



22nd May 2026

Dear parent/carer,

It is hard to believe that we are approaching the final weeks of this academic year. It has been a genuine privilege, in my inaugural year as Headteacher, to lead such a remarkable community of staff, students, parents and carers. Together, through strong collaboration, we continue to achieve the very best for our students, ensuring they are safe, supported and successful, both socially and academically.

This term has been no exception. Each newsletter provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on all that we have accomplished together and to celebrate the many strengths of our community. What follows is a snapshot of the resilience, optimism and kindness that underpin all that we do.

As we approach the end of the year, we say goodbye to our Year 11 students. Each cohort leaves its own distinctive mark, and this group has exemplified commitment, maturity and a strong sense of community. Their dedication to their studies, alongside the way they have supported one another and contributed positively to school life, has been truly commendable. Their kindness and self-awareness, particularly in how they have supported others, will be greatly missed. We wish them every success as they continue their examinations and move on to their chosen pathways in September. We look forward to celebrating their achievements on results day and again at our certificate evening in the autumn term.

This term has also seen us warmly welcome students from Indonesia as part of a cultural exchange programme. Our students demonstrated outstanding hospitality and kindness, hosting and accompanying our visitors throughout their stay. The experience culminated in a wonderful farewell performance, celebrating shared learning and the strength of global community connections.

Our Year 10 students were inspired by the “Dare to Dream” project, where former professional footballer Adam Virgo shared his journey. His message of perseverance and optimism provided a powerful reminder of the importance of resilience in achieving personal goals.

Meanwhile, our Duke of Edinburgh cohort has undertaken further expeditions in preparation for their awards. These experiences have challenged students physically and mentally, developing resilience, leadership and self-awareness, qualities that will serve them well beyond school.

The recent dance show was a spectacular celebration of the creative arts. With over 160 pupils involved, the event showcased exceptional talent, teamwork and dedication. Supported by staff across multiple departments, the performances reflected hours of committed practice and highlighted the joy and confidence that the arts bring to our community. It was a truly uplifting example of what can be achieved when we work together.

Character Day was another significant success, reflecting our commitment to developing well-rounded, thoughtful and engaged young people. Students participated in a wide range of activities, including visits to the University of Sussex, beach cleaning, first aid training, and wellbeing sessions led by Action Your Potential. Others explored environmental sustainability through visits to Wakehurst Place and the Knepp Rewilding Project. These experiences not only broaden horizons but also deepen pupils’ sense of responsibility, community and self-awareness.

I am sure you will agree that this newsletter captures much of what makes our school such a special place. It is our shared values of resilience, optimism, community, kindness and self-awareness that enable us to continue moving forward together with confidence and purpose.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.



Mr M. Ashdown
Headteacher

CONTENTS

1	Words from Mr Ashdown
2	Contents
3	Year 11 Assembly
4	Cultural Exchange
5	Dance
6	Creative Arts
7	Equestrian
8	Geography
9	Character Day
10	PE
14	Iceland Trip
15	Careers
16	Downlands' Got Talent
17	Second Hand Uniform Sale
18	Summer Fair
19	Canteen
21	Important Information
25	Community Board
33	Downlands Communities & Future Events

YEAR 11 LEAVERS' ASSEMBLY

The Year 11 Leavers' Assembly was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the past five years and celebrate everything our students have achieved during their time at Downlands. There were plenty of smiles, laughter, and memories shared as we reminisced together and looked back on their time at Downlands. A huge thank you goes to all the students who contributed to creating the leavers' video and yearbook. We hope these will serve as treasured mementos of your time here .



Following the assembly, students had the chance to say their farewells, collect their yearbooks, and sign shirts with messages from friends and staff – a lovely tradition marking the end of an important chapter.



We are incredibly proud of all our Year 11 students and look forward to celebrating with them again at the Prom. We wish them every success as they prepare for their exciting next steps.



CULTURAL EXCHANGE

INDONESIAN VISITORS

In April, Downlands was delighted to host a week-long Immersion Programme welcoming 17 students and five teachers from Indonesia. It was a truly memorable and enriching experience for our school and the wider community.

Throughout the week, our visitors were warmly welcomed into local host families across the village, giving them a genuine taste of British life. During the school day, they were fully immersed in lessons alongside Downlands students, sharing classrooms, conversations and cultures. Students learned from one another and discovered both similarities and differences in school life.



