



The Downley School

“Learning, Growing and Succeeding Together”

April 2023



Head Teacher's Comment

I have had such a lovely start to my interim headship at The Downley School, and I would like to thank you all for making me feel so very welcome. The children are an absolute delight to be with and I have treasured my moments that I have so far spent with them in assemblies, class, lunch and at play.

Last Thursday, I met many of you and I was able to share some of my background alongside the focus for this term. For those of you who were unable to attend I have provided this information on the following pages. I am very much looking forward to working with you all.

Staffing update

Last week **Mrs Perrottet** was successfully appointed as the substantive Assistant Head teacher. I am sure you will join me in wishing her continued success in this role.

This week we said goodbye to **Ms Colebourne**. We would like to thank her for the work she has done with our SEND children and families. Mrs Perry will be the SENDCo and will continue to work alongside families and teachers to ensure we are meeting the needs of our SEND children.

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An introduction to Ms Dandridge (Interim Head teacher)

My route into teaching

I grew up in Maidenhead, Berkshire and was a good tennis player at Secondary school spending any spare time in the PE department. Through coaching the younger children, I discovered that I was able to build a good rapport with children and enjoyed watching them develop following my input. Subsequently, I spent summer holidays coaching tennis at playschemes and as a lifeguard was always assigned to hosting the various sport/play parties. I decided that teaching would be an ideal job for me, so to help fund my degree I spent the first few summer holidays in America (New York State) working at Timber Lake West camp.



Teacher training

I trained at University of North London, now Metropolitan University, and specialised in Health PE and Recreation – subjects that continue to be a passion of mine. My teaching practices were all in Brent and so I naturally found my first position in this Borough after graduating with a BEd (Hons).

Having taught in Brent since 1998, I have valuable experience of working with children and families from deprived and culturally diverse backgrounds. As an experienced primary practitioner, I have always had high expectations for children to fulfil their potential. Most of my class-based experience has centred around schools where children come from challenging circumstances with low starting points. I do not believe barriers to learning are excuses for poor achievement and seek to address issues so that every child can succeed through high expectations from their teachers and parents. Developing a growth mindset in the school community enables limitations to be removed: with the focus on progress, all children's efforts are celebrated regardless of the outcome thus motivating the lowest attainers while challenging the higher.



St Mary's CE Primary School (SMCE)

After my first two years of teaching, I fulfilled my life-long ambition of travelling around Australia. Whilst fruit picking in Brisbane, I secured a job for my return in September at SMCE where I spent 21 wonderful years teaching and leading. The school serves a highly deprived community and many families have arrived from overseas experiencing challenging circumstances. Children enter the school performing below their peers and by the end of their learning journey, results are above national at KS2, exceeding the progress of those nationally. In a school with high levels of Free School Meals, Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs and English as an Additional language, results like these can partly be attributed to quality and timely interventions that were provided for our most vulnerable. I believe that if we can get the learning right for these pupils, we can get it right for all learners.

During my years at SMCE I progressed through the following leadership positions: PSHE leader, Science, Maths, Assessment, teacher career development and safeguarding. I was appointed as Deputy Headteacher in 2006 and subsequently passed my National Professional Qualification in Headship. I co-led and supported the school through 4 Ofsted inspections moving from satisfactory to good and maintaining this status in October 2022. My leadership is respectful and in sympathy with the Christian foundation of the school, and the school has been graded as 'outstanding' in the last two SIAMS inspections. Inspection reports made specific reference to work that I led – most notably safeguarding and assessment practices.

My beliefs regarding education

A child's primary education sets the foundations of a child's learning career and I believe they should leave with a sense of awe and wonder of the world and the opportunities that lie within, having achieved well and with confidence and belief that they have the right for an aspirational future. For me, primary education is about developing a love of learning in children so that they become lifelong learners. Children learn to love learning by attending school every day and enjoying their lessons so excellent attendance is paramount: lessons that excite and enthuse become memorable and entice children back into school the next day. While good outcomes in reading, writing and maths are essential, this should not limit opportunities for enjoyment of the wider curriculum. Primary education is about introducing a child's young, growing mind to all subjects so that they can discover where their interests and strengths lie. A rich, relevant, and interesting curriculum with cross curricular links makes learning enjoyable and meaningful, while PSHE, citizenship and RSHE enable children to navigate life issues that can impact on their readiness for learning.



I'm an advocate for celebrations of learning but also of wider events. Special theme days, like World Book Day, bring the school community together and are events that children and staff look forward to. Likewise, by supporting charitable causes like Red Nose Day and Children in Need, awareness of issues that may go beyond your child's immediate experiences help to develop them into responsible citizens.

The Downley School

So, I guess you may ask if everything was going so well at SMCE then why did I leave and move to TDS?

