Downs Infant School Newsletter

Summer Term 1 2026

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

Head Teacher's Welcome



Dear Parents and Carers,

What a busy half term we have had - full of learning, enjoyment and variety! I am delighted to have made a full recovery from my surgery and would like to thank so many of you for the kind messages and good wishes I have received.

Miss Emily London (Starfish Class Teacher) is now officially on maternity leave. Miss Jade Clifford, who is already a familiar face around the school from short and long-term supply cover, has been successfully appointed to cover in Miss London's absence. Before leaving us, Miss London worked tirelessly to ensure that the school reports were written for her class and that logistics for the end of Reception class splits were sorted. This has meant that Reception class split discussions have started earlier in the year than would ordinarily be the case but this information won't be shared publicly until 21st June, along with the rest of the school. Transition to the next year group can feel unsettling for the children and we have a robust procedure that we follow in order to make this as smooth as possible. Please can I ask you to support us by not discussing transition too early as this simply extends the period of uncertainty for the children.

Once again, the Children's Parade was a huge success and a truly memorable event for all involved. Anansi the Spider looked resplendent in the sunshine and is currently sitting proudly on display in Jubilee Library. Huge thanks are owed to Hannah Gates, Sally Franks and everyone who helped make this event possible.



Miss Cornish led a very informative Relationships and Health Education workshop which was well attended by parents and carers. The latest Downs Infants Junior Park Run Takeover was also incredibly well attended with a record breaking 182 participants!



Last Monday, we welcomed Rosie the dog into assembly for Years 1 and 2, where the children learned how to stay safe around dogs. The assembly was competently led by Arne from Kingfisher Class and his mum, Stephanie. Through a different assembly, we also learned more about the wonderful David Attenborough and celebrated by singing 'Happy Birthday' to him on 8th May.

We continue to be impressed by our budding musicians. From recorder and violin players to our Rock Steady rock stars, there has been a great deal of talent on show. We are looking forward to enjoying some live music from them next half term.

Over the half term break, artist and Downs Infant parent, Amber Ashby will be painting a beautiful mural by the school office to show our school values (Aspiration, Belonging, Creativity, Diversity, Empathy and Flexibility). If waiting by the office, please can I ask you in advance to ensure this artwork is respected as I've been reliably informed that little hands and feet often make their way onto the walls in that area and leave mucky marks behind!

Wishing you all a lovely half term break in the gorgeous sunshine. We look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday 2nd June as Monday 1st June is an INSET day.

Best wishes,

L. Walker

Lisa Walker

Learning in Reception - TRIPS SPECIAL

All of the Reception children and staff rounded up the half term's learning with a grand finale, the very fabulous trip to Washbrooks Farm. 'Understanding the World' is a key part of the children's learning and the farm gave ample opportunities for them to explore the natural world and to observe plants and animals. It also provided a wonderful opportunity for them to play co-operatively, take turns and share with others. The children were such fabulous ambassadors of our school, they truly shone!



Huge thanks to all those who helped on the school trips. We couldn't provide these wonderful, varied and enriching experiences without you. Thanks also to all of you who offered but weren't able to support on this occasion.

For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

Learning in Year 1 - TRIPS SPECIAL

Year 1 enriched their history learning with a fantastic trip to Amberley Museum. They took part in a workshop titled 'Communication Nation', learning about communication in the past. This involved sending a telegram, using semaphore flags, talking through tin can phones and exploring a wide range of old telephones; some of the historical phones looked a bit too familiar to some of the adults though! They also enjoyed an exciting ride on the train and a play in the play area. The children were great representatives of Downs Infant School and we are very proud of them all.



Huge thanks to all those who helped on the school trips. We couldn't provide these wonderful, varied and enriching experiences without you. Thanks also to all of you who offered but weren't able to support on this occasion.

For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

Learning in Year 2 - TRIPS SPECIAL

Year 2 had a wonderful visit to Lewes Railway Land Nature Reserve where they were able to expand on their science and geography learning. The children participated in some fun activities in the woodland where they learnt all about habitats and food chains. They even got to make their own woodland buddy and a habitat for it using the wealth of natural resources within the area. In the meadow area they surveyed the land from the spiral mound that overlooked the reserve and noticed lots of physical features of the landscape as well as human ones. In the meadow, they went on a hunt for a huge variety of plants, studied the various parts like leaves, stems and seeds and learnt what plants need to survive by collecting all the elements in a relay race!



Huge thanks to all those who helped on the school trips. We couldn't provide these wonderful, varied and enriching experiences without you. Thanks also to all of you who offered but weren't able to support on this occasion.

For more detail and photos, please check your Tapestry account

Our City, Our World

Last term, our OCOW theme focused on transport, which spilled over into the summer term with a visit from Brighton & Hove City Council's Bikeability team. Children in Reception and Year 1 were able to develop important balance and control skills in preparation for learning to cycle.



This term, our OCOW theme is Water. There are lots of exciting activities to try at home, shared weekly on Tapestry. Please do take a look and get involved – be as creative as you like! We look forward to seeing your ideas and would love to display some of them in the school hall.

NEW FODIS TEAM!

A warm welcome to **Lindsay Alexander, our new FODIS co-Chair, and Anna-Maria Mele, our new co-Treasurer, joining Camille & I on the team.** We're already busy planning our **Summer Fayre on Saturday 4th July, 12–3pm — save the date and any help welcomed.**

TRIV QUIZ NIGHT

Huge thanks to everyone who joined our Triv Quiz last month. Congrats to **The Team With Too Many** on the win, and commiserations to **Let's Get Quizzical**, proud new owners of the wooden spoons! Special thanks to our volunteers. **We raised over £500 to buy new rekenreks for maths learning.**

26 IN 26 CHALLENGE

Our little superheroes sponsorship efforts has raised over **£900 for the school!** The money will fund a **colourful new foyer mural by Amber Elise and comfy new seating,** to be unveiled after the May half term.

