you back into school through the front door, please.

If you have any good quality, age-appropriate quiet board games, jigsaws or colouring books that are no longer used at home and that you would be happy to donate to the school, we are in desperate need of more resources for our wet play boxes and would be very grateful for any donations. Please send these in with your child.

Finally, please be mindful of the roadworks that are going on around the school and be safe! Please also park considerably during this time as we have had concerns raised from our neighbours.



Wishing you a lovely weekend

Miss Garlick and Mrs Best

## Reception

This week in the Reception classes we started with our weekly challenges. We had 3 challenges set out for the children. The first one was writing their own names in various ways. Some of the children used letter magnets, some drew with chalk, some used a template with a dry erase marker and some even used a paintbrush! Next up was ordering numbers and counting. We set the challenge for children to order up to 5, but we were amazed that a lot of our children made it up to 10. Lastly, we set out a creative table with all sorts of goodies to make spiders. The children enjoyed punching holes and counting 8 legs out for their spider. The creative juices were definitely flowing and were left with some incredible creations.



## Year 1

**Year One** have had a great start to the new school year. The children have settled into their new classrooms and routines and are showing such fantastic attitudes towards learning across all areas of the curriculum.

In English, we have started reading 'Lost and Found' by Oliver Jeffers. The children will focus on this text for their reading and writing this half term and will gain a deep understanding of the story, which will support their writing skills.

In maths, we have learnt all about number and how to compare numbers using 'hungry crocodiles' – please ask your child to demonstrate!

In our science lessons we are exploring seasonal change (thank you for all the conkers). The children have found out about events (including their own birthday) and in what season they occur.

We all enjoyed guessing the baby in our history lessons - the photos were amazing - and the children are beginning to use target vocabulary to talk about changes in their own lives.

Music has been great fun! We have been singing, clapping the pulse and using body percussion and non-tuned instruments to tap the rhythm of well-known rhymes and songs.

Our design and technology lessons have been all about exploring structures. Children have learnt the 3 main parts of a windmill and followed a design brief (from the mouse in the song 'Windmill in Old Amsterdam') to design, cut out and construct their own windmills.

There are so many other things we have been learning and we will keep you up to date using our Class Dojo and future newsletters.

## Year 2

We have been really enjoying our learning in Year 2. In Literacy, we have been reading 'Troll Swap' by Leigh Hodgkinson. We have written a diary entry and a letter from the viewpoint of the characters. We have been focusing hard on writing our full stops and capital letters. In maths, we have been working hard on our place value. We have been comparing 2-digit numbers and practicing counting in 2's, 5's and 10's. In science, we have been learning about animal diets and grouping animals. The children made some lovely posters about which animals were herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores. We have loved learning about what schools were like in the past in history and enjoyed asking Ms Wilding about her own experiences in school. It would be lovely if you could share some of your own anecdotes of school with your children which they can then share with the class. The children designed some very creative robots in computing, and they had to think carefully about what each of the different buttons did. Make sure you ask them to share how they designed their robot with you! All the children in Year 2 have been trying so hard and are looking forward to lots more fun learning in school.

## Year 3

### Year 3

In year 3 we have been writing some amazing 'Who am I?' riddles! All students wrote their own and challenged their peers to guess what they were. Can you guess?

#### Thomas

Who am I?  
I live in Australia.  
I go hop, hop, hop!  
I am common.  
I have two legs.  
Who am I?

#### Emma

Who am I?  
I prowl in the grassy African savanna.  
I stalk for me to find food.  
I love eating meat, so I am a carnivore.  
I eat wildebeests, hippos and rhinos.  
I hunt in groups, so hunting is easier.  
What am I?

#### Samaya

##### What am I?

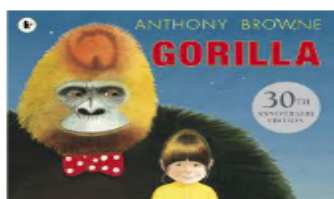
I live in Africa and Asia,  
I like bushes and rocks.  
I eat meat from other animals,  
and I have round ears.  
I have four legs,  
and I am fast.  
I have spots,  
and I am a big cat.

#### Ella

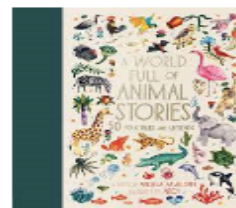
##### What am I?

I love food.  
I have sharp claws.  
I get very angry.  
I have whiskers.  
I am fluffy.

## Year 4



We are very delighted to see how quickly the children have settled in this term and responded so enthusiastically to our new books 'Gorilla and World Full of Animal Stories'. We have been revisiting expanded noun phrases and adjectives, adverbs and verbs.



The children have much enjoyed our practical work eg The Digestive System and learning about the Romans through map work, parading as roman soldiers and recently our live zoom session this week.

In music, we enjoyed exploring body percussion and creating rainforest sounds.

The cohort are keen sports people and have been enjoying their core work with Leo Gym and developing the throwing and catching skills with tag rugby (we are doing this now and then will look at football and dance after half term).