I chose to work for ODBST as their values resonated with me. I like that the Trust encourages their schools to maintain their own identity as I believe that every school and its community is unique. The close working partnership of the schools in ODBST provides an opportunity to share and gain expertise from excellent classroom practitioners and leaders which supports the development of The Downley School. There were several headship roles that I could have applied for within the Trust but, for me, none of these schools had the potential this school has.

I relocated to Bucks in 2016 as I wished for my girls, then aged 1 and 4, to grow up within easy reach of London while enjoying the countryside. I value outdoor education and prefer a school environment that could offer this, something that can be hard to find where I was in London. Now my girls are older, 8 and 11, I feel it is the right time for me to progress in my career. Living in Bucks, I feel passionately about the education local children receive and believe that I have the commitment your children deserve in providing a first-class education. I feel ready and enthusiastic about being the interim headteacher for The Downley School, building on the school's existing strengths and achievements and delivering high quality outcomes.

The term ahead

To ensure that a good handover has taken place, last half term I worked with The Downley School leadership team every Wednesday. They shared the good work that has been done with regards to reading, writing and maths and we will continue to embed these improvements. Class Dojo and newsletters will continue to be used to update you on news, forthcoming events, and any updates with regards to school improvement.

I am already due to meet next week with Chair and Vice-Chair of Parent Association to look at opportunities for parental engagement. In conversation with teachers, we will be continuing open classrooms and as you should already know we have invited you into school to celebrate the Kings Coronation on Friday 12th May. As part of our transition programme, we plan to showcase this year's learning to parents in the second half of the summer term.

I shared in assembly what I expect from the children while they are at school. I would appreciate your support in encouraging the following:

- Be in school and on time
- Keep each other safe
- Effort – Be your best self
- Polite – good manners
- Responsible – take responsibility for your actions
- Kind – be considerate of others and their feelings
- Honest – we all make mistakes; tell the truth so that we can help you not make the same mistake again
- Dress smart – Organised and smart appearance encourages more organised and smart thinking

The summer term is a great time of year to get to understand a school community. This term I will schedule opportunities for children, parents, and staff to share their views on The Downley School and prioritise focus areas for improvement. In the meantime, if you need to share something with me urgently then, as long as I am not in a meeting, I can be found on the gate at the end and start of the day. Please also feel free to call the school office or email me: headteacher@thedownleyschool.co.uk

King's Coronation

The King's Coronation is taking place on Saturday 6th May 2023 and The Downley School are eager to celebrate this event in history. We will be celebrating the week of the 8th May with activities in and outside of the classroom. These are outlined for you here.

1. The Big Help Out

To mark His Majesty The King's Coronation thousands of organisations across the country are getting together to give us all the chance to help out in our own local communities and The Downley School is the perfect place for you to help out! On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoon between 2:00 – 2:30pm you can volunteer to read with children in KS1. To volunteer, please register your interest by following this link

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/P9JCNSK>

Once you have registered your interest, please wait for confirmation and further details.

2. Friday 12th May 2023

To conclude our celebrations there are a few events happening on Friday 12th May which are detailed below.

Dress Up Day

We love a dress up day! Theme: red, white, and blue clothes. Please wear any items of clothes or accessories with these colours.

The Big Coronation Picnic Lunch

During the week the children will be making decorations for the 'Picnic Lunch' which is taking place on the Friday. On Friday 12th May the children will enjoy a picnic lunch on the field. Please send your child in with something to sit on, this could be a picnic blanket or something similar. They can also share their blanket with their friend. More information regarding food options will be sent at a later date.

The Coronation Singing Event and Bake Sale

All parents are invited to the field to listen to the coronation songs we have been learning at 2:45pm on Friday 12th May. The children will be dismissed from the field afterwards and on the way out there will be a bake sale in the playground.

3. Coronation Competitions

There are four competitions taking place with a deadline of **Friday 12th May 2023**. Please see the posters attached for more information. Winners will be announced in assembly and on Dojo on Monday 15th May 2023 after judging has taken place.

Design a Coronation Stamp or Coin Competition

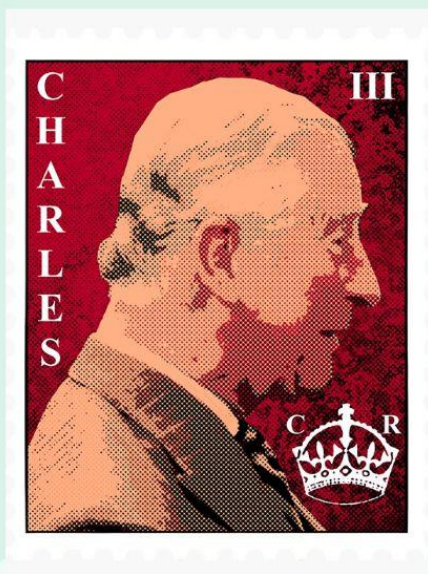
Design a stamp or coin to celebrate the coronation for a chance of winning a prize!

