

This half term's value has been: Diversity. Next half term's value will be: Empathy.

Head Teacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our latest mission that became known as 'Operation Hedge' has been accomplished! This week, every child in school has planted a shrub, supported by Audrey and Nick Jarvis from Lewes Urban Arboretum and our gardening volunteers, Gabriella Rizello and Sue Korman. The hedge will help reduce noise and air pollution from Ditchling Road, whilst boosting biodiversity on the school grounds and creating a greener, more welcoming frontage for everyone who passes by. This marks the culmination of months of fundraising, planning, and teamwork to give a sustainable 50th birthday gift to the school and its community, designed to last another 50 years and beyond.



This whole project has been a heart-warming community experience from beginning to end, with the future of our children and planet at the core. I daren't begin to name everyone involved but I would like to express my enormous gratitude for a true community effort from parents, carers, grandparents, governors, neighbours, and even local Barclays staff! And for those involved in moving the 6-metre-long planter over two very cold and wet Sundays, you will be pleased to hear that its use by our Year 2 children is already underway!





On Monday 16th March, 40 of our Year 2 children proudly represented Downs Infant School at the Let's Dance event at the Dome. They overcame backstage nerves to perform a choreographed routine to 'Celebration' by Kool & The Gang to the shrieks and applause of a delighted audience.

Many thanks to Neil Cowley and the team of staff and parent/carer volunteers, without whom this fabulous opportunity for the children could not have happened.

As part of all the exciting learning going on across the school, we've also seen Reception busing in the Garden and Year 1's highly entertaining retelling of the story of the Three Little Pigs. Thank you for your continued support in attending these memorable events for the children.



Once again, it was lovely to welcome the Downs Junior Mega Choir back across the road to sing to us; and for us to sing to them. It was also delightful to share some of our wonderful Book Week with all the familiar faces from the Juniors when they came to visit. On this occasion, it was to share in the love of books with the infant children. Thank you to Kirsty Cargill, Alison Harrex, and Yvie Mason for organising Book Week with support from FODIS.



Thank you to those who were able to donate to Comic Relief. Our Red Nose Day collection raised £125 for this valuable cause.



Wishing you all a very happy spring break. We look forward to welcoming you back on Monday 13th April.

Best wishes,

Lisa Walker

Learning in Reception

Reception launched their exciting space journey this term with a mysterious rocket landing in the Ocean area, along with a shy little alien visitor. This sparked a range of creative activities, including writing, making, creating and singing. The children have also produced beautiful painted self-portraits and enjoyed thoughtful discussions about how all families are unique and special.



For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

Learning in Year 1

Year 1 have been innovating their own stories inspired by The Three Little Pigs, linking their English work with their science learning on materials and their properties. In maths, they have been exploring numbers 11–19, with a focus on odd and even numbers, doubles, and addition within 20. They have also been working incredibly hard to prepare for their fantastic show.



For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

Learning in Year 2

In English, Year 2 have been writing imaginative diary entries based on being woken in the night by something mysterious, using a wide range of adjectives to bring their writing to life. In maths, they have been learning about division both with and without remainders, and have recently moved on to quotitive division—where the total quantity and group size are known, but the number of groups is unknown. To support their history learning, the children enjoyed a special performance about the Great Fire of London (thank you FODIS!). In art, they have been creating stunning mixed-media backgrounds inspired by scenes from the Great Fire of London.



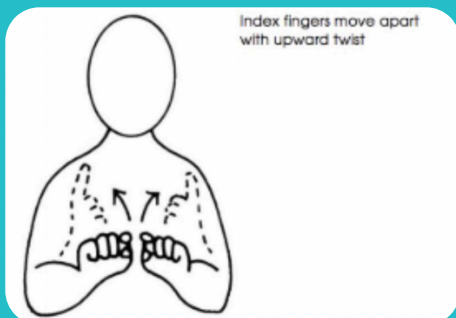
For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

This half term's Makaton signs were:

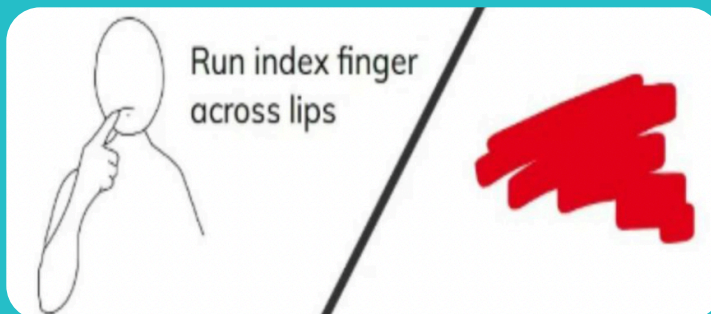


Did you know that over 100,000 children and adults use Makaton symbols and signs, either as their main method of communication or as a way to support speech?!

