



# The Downley School

“Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together”

## December 2022



### Head Teacher's Comment

As we approach the final days of the Autumn term, the air is alive with singing, icy breath, and happy chatter. Thank you to all the parents and carers who supported the Christmas plays. I am sure you enjoyed these as much as we did. The children were wonderful, singing their hearts out and getting into their roles.



There are a few staff changes to tell you about before the start of next term. Miss McClain-Smith and Miss Park (LSAs) are leaving us for pastures new. Mrs Walters (Y5) who stepped into the role this term when we were short of a Y5 teacher will be returning to her supply teacher role and used as needed and Mrs McGann, who already works in Y5 will teach on a Monday and Tuesday to replace Mrs Walters. Finally, we have seconded a new assistant Headteacher – Miss Hawkswell to oversee teaching, learning and curriculum developments and work closely with ourselves and Mrs Perry to further develop these areas. Miss Hawkswell will also teach in 1KH (1B) on a Monday. We are excited about these new appointments as we continue to develop the staff team and add capacity.

Although it has been very cold this week, we have managed to continue to function and wanted to thank you for your support in making sure the children were warm and kitted out with the right winter clothing. The children and staff look very festive today in their Christmas jumpers and we are all looking forward to sharing a Christmas lunch.



On behalf of all the staff, thank you for the kind words and gifts that have been received. We wish you a warm, safe, enjoyable Christmas holiday and look forward to seeing all the children back in school on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023**.

**Best Wishes**

**Miss Garlick and Mrs Best**

**Interim Headteachers**



# Reception

What a crazy time it has been preparing for our nativity! We have loved practicing, getting our costumes, showing off to the school and finally, the main event: showcasing it to the parents!

We have been busy decorating our classes for Christmas and practicing our fine motor skills by wrapping boxes. We have learnt a variety of new sounds and have been spelling words and reading together in groups. We have continued to learn about the number 5 – how can we make 5?  $2+3$ ,  $1+4$  or even  $0+5$ ! We've learnt positional words (on top, under, next to) and done many interactive lessons.

We had the joy of experiencing snow and frost through a 4 + 5-year-olds eyes (and our South African teacher who experienced it for the first time) and let me tell you, it is magical! We have explored the ice, played with it, and tried to melt it with warm water.

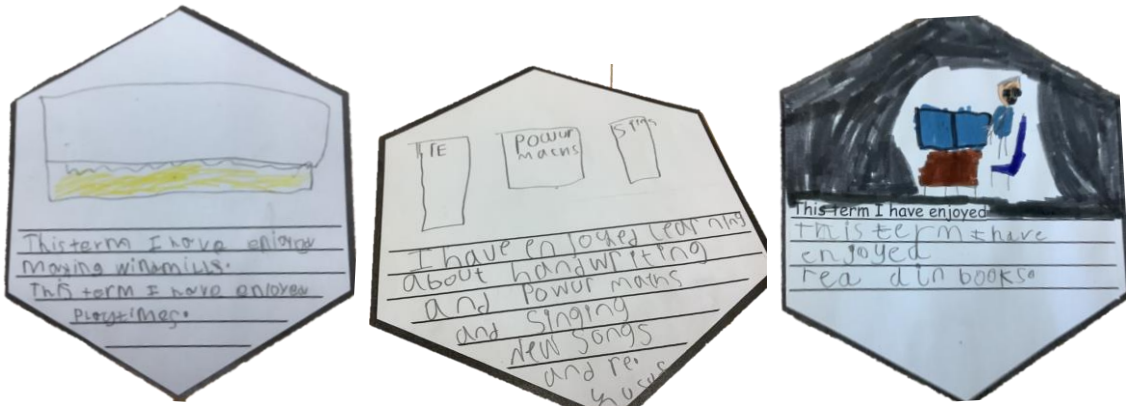
Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to Miss Park and will miss her terribly! Thank you, Miss Park for all your hard work, we wish you all the best.

We wish all our families a happy holiday season! We will see you in January. 😊



# Year 1

As we come to the end of our first term in Year One, we would like to say a huge thank you to parents and carers for all your support and kind words this term. The children have had an exciting time with all their new learning, and we have asked them what their favourite part of Year 1 has been so far. Here are a few replies:



It was great to see so many of you at the 'drop-in' session – the children love to share their work and 'show off' their learning. If you were unable to make it this time, rest assured there will be plenty of opportunities to come in and look at books in the new year. Along with the Class Dojo, we hope that this gives you a good understanding of what the children are learning and how. We will be sharing many more 'knowledge organisers' with you as we move into the Spring Term and start new topics in our different subjects.