Submit by:

Friday 12th
May 2023

Give to:

Your teacher who will
pass onto Mrs Perry
or Mrs Perrottet



One prize for EYFS and KS1
One prize for KS2

Coronation Portrait Competition

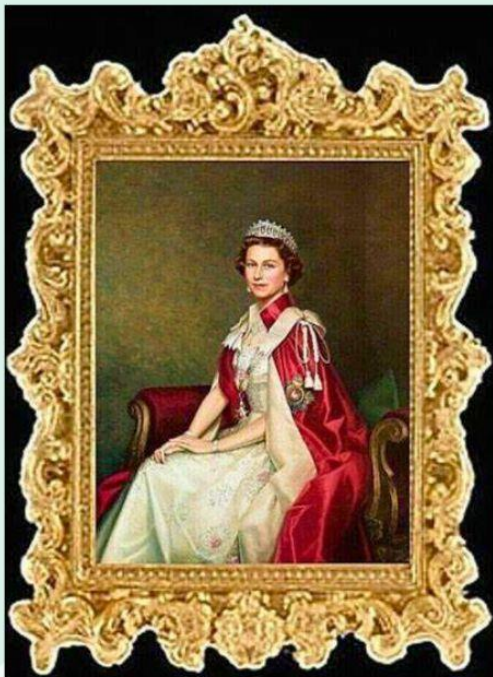
Either take a photo, draw or paint a portrait of yourselves as King or Queen for a chance of winning a prize!

Submit by:

Friday 12th
May 2023

Give to:

Your teacher who will
pass onto Mrs Perry
or Mrs Perrottet



One prize for EYFS and KS1
One prize for KS2

Coronation Shoe Box Competition

**Make a Shoe box scene of the Coronation
for a chance of winning a prize!**

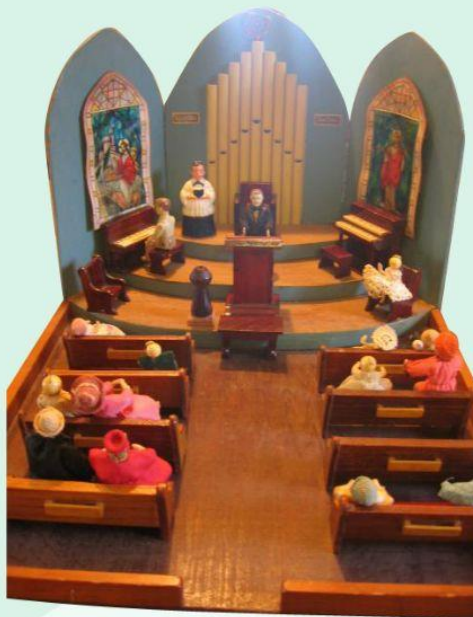
Other boxes allowed (no bigger than a shoebox)

Submit by:

**Friday 12th
May 2023**

Give to:

**Your teacher who will
pass onto Mrs Perry
or Mrs Perrottet**



**One prize for EYFS and KS1
One prize for KS2**

Coronation Cake Competition and Bake Sale

Bake a cake fit for a King for a chance of winning a prize! Once judged, there will be a bake sale at 3:15pm after the singing event on the field. All bakes welcome!

Submit by:

Friday 12th
May 2023

Give to:

Your teacher who will
take it to the
Imagination Suite



One prize for EYFS and KS1
One prize for KS2
One prize for a parent bake

Please label the ingredients on your bake

The Downley School Diary – 2022/2023

All dates below are provisional and subject to change. ** more info to follow

Green – PA events

May		
Monday 1 st May	May Day Bank Holiday	
Monday 8 th May	Bank Holiday	
Friday 12 th May	Dress up / Picnic/ Singing /Bake Sale	
Tuesday 9 th - Friday 12 th May	Year 6 SATS	
Tuesday 16 th May	Vision Screening EYFS **	am
Tuesday 16 th May	Open Classrooms	3.15 -4pm
Thursday 18 th May	Year 1 Classroom Activities**	am
Monday 22 nd - Thursday 25 th May	Year 2 SATS	
Thursday 25 th May	EYFS Bee Keeping Society Visit **	am
Monday 29 th May-Friday 2 nd June	May Half Term	
June		
Monday 5 th June	INSET day	
Tuesday 6 th June	Back to school	
TBC	Year 4 End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Tuesday 6 th - Friday 9 th June	Year 1 Phonics Screening	
Thursday 8 th June	Year 5 End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Friday 9 th June	Mufti Day–donations for Summer Fayre	
Saturday 10 th June	PA - Summer Fayre	3 – 5pm
Tuesday 13 th June	Class Photographs	
Thursday 15 th June	Year 3 End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Thursday 22 nd June	Year 2 End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Thursday 29 th June	Year 1 End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Thursday 29 th June	Year 5 Trip to Oxford Science Museum**	

The Downley School Diary – 2022/2023

All dates below are provisional and subject to change.