The week concluded with a wonderful celebration event held in our Amphitheatre. The Indonesian students hosted an inspiring performance for families, staff and students, showcasing traditional dance and martial arts. It was a vibrant and joyful finale that highlighted the richness of their culture and the success of the exchange. We are incredibly grateful to all the families, staff and students who helped make this Immersion Programme such a success.



DANCE

DOWNLANDS DANCE SHOW

Over 150 students took part in this year's dance show and it was a fantastic event. There were 25 pieces in the programme, which ranged from solos, duets and trios to large ensemble pieces. Our Year 11 choreographic work was also featured and it was impressive to see the level of creativity they produced. The standard of performances was extremely high and we are so proud of all of the dancers for their hard work. It was also our last show with Year 11 dancers and we will be extremely sad to see them leave.

**DOWNLANDS
DANCE
SHOW 2026**



THE MID-SUSSEX FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS DANCE SHOWCASE

On Monday 1st June we will be holding the annual Federation Dance Show at the Chequer Mead Theatre in East Grinstead. This is a collection of work from our federation schools and it is expected to be a brilliant show. Please come and support our students- you can purchase tickets using the link below:

**The Mid Sussex
Dance showcase**

Chequer Mead Theatre, East Grinstead
1st June 2026 at 7pm

Scan the QR code for more
information and tickets

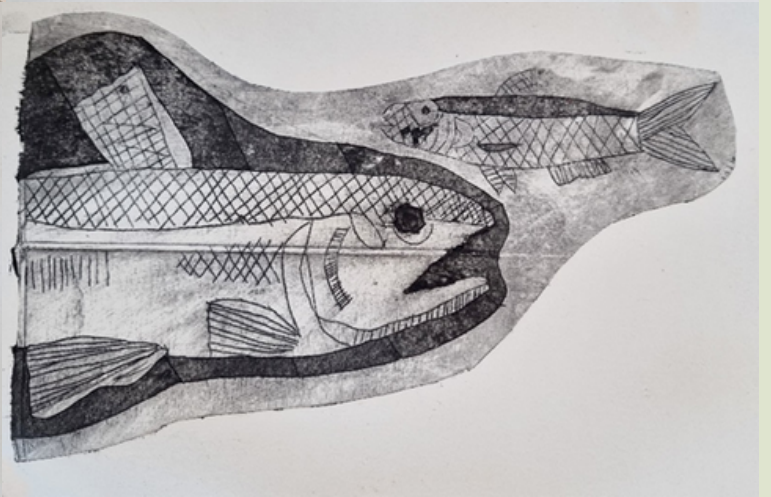
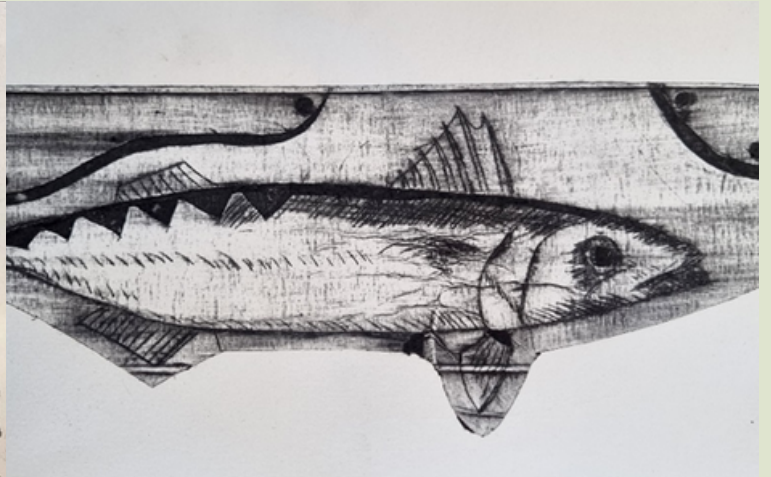
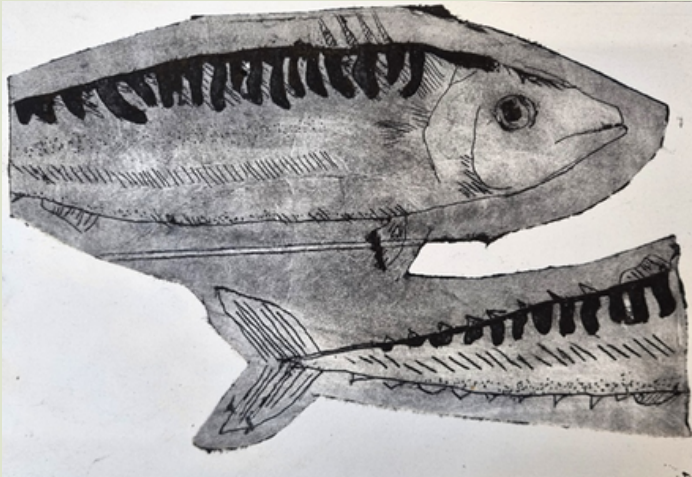
Mid Sussex
Federation
of Schools