Please continue to practice our new graphemes over the holidays – there are so many opportunities to use phonics, even if you are just segmenting words as you do the shopping,

e.g. s-p-r-ou-t-s, b-e-a-n-s, c-á-k-è.

Here are the Phase 5 graphemes we have covered this term:

## Autumn 1

Phase 3 GPC	Phase 5 GPCs
ai	ay play
ow	ou cloud
oi	oy joy
ee	ea each

## Autumn 2

Phase 3 GPC	Phase 5 GPCs			
ur er	ir bird			
igh	ie pie	i tiger	i-e time	
oo yoo	ue blue rescue	u unicorn	u-e rude cute	
oa	o go	o-e home		
ai	ay play	a paper	a-e shake	
ee	ea each	e he	e-e these	ie shield
or	aw claw			

The Year One Team would like to wish all our children, their parents, carers, and families a happy and healthy winter break and look forward to welcoming you all back in the new year!



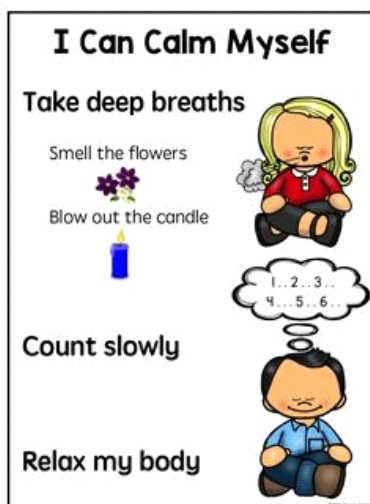
## Year 2

### Year 2

We are extremely proud of how hard all the children performed in their Year 2 Christmas production. They sang with enthusiasm, spoke clearly and confidently and all supported each other in producing an outstanding show. Well done Year 2 and thank you to all the parents who came and supported us.

In our maths lessons, the children have been working hard at adding and subtracting 2-digit numbers from other 2-digit numbers. They used a range of different strategies to help them including a number line and the column method. We have noticed how much more confident the children are becoming at sharing their own understanding with the class and helping each other to understand how to solve different problems.

In PE, we have been focusing on gymnastics and have been practicing different 2-, 3- and 4-point balances. The children have really impressed us how creative they are when inventing different balances and performing these in front of the class. Please ask them to share with you some of their different balances at home over the holidays.



In PSHE, we have been looking at different emotions and how our bodies feel when we experience these different emotions. We chose different colours that may go alongside different emotions and what we can do to help us when we feel negative emotions in order to help us calm down or feel happy. They children learnt that counting to 10 and breathing deeply can help them to feel calm when they feel nervous or angry.



The children should be very proud of how much progress they have made over the last term and how much they have grown in confidence and independence. We hope they get some well-deserved rest and fun family time over the holidays. We wish you all a very happy holiday!



## Year 3



This half term, year 3 have been studying the book "Winter's Child". We have enjoyed learning about the characters and the games that can be played in the ice and snow – we were helped a lot by the recent cold snap!

In maths we have been working on addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Recently we have been using our maths skills to crack codes and to work out word problems.



In French we have been learning our colours, shapes and sizes. We have used our new found skills to create pieces of art inspired by the French artist Matisse.

# Year 4



To quote a rather famous song - "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!" Decorations have gone up in the classrooms and cards are being handed out. We've not stopped working though as these last few days have provided opportunities to revisit the Autumn Term's work and revise the main points. The children have also completed some maths and grammar assessments so we can target any gaps.

We had a great time at the Verulamium Museum and the children really enjoyed the chance to handle real Roman artifacts and learn more about Roman life.



Many thanks to the parents who gave up their day to attend and make the trip possible.



We have recently been developing our DT skills creating pavilions and will be exploring our 3D art skills during our Christmas and winter activities.

As we near the end of our unit on electricity, we have also been exploring conductors and insulators. |



Along with the rest of the school, Year 4 thoroughly enjoyed watching Year 2 and Early Years practise their Christmas productions and appreciated all the hard work involved.