Most people seem to be using the Class Dojo platform and we have had very positive feedback that you are finding it helpful to see what is going on and be able to contact us directly. We thank you for your continued support, particularly as the children become more familiar with their routines such as completing maths and spelling homework and bringing their reading journal in.

Thank you

Mr Dollemore & Mrs Fyfe

## Year 5

Year 5 are having a very positive start to the year. Both in and out of the classroom, the children have risen to the challenge of Upper Key Stage 2 and the Year 5 team could not be prouder.

In maths, we have been focusing on 5-digit numbers including rounding, comparing, and using this knowledge to solve problems. The children's Mathletics homework tries to match what we are doing in class as much as possible, but if you would like to explore place value more with your child, try making up your own 5-digit number problems.

For example, can you work out the price of this house?

**The price has the same tens and hundreds digits with a sum of 10. There are no ones and the rest of the digits are odd numbers. The ten thousands and thousands digits total 16, with the largest digit in the thousands column.**

In English, the children have been fascinated by the life of Annie Taylor, who went down Niagara Falls in a barrel, aged 6. We held a debate between the two classes; both taking different points of view on whether Annie should complete this dare devil feat or not. You'll have to ask your child, who they thought won!

Last week we also sent out letters for our residential trip to Upton Court in January. We are really excited to enhance the children's experience of the Tudors through this immersive trip.

**Dinner table discussion question:** What influence did the Ancient Greeks had on modern society?

**Prompts:** Democracy, architecture, sport

Have a lovely weekend

The Year 5 team

## Year 6

Well done Year 6 for a brilliant first few weeks of term. Everyone has settled in really well and we have had a very positive start, that we are sure will continue as the year goes on!

Year 6 have had a busy start to the year, we have been working hard in maths on our topic of place value, now working with numbers up to 10,000,000. The children have enjoyed using and exploring with these numbers by partitioning, rounding, sequencing, and comparing them.

Our topic this term is World War II, we have created art based on the Blitz in London, attempted to crack some of the codes from Bletchley Park in our computing lessons and listened to the hopeful songs of Vera Lynn.

In English, the children have been looking at the book 'Star of Fear, Star of Hope' which is about the separation of the Jews in northern France during the war. Our writing has been from the perspective of the Jewish children, the children have created some brilliant descriptive and very emotive work.

In science, we have been learning all about the human body, specifically the circulatory system. We have enjoyed learning the different parts of the heart and how we can keep our hearts and the rest of our bodies healthy!

Finally, in PE we have been working hard to develop our attacking and defending skills in a range of skills-based drills based on a variety of sports. The children are increasing teamwork and sportsmanship alongside their physical and game playing skills.

What a jam packed and exciting start to what I am sure is going to be a brilliant year! Well done Year 6 - keep up the good work!

**The Year 6 team**

## Opportunities to Discover

@HW Music Centre  
Millbrook School  
Millend Road  
HP12 4BA

**Music FOR ALL**  
MAKING MUSIC CHANGES LIVES

# LEARN TO PLAY

## 8-9 OCTOBER '22

*Have a free taster music lesson here in October!*

*Whether you're new to music making or want to re-ignite your interest, join us here for a free lesson.*

[www.musicforall.org.uk](http://www.musicforall.org.uk)

Music for All supports disadvantaged music makers across the UK  
Registered UK charity no 1055371

**HW Music Centre**  
Saturday 8th October  
Musikids session 4-8 year olds 9.30-10.30am  
Have a go sessions for all 11-12.30pm  
email [hwmusic@bucksmusic.org](mailto:hwmusic@bucksmusic.org) to book

Sponsored by: **HAMM** **BLACK LIVES IN MUSIC** **MAKE MUSIC DAY UK** **making music** **MUSIC MARK** **mia**



Aged 8-15? Join our FREE Children's Choir course in the October half-term!

Via the gateway of the Baroque era, we want to introduce young people to the joy of classical music and its many benefits, to inspire their creativity and elevate their self-esteem. Our 2022 Children's Choir course will be held over the October half-term (**Monday 24th - Friday 28th**) at **The Vache, HP8 4SD**. You will also need to be available on **Saturday 19th November** for a rehearsal and gala performance alongside professionals at Conway Hall in London. We're looking forward to growing the success of last year's choir and are excited to be able to welcome up to 16 young singers on our course this year. We're looking for keen young singers who can demonstrate both a passion for singing and a need to take part in our fully funded course and performance opportunity. Please don't worry if your child has never done any classical music before or cannot read sheet music. Enthusiasm and openness are much more important. To register your interest, please submit the following short form before **Friday 30th September**: <https://forms.gle/V25cx2EzaiLBnKQ88>

#### About Vache Baroque

Vache Baroque is a registered charity running critically acclaimed performances and education projects in Bucks. For more information check out our website:

[vachebaroquefestival.com](http://vachebaroquefestival.com)



## HALF TERM CAMPS!!

Game Ready is a netball training company focused on developing skills and game understanding in a fun and relaxed environment.