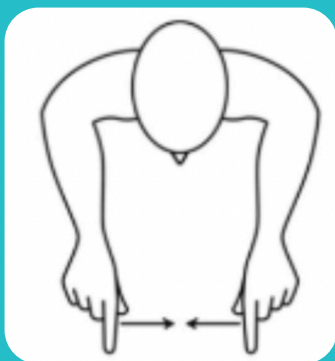
Different



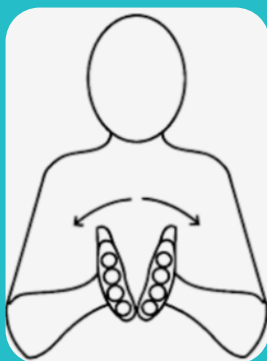
Red



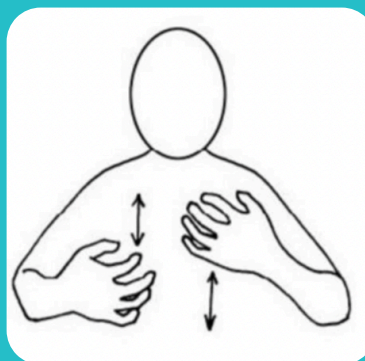
Same



To read



Exciting



To dig



To plant



To grow



Safeguarding

If you would like to speak to our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Lisa Walker, or a member of our safeguarding team in confidence, please email:

DSL@downsinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk

If you have any compliments, comments, concerns or complaints to feedback to school please email: CCCC@downsinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Governors' News

As the term draws to a close, Governors would like to say an enormous thank you to Mrs Walker and all her staff for their amazing hard work to ensure that all our children have the best possible experiences in their journey through our school. An extra thank you to the staff and children who put on an amazing performance for "Let's Dance" at the Dome this term.

Governors are working hard to set a balanced budget for the new financial year, however, like a number of schools in the city and across the country this has become increasingly difficult over the last few years.

Some governors spent the morning in school this half term visiting classrooms with a focus on maths, music and RE. Time was spent talking to children about their learning, meeting with senior leaders and discussing progress against the school priorities for development.

Governors hope that you all have an enjoyable spring break.

School Council



This half term, our School Council representatives (one per class) have been busy learning lots of Makaton signs to teach to the whole school. The ideas gathered for how to improve the activities on offer in one of our outdoor areas at lunchtime also led to a discussion about planting more plants. This has been very timely with our hedge planting project! The children have also been busy thinking about what makes them feel like they belong at Downs Infant School.

Resources Shout Out



Many thanks for the Christmas jumper donations. Mrs Walker now has enough small sized spares, but if you have any good quality Christmas jumpers suitable for Year 2 children, Mrs Walker would really appreciate them!



Jake in Kingfisher Class says, "Please, if you have any army costumes or netting, please can you give it to us?"



Reception classes would love some Meccano, Marble Run, and marbles please!

And if you have any spare buttons or ribbons, Reception would love those too.



As always, all year groups need lots of packaging for junk modelling. Please note that we're unable to accept packaging from products containing nuts or seeds. We also can't accept packaging from medicines or toilet roll tubes. If you could bring in your recycling on a Monday morning that would be great!

Rainbow Club News

Rainbow Club staff would like to remind parents to ensure their children have suncream and sunhats with them for playing outside now the weather is going to be getting warmer.



SPRING FAYRE

Well, that was a lot of fun! Our **Spring Fayre** on Sunday was a huge success – thank you to everyone who came along. A massive shoutout to our amazing class reps and volunteers who ran the stalls so brilliantly, and to all of you for the incredible donations. **Thanks to your generosity, we raised £1800!**

WONKA BARS

Our **Wonka Bars** fundraiser for **World Book Day** was another big success, making **over £500 profit**. Huge thanks to everyone who sourced and wrapped nearly 400 bars and all who bought them. Special thanks to Edie & Loic for their brilliant designs, our class reps for all their efforts, and to Lindsay Alexander for securing £200 sponsorship from Brand Vaughan. Congratulations too to our 10 lucky winners!

FROZEN FRIDAYS

Thank you also to the **Frozen Friday team**—we raised **£144** this month. We'll be taking a break over Easter and will be back on the first Friday in May.

LOST PROPERTY

Finally, please check reception for any lost property—we'd love it to find its way home! Have a wonderful Easter break—fingers crossed for more sunshine. Love, FODIS x

FODIS Friends
Of
Downs
Infant
School

FODIS EVENTS

**FIRST
FRIDAY
OF EACH
MONTH!**

FROZEN FRIDAY

we'll be back after Easter - so please join us for ice creams from 3-3:30 outside Starfish

APR
13

26 IN 26 CHALLENGE

children choose an activity (spot 26 spring flowers, drawings, keepy uppys, etc) and get sponsorship for doing 26 in 26 days

APR
16

FODIS - EGM

have your say and vote in our new FODIS Chair and Treasurer. 7:30pm at The Open House

APR
24

TRIV QUIZ NIGHT

we'd love to have a giggle with you at our next quiz - 7:30-10:30pm. Prizes for the winners and losers

JUL
04

SUMMER FAYRE

join us on Saturday from 12-3pm for fun and games. If you'd like to get involved let us know!

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
GET INVOLVED.**

fodisgeneral@gmail.com



Key Dates (red = dates added since last newsletter)

Friday 27th Mar	LAST DAY OF SPRING TERM 2
30th Mar - 10th Apr	EASTER HOLIDAYS
Monday 13th Apr	FIRST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 1
Tuesday 28th Apr	Class Photographs
Saturday 2nd May	Children's Parade
Friday 8th May	Reception Trip to Washbrooks Farm
Monday 11th May	Year 2 Trip to The Railway Land Wildlife Trust (2 classes TBC)
Tuesday 12th May	Year 2 Trip to The Railway Land Wildlife Trust (2 classes TBC)
Wednesday 12th May	Year 1 Trip to Amberley Museum
Friday 22nd May	LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 1
25th -29th May	HALF TERM
Monday 1st Jun	INSET DAY
Tuesday 2nd Jun	FIRST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 2
Wednesday 15th July	Year 2 Leavers' Show 9.20am
Thursday 16th July	Year 2 Leavers' Show 9.20am
Friday 17th July	Reports to Parents/Carers
Tuesday 22nd July	LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 2