



Downton Church of England VA Primary School

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Friday 26th November 2021

Dear Families,

The nights are drawing in... and we are promised a drop in temperatures....it can only mean one thing that summer is a long way off! On the plus side – the sunsets over the school are beautiful at the moment – this lovely sunset was taken by a staff member as children played happily at After School Club.



This must mean that we are getting closer and closer to Christmas, which also means that school will be extremely busy school over the next few weeks. In this newsletter, you'll find some more information as to what is coming up.

Christmas Extravaganza

As mentioned last week, we are going ahead with our Christmas Extravaganza this year, all outside. This is happening on Friday 3rd December from 4pm-6pm, on the school playground. Please come along and support the DPSA. There are lots of wonderful stalls, the chance to win a Christmas tree, the legendary Christmas raffle, stalls – pick up a floral creation from Mandy Gardiner, listen to the choir, sip mulled wine, enjoy hot food and listen to the Downton Band to get us all ready for Christmas. I believe a very special visitor will be announcing the results of the raffle so please do join us. If you can spare some time to help on one of the stalls the DPSA would be most grateful.



Secret Present Room

The wonderful Secret Present Room opens on Monday 6th December for the children to go and choose a gift for a loved one. There is still time for you to purchase entry for your child – this can be done via SchoolGateway and the deadline for payments is Wednesday 1st December. The DPSA are still in need to volunteers to help throughout the week and would be very grateful for your time – it really is a magical experience to get involved with especially as this year the volunteers will also be helping the children with wrapping their chosen gift!



Surprise Cups

One of the most popular stalls at the Christmas Extravaganza is always the Surprise Cups. A huge thank you those who have taken the time to fill and wrap these – they look great. The deadline for cups to be returned to the office is Wednesday 1st December.



Christmas Raffle

Once again, the DPSA have been overwhelmed with the generosity of local business and their donations of prizes for the raffle being held at the Christmas Extravaganza. Tickets will be available to purchase on Friday 3rd December at drop off, available in the office throughout the day, at pick up and also for the first hour of the Extravaganza. There are lots of great prizes to be won, and there is also a real 6ft Christmas tree and lights up for grabs.



Christmas Raffle

Vouchers from:

- The Wooden Spoon
- Stable & Wick
- Carters Barber Shop
- HDavison Photos
- No22 Beauty & Massage
- Bramshaw Dance
- Desy Thai Restaurant
- Gymies

Prizes donated by:

- Downton Brewery
- Downton Co-Op
- Downton Tyre & Auto
- Ockenden Tree Services
- Nails by Jo
- Charlotte Dooley
- Hair by Kirsty
- Skinner & Osment

...plus much much more!

Nativity Performances

We are very excited that we can once again invite parents to watch the nativity productions, it is such a special time of year. Our Reception children nativity is taking place on Tuesday 7th and Wednesday 8th December – please remember to return your slips to the office to confirm which performance you would like to attend. Our KS1 nativity production, “It’s a Miracle!” will be taking place on Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th December with bookings being taken from 7am Monday 29th November. They are all working incredibly hard and we cant wait to watch them perform and get us in that festive spirit!



Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumper Day

Don't forget Thursday 16th December is our Christmas Jumper Day – children can wear a festive knit in place of the school jumper or cardigan and are asked to bring a £1 donation for Save the Children on this day. The whole school are invited to enjoy a Christmas Dinner which they can order on the day during registration.

End of Term Christmas Service

We are hoping to hold our end of term service at St Laurence's but are keeping our eye on the current guidance. We will update you with more information as soon as we are sure it will be able to proceed as usual.



Reception News

What a wonderful week our Year R children have had! They really enjoyed joining a webinar with Eileen Browne the author of Handas surprise. The children were captivated as they listened to her retell the story. They then took part in some dance activities linked to the story as part of the Wiltshire Year of Reading. This second photo is of our special visit from the fire service. They taught children how to float if they ever got stuck in water. They also told us all about their uniform and shared lots of photos of fire engines!



Football success

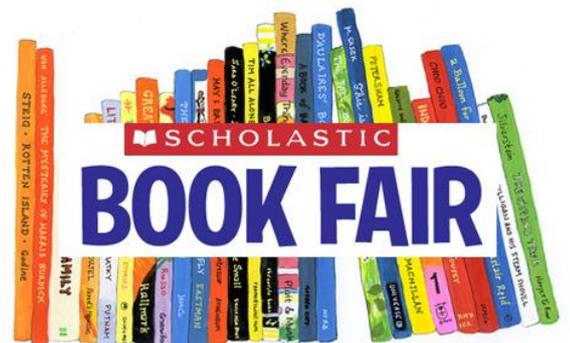
A team of our Year 3 and 4 boys played against Alderbury this week in a friendly football match. Showing excellent skills and team work, the boys saw themselves defeat their opposition with an impressive 7-2 win. Well done to all of you – you should be very proud!



Scholastic Book Fair

We are delighted to let you know that the Scholastic Book Fair arrives in school on Tuesday 6th December and will be open in the school office from Wednesday 7th until Monday 13th December.

This year, we need to run the fair slightly differently. As in previous years, it will continue to be set up in the school office, where parents and children will be very welcome to come and browse together after school. This year's event will be CASHLESS, meaning books will need to be reserved, and then paid for via Gateway - once paid for the books will be delivered to your child in school.



This is a such an exciting time for us in school and we are so pleased that we are able to go ahead with the event. It is always wonderful to see the children browsing the books with their classes, and after school with their families. Any books purchased by you generates valuable commission for us to purchase new books for our school library, so thank you! We look forward to seeing you there and, as always, thank you for your support.



Reporting absence and reason for illness

As part of our safeguarding duties, it is really important that any absences are reported to the school office by 9am so we are aware once registers are completed. It is also really important for us to know why your child is absent, so including any symptoms or the nature of their illness when reporting their absence as this information may be needed to ensure we are following the correct procedures with regards to infection control.



Parliament visits KS2 in Downton

This week we were delighted to have Tomas from the UK Parliament come and speak to our KS2 children. He explained what democracy was and shared with them what actually happens at the Houses of Parliament. It was lovely to see our KS2 children so engaged and asking very pertinent questions – we are proud of them all.



Mental Health lead

I am delighted to announce that Mrs Drennan will be taking on the role of **Senior Mental Health Lead** for Downton Primary School. This is part of the government's commitment for all schools within the UK to have a Senior Mental Health Lead by 2025. The aim of this role is to develop and oversee a **whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing** and you can learn more about this role [here](#).

Mrs Drennan will be working closely with SLT to develop a strategy for long term, whole school, change. She will also be establishing a working group of team members from across our staff community. This group of willing and motivated volunteers will act as '**Mental Health Champions**' with opportunities to access training, lead and support specific projects and share their knowledge and ideas. This is a very exciting time for us as a school and will make such a difference to pupils and staff.



We look forward to seeing you all in school over the coming weeks and enjoying all these festive events with you and your children.

Best wishes,

Paula Carlton