We would like to thank you for your continued support this term and hope you all enjoy the holiday ahead with friends and family.

Mr Dollemore, Mrs Fyfe, Mrs Burnham, Miss Gordon and Miss Giles



## Year 5

Congratulations Year 5 team on a successful Autumn term. Mrs Murrill and Mr Langton have been extremely impressed with your efforts and attitude towards your learning this half term. Let's make sure this rolls through after Christmas.

This half term we were lucky enough to explore our local woodland area on route to Hughenden Manor for our morning break. Thank you to all the parent helpers who volunteered their time to make this a wonderful experience for the children, we know they thoroughly enjoyed it and gained knowledge of their local area and how it compares to the Alps environment. Being immersed in the woodland also allowed Year 5 to develop their figurative language skills in poetry. Students are becoming skilled with writing figuratively, using similes, metaphors, and personification to strengthen their writing.

5MW and 5L have been learning a lot in Design & Technology this half term. Our learning has been focused on healthy eating and knowing what is in our food to develop and adapt a nutritious spaghetti Bolognese. It was great to see how engaging this experience was for the students, and how well they worked together in their groups. The day of cooking went smoothly. This was down to the impact from our parent volunteers, thanks again, we could not have been as successful without you.

Thanks to those of you who attended the virtual meeting in preparation for your child's residential experience at Ufton court. We trust that this trip will be very engaging and beneficial for Year 5. As teachers, we are looking forward to sharing this amazing experience with the students. Remember to double check the Ufton Court slideshow for essentials on what to bring and what not to bring. If you have any questions that arise over the Christmas break please Dojo Mrs Murrill or Mr Langton for clarity.

We appreciate your support with your child's education journey, it has been a great term to begin with and we are looking forward to some new exciting learning after the Christmas break. Merry Christmas, and happy holidays from the Year 5 team!

Mrs Murrill, Mr Langton, Mrs Walters and Mrs McGann





# Year 6

## Year 6 December

Year 6 have had an incredibly fun and busy end of term.

In English, the children have been looking at features of journalistic writing for example direct and indirect speech, journalistic sentences and much more. They then created their own newspaper articles in groups and independently.

Year 6 have demonstrated some excellent maths skills this term. The children have been dividing fractions by a whole number and enjoyed modelling and talking through their methods with their peers. They were encouraged to look at different strategies for example using a pictorial method, KFC (Keep, Flip, Change) method and others.

In our cross curricular Geography and ICT lesson, the children looked at percentages of population undernourished in different countries. Some children were surprised to find how people are living in poverty in the UK which sparked interesting discussions in the classroom. We thought about ways to help people and make a difference.

In Science, Year 6 are finishing their unit of work on electricity, learning the difference between current and voltage. The children completed investigations thinking about independent, dependent, and controlled variables. Next term, we will be looking at Light.



**Thank you for all your support this term. We are really proud of the hard work and achievements in Year 6. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy new year, from all the staff in Year 6.**



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THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

# POPPY APPEAL

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Downley School  
collected

**£248.23**

during the 2022 appeal.

*Thank you*

for your support of veterans  
and their families.



Registered Charity Number: 219279

# School Office

## **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 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 medical** if they are during school hours, excluding sickness, which is reported via the absence line. 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** 'Leave of Absence' application forms are not needed. **Please send an email into the school with evidence of your child's appointment.** Where possible please make appointments outside of school hours.*

## **Medical**

*All medicines, including Asthma inhalers, must be supplied in the **original packaging with the dispensing label.***

## **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.

### Green – PA events

<b>December</b>		
Tuesday 20th December	Break up	1.15pm
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December - Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	Christmas Break	
<b>2023</b>		
<b>January</b>		
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	Back to school	
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January	Open morning	9.30 - 11am
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> January - Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> January	Year 5 residential trip	
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	Parent First Aid Workshop TDS+ Building	8.30 -12pm
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> January	SEN drop-in session for parents	2 -3pm
Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> January - Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> January	Bikeability Year 5	
<b>February</b>		
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Inset day	
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> February	Safer Internet Day	in half term
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> February- Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term	
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Back to school	
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February - Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Anti - Bullying Workshops	
<b>March</b>		
Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent First Aid Workshop TDS+ Building	8.30 -12pm