<https://www.chequermead.co.uk/shows/mid-sussex-federation-of-schools-dance-show-2026/>

CREATIVE ARTS

YEAR 9 PRINTING WORKSHOP

Year 9 GCSE Art students have recently completed an exciting dry point etching project using recycled Tetra Pak cartons led by Ms Attiah. Inspired by sea life, students created detailed drawings before carefully etching their designs into the printing plates. They then used the printing press to produce a series of striking prints, experimenting with line, texture, and tone. The final outcomes were highly impressive, showcasing both creativity and technical skill while also highlighting the innovative use of recycled materials in art.



ROYAL ACADEMY YOUNG ARTISTS' SUMMER SHOW

Congratulations to talented Young Downlands artist Maisie in Y7, who has achieved success in having her original cat painting selected for the prestigious Royal Academy Young Artists' Summer Show. Her artwork will be exhibited online this summer alongside outstanding student work from across the country. This is a fantastic achievement and recognition of Maisie's creativity and artistic skill, well done!



Sweet Dreams
Maisie Smith

CREATIVE ARTS

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to the students who won Photo of the Month
Well done on capturing some great shots!



**PHOTO OF THE MONTH
WINNER**
ALFIE 8IL



**PHOTO OF THE MONTH
RUNNER UP**
TILLY 7MP

Submit your entries by the 1st of each month to
chamblywalker@downlands.org

Max 2 entries per person per month

EQUESTRIAN

DOWNLANDS EQUESTRIAN TEAM

Well done to Downlands Equestrian team who had a fantastic result at a recent NSEA event. Belle and Macey both put in a brilliant effort, competing in a challenging combined dressage and showjumping event.

While Macey rode a great round and was just a bit unlucky with a few poles down, Belle managed an incredible second-place finish in an enormous class. This is a massive achievement and means she has officially qualified for the Nationals!

We also want to give a huge shout-out to James B, who captured these stunning action shots as part of his GCSE Photography portfolio. It's great to see such talent both in the saddle and behind the lens.

Huge congratulations to both girls, and good luck to Belle at the Nationals!

 National Schools Equestrian Association				
15:51				
Charlie Worth School, W.SX	42	19.0	0	19.0 1st
Molly's cheeky spirit Downlands Community, W.SX	43	19.5	4	23.5 2nd
Geoffrey St Teresa's School, SY	38.5	23.8	0	23.8 3rd
Kensington Absolute Mayfield	41	21.0	4	25.0 4th
Maximum Charlie St Teresa's School, SY	39.5	25.0	0	25.0 5th
Buttons Lingfield College, SY	39	26.5	0	26.5 6th



GEOGRAPHY

Over the last two weeks, our GCSE Geography students travelled to the stunning Seven Sisters Country Park to carry out their fieldwork investigations, focusing on 'changes over time' and the sphere of influence of tourism in a honeypot site. Across four days of visits, students experienced first-hand a range of sampling, data collection and enquiry skills in preparation for their GCSE exams, using techniques ranging from bi-polar surveys to soundscapes.

Over the four days, they were treated to a true variety of British weather, which added an extra dimension to the experience! From bright sunshine and clear skies that showcased the coastline at its very best, to blustery winds and cooler, cloud-covered conditions that reminded us of the power of nature, students were able to see how weather can influence both human activity and the landscape itself.

Despite the varied weather, students demonstrated fantastic resilience, enthusiasm and teamwork throughout. They approached each task with maturity and curiosity, working collaboratively to gather high-quality data that will support their work back in the classroom.

Trips such as these are a vital part of Geography, allowing students to engage with the real world beyond the classroom and develop a deeper understanding of the processes they study. Year 7 and 8 students will be undertaking fieldwork across the site in the coming weeks, so please ensure hay-fever medication is taken before school if needed. Year 7 will be using microclimate data to determine the perfect site for a wellbeing snug, and Year 8 will be exploring the features of our stream on site and whether it matches a typical river.