** - more info to follow **Green – PA events**

July		
Monday 10 th July	Year 6 Production Dress rehearsal to EYFS & KS1	9am
Tuesday 11 th July	Year 6 Production Dress rehearsal to KS2	9am
Wednesday 12 th July	Year 6 Production to Parents	2.30pm & 6pm
Thursday 20 th July	EYFS End of Year Performance	9 – 9.30am
Friday 21 st July	Year 6 Leavers Assembly	9am

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.

Parking

Just a polite reminder to avoid parking in Faulkner way.

Opportunities to Discover



THE PEOPLE OF DOWNLEY & DISRAELI

YOU ARE LOVE-D

**A DAY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS
MONDAY 8TH MAY**

What can you come to???





**SERVING BREAKFAST AT SUNNY BANK METHODIST
MOOR LANE HP13 5YP
8AM TIL 10AM**

**FAMILY FUN TIME AT VIBE CHURCH
209 THE PASTURES HP13 5RR
10:30AM TIL 1:30PM**

**AFTERNOON TEA AT ST JAMES CHURCH
PLOMER HILL HP13 5NB
2PM TIL 4PM**

You might see us out and about on this day in
RED t-shirts around the community so come
and say Hi and see what we are up to!

FOR ANY MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER CONTACT:
HEATHER.GRAHAM@STJAMESDOWNLEY.ORG.UK
INFO@VIBE-CHURCH.COM



WHAT'S GOING ON...

At Sunnybank Methodist Church - 8am til 10am:-
Come and have a breakfast sandwich and a drink.



At VIBE Church - 10:30am til 1:30pm:-
There will be lots to do for all the family with
hot and cold drinks, cakes and pizza!

Also @ VIBE Church - School Uniform bank:-
Make a donation or come and find what
you need from our School uniform bank!

At St James' Church - 2pm til 4pm:-
Cream Tea Afternoon - enjoy scones, jam,
cakes, coffee and tea.

Also @ St James' - Food bank:-
Please bring a dried food or canned food
option to donate to One Can food bank.

**And we will announce the WINNERS of our
UnSung Hero Awards
at St James' Church at 3:30pm**





GET SET FOR ULTIMATE HOLIDAY FUN!

FRESH AIR FUN

INSPIRING CHILDREN EVERY DAY

Outstanding holiday camps for 4 to 14 year olds this summer at
Maltman's Green School in Gerrards Cross, Godstowe School in High Wycombe & Davenies School in Beaconsfield

Ultimate Savings When You Book Early!

CAMP DATES

SUMMER: MON 17TH JULY - FRI 25TH AUGUST

Over 40 exciting activities delivered every week across four age groups, giving each child THE Ultimate holiday experience.

SWIMMING TENNIS ARCHERY 8+ ZORBING 8+ ULTIMATE ART COMBAT ARCHERY PEDAL KARTS 6+ FENCING 8+ ULTIMATE INFLATABLES ROLLER RACERS DODGEBALL KVIK CRICKET ULTIMATE FRISBEE ESCAPE & EVASION	BADMINTON NETBALL STORY ADVENTURE ROUNDER DANCE FOOTBALL TRI-GOLF 6+ TEE BALL TAG RUGBY CAPTURE THE FLAG TEAM & INITIATIVE GAMES ...AND MUCH MORE*
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With spacious grounds, a swimming pool and modern facilities these independent schools are perfect for our Ultimate Activity Camps.

GODSTOWE SCHOOL
 Address: Shrubbery Road, High Wycombe, HP13 6PR

MALTMAN'S GREEN SCHOOL
 Address: Maltmans Lane, Gerrards Cross, SL9 8RR

DAVENIES SCHOOL
 Address: 73 Station Rd, Beaconsfield, HP9 1AA

SUMMER SAVER OFFER

£225 PER WEEK
 SAVE £20
 STANDARD PRICE £245

£50 A DAY
 SAVE £4
 STANDARD PRICE £54

Offer ends Tuesday 6th June 2023

BOOK NOW on ultimateactivity.co.uk or call **0330 111 7077**

*Activities vary per location - see online. If you have received this flyer from your child's school, this does not mean the school endorses Ultimate Activity Camps.



Come Sailing!

Open Day Upper Thames SC
Monday 8th May 11am to 4pm
Riverside, Bourne End SL8 5PT
Tea by the Thames from 3pm
In aid of Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust

Sailing Memberships including the use of club owned boats, an annual fee equivalent to £23 monthly, add all your children for just £3 per month. Social members' annual fee equivalent to £8 per month

www.utsc.org.uk