LOST PROPERTY

This is a huge problem for us so now if you think you've lost anything please email: **fodisfreeshop@gmail.com.** We'll have a dedicated area to collect. More details to follow.

FROZEN FRIDAYS

Thank you also to the **Frozen Friday team—we took over £190 this month. Our next events will be Friday, 5th June and Friday 3rd July.**

Friends Of Downs Infant School

FODIS

FODIS SUMMER FAYRE

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
GET INVOLVED.

fodisgeneral@gmail.com

JUL 04

SUMMER FAYRE
join us on **Saturday from 12-3pm** for family fun and games - we'd love to see you there!

STALL VOLUNTEERS
are you able to help for an hour on the day? Perhaps organising your class stall or could you spare some time to help set up / take down?

BEAT THE GOALIE VOLUNTEERS
could you help for an hour slot to run our **Beat The Goalie** activity? Just turn up, keep an eye on the ball and give out prizes?

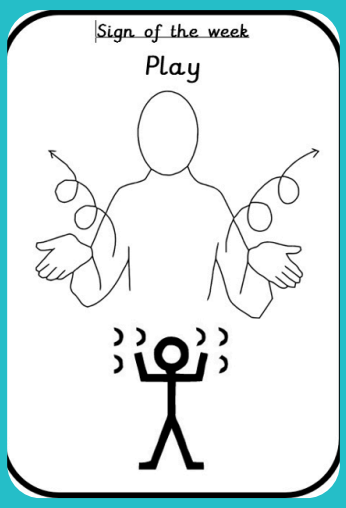
BBQ VOLUNTEERS
we're looking for a team to help run our **outside BBQ** - could you spare an hour or so or help us get supplies?

DONATIONS BY 29TH JUNE
we'd love any clean and still life in them teddies, kids clothes, filled jam jars, raffle prizes, tombola prizes and shop bought / home bakes (no nuts & seeds)

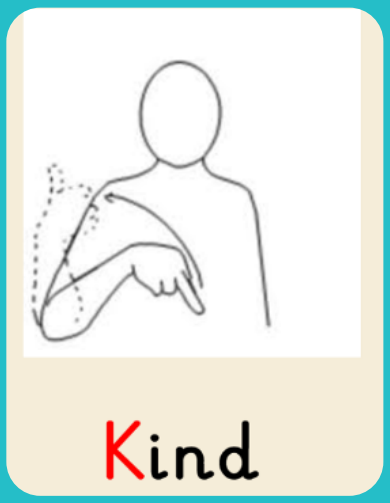
This half term's Makaton signs were:

DID YOU KNOW?

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?!











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 we finish our Summer half term, I am pleased to introduce a new co-opted school governor. Emma Johnston brings a wealth of educational experience to our board and with the rest of the board I look forward to working with her to ensure we continue to deliver for all our pupils.

This term, we held our Resources Committee meeting to discuss financial planning and priorities for the year ahead and have officially submitted our budget to the Local Authority. As with many schools nationally, budgets remain a challenge, but we continue to work carefully to ensure that every pound is used effectively to support the best outcomes for all our pupils.

Together with school leaders we also held a Quality of Education meeting to assess the educational data and track pupil progress. This gives us a valuable opportunity to step back, study the trends and ensure we are actively helping all our pupils to meet their potential.

The Children's Parade was another huge success and a massive thank you goes to all the staff who give up their time to make this such a great occasion.

We would also like to thank FODIS who ran a successful quiz night raising valuable funds for the school for which we are very appreciative.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our teachers, support staff, and school leaders for their continued hard work and commitment. Their passion and dedication make a real difference every day, and we are grateful for all they do.
We look forward to a last productive term, filled with learning and creativity.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our school community.

Best wishes

Susan Campbell, Chair of Governors

Reminders

Please ensure your child has a named water bottle in school.

We have a mountain of lost property due to items not being named. Please clearly name clothing and lunchboxes so they can be returned to your child in the classroom when they are lost. All items of lost property unclaimed at the end of each half term are donated to charity or recycled.

Resources Shout Out



We'd love some simple puzzles with up to 20 pieces, and some "cause and effect" games for The Hive. If you have anything suitable please bring it to the school office.

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! Thank you.

School Council



Our third and final School Council has been elected for the year. Representatives Eleni, Theo, Margot, Eulalia, Finn, Phoenix, Rhea, Isla, Alma and Ori have been busy giving Miss Cargill feedback on the library and helping Mrs Walker with some health and safety discussion.

Key Dates (red = dates added since last newsletter)

Friday 22nd May	LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 1
25th -29th May	HALF TERM
Monday 1st June	INSET DAY
Tuesday 2nd June	FIRST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 2
Friday 5th June	FROZEN FRIDAY
Thursday 25th June	NEW Reception Parents/Carers Evening 6.30-7.30pm
Friday 3rd July	FROZEN FRIDAY
Saturday 4th July	FODIS Summer Fayre 12-3pm
Tuesday 7th July	Year 2 Sports Day Kingfisher & Puffin 9.15-10.15 Robin & Owl 10.45-11.45
Wednesday 8th July	Year 1 Sports Day All classes 9.15-10.30
Friday 10th July	Reception Sports Day All classes 9.15-10.30
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
Friday 17th July	Reserve Sports Day (in case any postponed due to bad weather)
Tuesday 22nd July	LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM 2