CHARACTER DAY

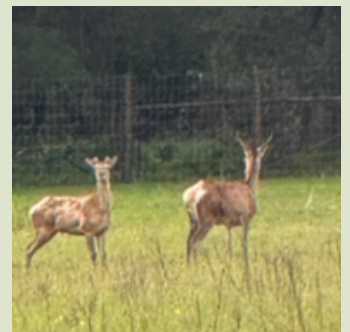
CHARACTER DAY 2026: A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY, CURIOSITY AND WELLBEING

On Friday 15th May, our annual Character Day once again brought the school community together for a day of meaningful experiences beyond the classroom. Despite an initially gloomy forecast, spirits remained high—and the weather held—allowing every year group to fully embrace their activities.



Year 7 students headed out to the coast for beach cleans in Brighton, Hove and Lancing. Not only did they contribute positively to the local environment, but they also demonstrated teamwork and resilience throughout the day. Between collecting litter and learning about the impact of pollution on marine life, students even found time to get creative—many enjoyed designing and building artwork using pebbles along the shore. It was a wonderful combination of service, creativity and outdoor learning.

Year 8 took part in Sustainability Days at two very special locations: Wakehurst and Knepp Estate. Those visiting Wakehurst explored the fascinating Millennium Seed Bank, gaining insight into global conservation efforts and the importance of protecting plant biodiversity. Meanwhile, students at Knepp were immersed in a thriving rewilding landscape, observing storks, ponies, deer and kestrels in their natural habitat. Both experiences left students inspired by the importance of sustainability and the role we can all play in protecting the natural world.



Year 9 remained in school for a Health and Wellbeing Day focused on developing life skills and self-awareness. All students completed a first aid course, equipping them with valuable and practical knowledge. The day also included a variety of workshops designed to nurture wellbeing, from peaceful woodland walks and creative clay bead making to board games and even crafting the “perfect playlist.” The range of activities ensured there was something for everyone, encouraging students to reflect on what supports their own wellbeing.



Finally, Year 10 students visited the University of Sussex for an exciting glimpse into higher education. They toured the campus, enjoyed lunch in the Students' Union, and attended an engaging talk from a student ambassador about university life. The visit provided valuable insight and inspiration as students begin to consider their future pathways. Character Day 2026 was, once again, a tremendous success—highlighting the importance of character, community and personal growth in education.



U15 GIRLS' HANDBALL CRICKET

This half term, we were delighted to facilitate a hardball cricket fixture for the U15 girls team, with more opportunities planned after the half term break. It is fantastic to see Downlands being able to field a team of talented, enthusiastic and committed young athletes who are eager to develop their hardball cricket skills.

Every player involved also represents a local club outside of school, highlighting the incredible growth and progress of the women's game in recent years. A special thank you goes to St James CC for allowing the girls to play their fixtures on their outfield.

U15 GIRLS HANDBALL

The U15 Girls Handball team travelled to Brampton Academy in London to represent Sussex at the South East England Regional Finals. The standard of Handball was exceptional with every game being very tough and requiring a lot of grit and determination.



The team worked extremely hard throughout the tournament and managed to come second in their group which meant that they progressed to the semi-finals. In the semi-final, they came up against a strong Putney side who had beaten us on three previous occasions and are currently national champions. The girls put in an incredible performance and all fought hard for one another. As a result, they went onto win the game 5-2 which means that they now progress to the national finals in Nottingham and will be representing South East England. Every member of the team played a vital role in achieving this success and should all be immensely proud of themselves.

U14 GIRLS HANDBALL

The U14 Girls Handball team travelled to Chichester to compete in a South England competition. The team played incredibly well throughout the competition and went on to win every single game. The team scored 18 goals throughout the competition and conceded only 1 goal. Every member of the team should be very proud of all of the time and effort they put into preparing for the competition – it certainly paid off. We are looking forward to the national competitions next year as the team has the potential to do extremely well.



U13 GIRLS HANDBALL

This half term, the U13 girls competed in the England Handball Schools South Regional Finals in London. The team worked exceptionally hard in preparation for the event, training every Thursday morning before school and every Wednesday lunchtime. Their dedication has led to huge improvements in their jump shots, defensive play and attacking movement patterns. Their opening match showcased this progress perfectly with a superb 6–0 victory over Sanders, with every member of the squad making a valuable contribution. In their second game against William Perkin School, the team once again demonstrated excellent teamwork and determination, securing a 5–3 win.