Led by Katt Garner (Ainsworth) Level 2 franchise coach and former SuperLeague player

### Camp Details

**When:**

Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> Oct 2022 10am – 3.30pm

(Age 10-12 years)

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> Oct 2022 10am – 3.30pm

(Age 13-16 years)

**Where:**

Sports Hall

John Hampden Grammar School

Marlow Hill

High Wycombe HP11 1SZ

**For Who:**

All netballers aged 10-16 years

(Please see selected days regarding specific age groups)

**Cost:**

£45 per player per day

**Focus:**

Improve skills and tactical knowledge, match play and loads of fun!



Click on  
link below

## BOOK NOW

to reserve your child's place on our camps. Once completed further details will be sent to parent/guardian.

(Your child's place is not confirmed until payment has been received)

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScMhAIF-Jaj4XTjJmbh98uFAGwCImz\\_r2H0hLc3SKp2dPcYCQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScMhAIF-Jaj4XTjJmbh98uFAGwCImz_r2H0hLc3SKp2dPcYCQ/viewform)



## Buckinghamshire Family Learning

What can I do if my  
child chokes, gets burnt  
or has a minor injury?

What do I do in an  
emergency  
situation?

### First Aid



Join our **free** two-hour workshop  
for parents and carers of children  
at school in Buckinghamshire

Tuesday 18th October at Highcrest Adult Learning Centre, 10am-12pm

Wednesday 2nd November at Hampden Way Family Centre, 9.30am-11.30am

To book your place, please use the QR code or click on [Family Learning Courses](#)

or phone our enrolment team on: 01296 383592

For more information text Lou on 07814 305345

or Sarah Winfield on 07825 862029

with your name and FAid



buckinghamshireadultlearning



BucksAdLearning



adultlearningbc.ac.uk

# School Office Notices

## Class Notes

Please can you ensure that emails regarding absence, late arrival or your child leaving School early are sent into the school Office. We will then pass your message onto the teacher. Thank you.

## Absences

Reporting an Absence. If your child is absent from School, please ensure you report the absence to the school office **via the absence line or the office email**, every day of your child's absence.

Sickness and diarrhoea - Your child is not permitted to return to School until they have been free of sickness/diarrhoea for 48 hours from the last episode, as per the Buckinghamshire County Council's policy.

## Leave of Absence Applications

'Leave of Absence' application forms need to be completed for **all absences other than a medical** if they are during school hours. The school does not encourage holiday during term time and therefore will be unauthorised. Where possible, please complete and return a "leave of absence form" to the school office at least one month before leave is required.

For **Hospital/medical appointments** a 'Leave of Absence' application form is not needed. **Please send an email into the office only, with evidence of your child's appointment.** Where possible please make appointments outside of school hours. **Please do not use Class DoJo to tell us about absences – these must go through the office**

## End of Day Arrangements (EOD)

Please ensure a new EOD arrangement form is filled in if anything changes. If it is a one-off change, this must be sent via an email to the **school office only, before 2pm** on the day it is due to happen.

## Bikes & Scooters

A Polite reminder - children should not ride bikes or scooters whilst on the school site.

## Drinks & Snacks

We do encourage parents/carers to provide their child with a bottle of water; squash is NOT permitted. Water bottles should be "see-through" with a sports top (to avoid spillages) and labelled clearly with your child's name. As a "healthy" school, we encourage parents/carers to provide their child with a healthy snack. Key Stage 1 children are provided with fruit from School as per the government initiative.

**Please ensure that your child has a relevant healthy snack at break-time that is nut, sesame seed and kiwi free.**

## Uniform

A reminder to all that we change from our Spring/Summer uniform to our Autumn/Winter uniform after the October half term break. Please note that uniform is no longer gender specific.

Please note that in line with school policy, children are not permitted to wear make-up, have extreme haircuts or wear earrings whilst at school. If your child is seen wearing earrings, they will be asked to remove them and they will be put in an envelope until home time.

## Late Items

Late Items If your child forgets items needed for the school day, they can be dropped off via the office, but we ask that this is kept to a minimum. If a child forgets their water bottle, we have cups in school that can be filled. If there are any letters to be handed in, we ask that your child gives them to their teacher. We appreciate your support with this.

## The Downley School Diary – 2022/2023

All dates below are provisional and subject to change.

### PA dates

<b>September</b>		
<b>October - Black History Month</b>		
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> October	American Diner themed lunch	
<b>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>PA New Parents/Carers Wine &amp; Nibble Evening</b>	<b>7pm - 10pm</b>
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Secondary Transfer Test Results	
<b>Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<b>Second Hand Uniform Sale</b>	<b>2pm- 4pm</b>
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Drop-in session 1 – parents and children	3.15 – 3.45pm
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> October	Individual and sibling photos	
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> October - Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term	
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> October	Back to School	
<b>November</b>		
Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> October - Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Bikeability - Year 5	
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> November	Flu Vaccination - all year groups	am
<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November</b>	<b>PA AGM</b>	<b>7pm - 10pm</b>
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Swimming Starts for 6B	
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Parent Consultation evening	Tbc
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	Parent Consultation evening	Tbc
Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Remembrance Day	
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Children in Need Day	
<b>December</b>		
<b>December</b>	<b>Christmas Fayre</b>	<b>TBC</b>
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day	
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December - Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	Christmas Break	