



Downton Church of England VA Primary School

Gravel Close, Downton, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3LZ

Telephone: 01725 510556

Email: admin@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk Website: www.downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Paula Carlton BA (Hons) QTS NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs A Bates BSC PGCE QTS



Tuesday 19th October 2021

Dear Families,

What a start to the new academic year we have had! At long last, our children have been able to get out and about doing what we do best – enjoying learning. This term, school has begun to feel much more like it used to, apart from a few minor changes to routines and habits. In addition to this, the children have also been working extremely hard in their classes, and are ready (as I am sure you all are) for this half term break.

It has been lovely to see parents back in school, whether it is at parents evenings, volunteering on trips, hearing readers, or helping the DPSA. It really does make a positive difference to our community. We are currently looking for parent governors to join our governing body, if you think that you could help in this way, contact the office for more information.

The DPSA have made a tremendous start to the new year raising over £600 for the school from the disco. However, without your support they will not be able to continue. The DPSA currently have a vacancy for a chair and treasurer. The DPSA is such an important partner to the school, their fundraising changes outcomes for all of our children.

Harvest Festival

It was lovely to be able to celebrate Harvest once again as a whole school at Church. Children carried a can of food to be donated to the Trussell Trust. The service was really special, with readings, singing and reflection. I would like to thank Phil and Katy for leading such a special and memorable worship.



KS1 visit Marwell Zoo

On Friday, KS1 visited Marwell Zoo as part of their Africa topic. The children loved the day and tell me that they really enjoyed seeing the Meerkats most of all. The children were a real credit to us – particularly as there were so many of them. I would like to say a huge thank you to our parent volunteers – without you this trip would not have been possible.



Black History Month

Black History Month is a celebration of black history that takes place during the 1st – 31st October every year in the UK. It celebrates the history, arts and culture of black people. Black history is often underreported and underrepresented so by dedicating a month to it every year, it helps to readdress the balance. At school, all classes have been learning about different significant black people throughout history, ranging from Mary Seacole to Nelson Mandela. Ask your child about what they have learnt. We have also invested in a range of culturally diverse books to enhance our library. Why not visit the Black Lives Matter section of our virtual library on our school website to share some stories with your children?

<https://downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk/our-virtual-library>



Year 5 visit from a Marine Biologist

Emma Fox, a Marine Biologist Assistant from Project Seagrass, visited school last week and worked with our Year 5 children. She gave an educational presentation, linked to their Oceans and Coasts Geography topic, about her work re-growing seagrass. It's incredibly helpful for the environment, absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing lots of oxygen. The children really enjoyed her visit!



Learning outside the classroom in Year R

On Friday, our Reception children explored the adventure garden with Mrs Wells looking for bugs and insects hiding under logs and spotting birds in the sky. They used their magnifying glasses to look closely at the insects to help match them up with their worksheet, counting their legs and looking at their colours. Great observation skills – well done!



Governors

Governor's work with our school leaders to shape the strategic school direction. We currently have a vacancy for parents to join our team. The role has steadily risen in responsibility, over the last few years. This is not a small commitment, but I can assure you it is very rewarding and will greatly enhance your understanding of the school and increase your involvement in the local community. If you are interested please email our clerk, Angela Jordan, at ajordan@downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk



Bag2School

Following our previous success with Bag2School, we have another collection date confirmed for Tuesday 16th November. A great excuse to have a clear out of those cupboards over half term and help raise money for the school.

Please do check the list of what they can accept as any bags containing items which are not accepted will not be taken - <https://bag2school.com/what-we-collect>. Items can be bagged into black bin liners and dropped in to the school office from Monday 8th November.



Year 3 visit to Stonehenge

Last week our Year 3 children took a trip to Stonehenge to support their Stone Age topic this term. The children were encouraged to immerse themselves in the stone age era, imagining themselves as people visiting the stones some 3000 years ago as well as considering how they were built. The children were able to tell me today, all about how the stones have changed over the years, where archaeologists 'think' they came from and how they got there.



Archie's West End audition experience

For the past three months, Archie has been auditioning for the UK National Tour of Les Miserables for the role of Gavroche. From nearly 150 boys, he made it to the last 12, but sadly just missed out on the final 6 cast. He had the opportunity to perform for Cameron Mackintosh several times and perform on two West End stages. Archie says, "Although I was sad not to get it, it was a really fun experience and I particularly loved getting to sing on a West End stage." What an amazing achievement Archie – we are really proud of you!



Biathlon achievement for Iola

We are proud to share that Iola in Year 6 came 15th in a field of 107 girls from across the country last weekend at the 2021 Schools Modern Biathlon at Bath University. She completed an amazing 800 run as well as a 50m freestyle swim. She had tough competition in the field from many private and main stream school. As always, she represented our school with pride and great sportsmanship – well done Iola, we are so very proud of your achievement.



11+ Familiarisation Club

Mrs Newsome will be starting her after school 11+ club for our Year 5 pupils next term. If you would like your child to participate, please contact Mrs Savage in the office for a registration form.

New school lunch menu

Our new school lunch menu and jacket potato menu which takes effect from after half term can be found on our website: <https://downton-pri.wilts.sch.uk/school-meals-milk>



Despite the end of the first term being with us, there was today an air of sadness in the school as we wished a sad farewell to Carol Tanner who starts her retirement today, after almost 14 years working at Downton. Over this time Carol has made a huge impact on the whole school community, exuding her cheerful and positive vibes, as cook, cleaner in charge and wraparound care lead. Please join us in thanking Carol for her contribution to the school during her time with us. We wish Carol a very long and happy retirement.

Although it is a sad time when people leave, it is also a time for new beginnings and new adventures. Please join me in wishing Mrs Coles our SENCO much happiness, as she leaves us to move onto the next phase of her career. I thank her for the positivity, support and guidance shown to staff, children and parents alike and hope that she looks back on her time at Downton with fond memories of us all.

Thank you to all of the parents and pupils for your continued support through the difficult times, and to so many of you for your positive messages, which have kept us all going. We are all really looking forward to next term when we can continue to grow and learn together in love.

Have a wonderful half term break.



Paula Carlton