Going into their final group match, the objective was clear — a win would secure top spot in the group. The girls rose to the challenge brilliantly, displaying confidence, skill and outstanding teamwork in a commanding 5–0 victory.

Contributions from every player in both attack and defence ensured they topped their group and advanced to the semi-finals.

In the semi-final, Downlands faced Putney, a school renowned for its strong and established handball programme. The team battled tirelessly in a closely contested match that swung from end to end. Despite a courageous performance, Putney narrowly claimed a 3–2 victory.

The girls should be incredibly proud of everything they achieved throughout the competition.



U14 NETBALL – SUSSEX ROUND OF THE STATE SCHOOL CUP

This half term, the outstanding Year 9 netball team proudly represented Mid-Sussex in the Sussex round of the State School Cup at Worthing College. After narrowly missing out on first place to Steyning last year, the team arrived determined to make their mark. This season has felt different for the squad. Following an exceptional campaign that saw them defeat several private schools and progress to the regional finals, the players carried a new level of confidence into the tournament.

Competing in a round-robin format against six other schools representing their districts, the team achieved exactly what they set out to do — winning every game on the day. One of the standout performances came in a fiercely contested 9–6 victory over Steyning Grammar, a result that reflected the team's determination and quality.

What was most impressive throughout the tournament was the depth of talent within the squad, their ability to work seamlessly together and the shared understanding that every player's role was vital to the team's success. It was an incredible end to an outstanding season for this talented group of athletes, and we look forward to seeing what next year's Super League campaign brings.



U14 HANDBALL

The Under 14 Handball team, consisting of Year 8 and 9 students have had a fantastic year. They took part in a competition earlier on in the year and won, making them Mid and West Sussex champions. They represented Mid and West Sussex in a tournament held at the University of Chichester and played brilliantly. They were unbeaten throughout the whole competition until the final game where they faced the team that won the National Handball competition the year before. The game was really close throughout, but unfortunately the boys lost 5-3 in the end. They are currently the second best team in the South of England, which is a fantastic achievement. A huge well done to the team!



MID SUSSEX ATHLETICS TRIALS

Congratulations to the students who attended the Mid-Sussex athletics trials. Many students won their heats and progressed through to the finals. Additionally, our inter girls team finished 1st out of 12 schools in Mid-Sussex. Special mention to Lily, Ruby and Arabella in Year 10 who won their events and have qualified for the Sussex finals in June. Evie in Year 9 has also qualified for the finals. Good luck to all!

Y10 TOUCH RUGBY

The Y10 touch rugby team went to the Southeast Touch Rugby Championship, the largest schools' touch tournament in the country.

After a dominant display in the group stages, which included beating the reigning national champions 6-1, they went on to battle through a tough semifinal and final to ultimately win the tournament.

They will now be going on to the national championship in June, a huge achievement for the boys. Well done to all involved!



Y10 BASKETBALL

The Y10 Basketball have had another fantastic season where they made it all the way to the Mid-Sussex cup final. The team came up against a very strong St Paul's side who have narrowly beaten Downlands on the last 3 cup finals.

It looked as though the team were going to fall short once again in the final as they trailed St Paul's by 21 points at half time. The team then began playing to their full potential and the gap began to close as Downlands went onto score 10 points in a row without conceding a single basket. By the fourth quarter, Downlands were only a few points behind and managed to level with St Paul's right before the end of the game which then took the game to over-time. The team held their nerve in over-time and managed to go onto win the game by 4 points. Coming back from 21 points behind and going onto win showed real grit and determination and the boys should be incredibly proud of themselves on such a fantastic achievement.



Y8 BASKETBALL

The Year 8 Basketball team have continued their success from Year 7 and have made it to the Mid-Sussex final for the second year running. The team have worked incredibly hard attending early morning training sessions to prepare for the cup final. Every member of the team played extremely well in the final and they went onto win the game 36-18. The team are also through to the play-off stages of the Junior NBA Championships.



U13 BOYS HANDBALL

The U13 boys travelled to London to represent Sussex in the South East England Regional Finals. The boys played extremely well in the group stages which meant that they progressed through to the semi-final knock out stages. The team went on to play Dover Grammar School in the semi-final. It was an incredibly tough game and we were trailing by one goal with only a minute left on the clock. We managed to equalise and take the game to extra time. In extra time, we took the lead and hung on to eventually win the game. The boys will now represent South East England at the national finals in Nottingham in June. The team should be incredibly proud of themselves on this outstanding achievement.



TRIP TO ICELAND

YEAR 10 ICELAND ADVENTURE: SNOW, SCIENCE AND UNFORGETTABLE MEMORIES

In April, 62 of our Year 10 students embarked on an educational adventure to Iceland — a journey that combined geography, science, and culture. Despite facing some of the most wintry weather ever experienced on our school trips, the excitement and enthusiasm of the group never wavered. If anything, the snow only added to the magic and provided the perfect setting for countless good-natured snowball fights. Our students' enthusiasm made the trip a joy, turning every challenge—and even the freezing weather—into a positive experience.



One of the highlights of the trip was our visit to the Secret Lagoon, where students enjoyed the surreal experience of bathing in naturally heated geothermal waters surrounded by snow-covered landscapes. This was followed by an exhilarating glacier walk at Sólheimajökull, where students explored crevasses, ice formations and the dramatic effects of climate change first-hand, bringing their classroom learning vividly to life.

The group also visited some of Iceland's most iconic natural wonders, including the breathtaking waterfalls Skógafoss and Seljalandsfoss. Amidst icy spray and endless landscapes, students marvelled at the sheer power of nature.

In Vík, students experienced the Lava Show, gaining an insight into Iceland's volcanic activity by witnessing real molten lava in action. Our journey through the famous Golden Circle took us to Þingvellir National Park, where students stood between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates, followed by the erupting Geysir geothermal area and the mighty Gullfoss waterfall.

No trip to Iceland would be complete without a taste of local culture, and Eyfstadallur Ice Cream Farm was a firm favourite. Enjoying freshly made ice cream while learning about sustainable farming practices proved to be both delicious and educational.

Our final experiences in Reykjavík included Perlan and the FlyOver Iceland attraction, offering students a virtual journey across the country's landscapes and a chance to reflect on everything they had seen and learned.

This trip was not only an academic success but also a testament to the students' resilience, teamwork and enthusiasm. Despite challenging weather conditions, they represented the school brilliantly and returned home with a deeper understanding of our planet. Iceland certainly challenged us — but it rewarded us in equal measure.



VISIT TO SUSSEX UNIVERSITY

Another hectic half term culminated in taking the whole of Year 10 to the University of Sussex for the day on Friday 15th May. Students got to tour the campus with student ambassadors from the university, sample the delights of the various food outlets on campus and sit in a lecture hall to hear about what university life is really like and have their questions answered. We also considered what working at a university might be like, and the range of job roles available. We were fortunate once again with the weather, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the Year 10s for their excellent behaviour, not only on campus but also on the train journeys back and forth.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work Experience is getting ever closer, thank you to all the students and parent/carers who have been beaver away finding placements, your help is absolutely invaluable. We do still have many students without a confirmed placement, so if you are able to offer opportunities at your own place of work, even if your child is not in Year 10, please contact careers@downlands.org.

GOOD LUCK YEAR 11

As we say goodbye to our current Year 11s attending full time, I want to wish them luck with their final GCSEs after the half term break and with their future paths, wherever they may lead. Please make sure you have added a personal email address to your Unifrog accounts so that you will be able to keep accessing this incredible resource after your Downlands email is switched off following results day. I hope that you will keep in touch as I love to hear what you are doing and how you are getting on.



PARENTS

If you have not done so already, and would like to have access to your child or children's Unifrog account, please complete this form: Consent for my email to be attached to the Unifrog account(s) of my child/children – Fill out form

I will advise you when you are able to log into their account.

CAREERS INFORMATION

Please visit the Careers section of the school website where you will find a wealth of information on career pathways and next steps:

[Downlands/curriculum/work-experience-careers](#)

- [General Careers Information](#)
- [Specific Career Fields](#)
- [Find Your Path](#)
- [College Open Events](#)
- [Work Experience](#)
- [Apprenticeships & T Levels](#)
- [Careers Education, Advice and Guidance](#)
- [Careers Speed Dating](#)
- [Job Vacancies & Competitions](#)

DOWNLANDS' GOT TALENT

Do YOU have what it takes?

Can you sing?

Can you tell jokes?

Can you dance?

Can you play an instrument?

Are you a ventriloquist?

Have you got a sporting talent?

Auditions: 8th & 9th June

Finalists will perform at the Summer Fayre on
Saturday, 27th June

PRIZES TO BE WON!

Sign up via the link
that Miss Bridge sent you
by **Friday 5th June**

SECOND HAND UNIFORM



SECOND-HAND
UNIFORM
SALE
SUMMER FAIR

SATURDAY, 27TH JUNE

Downlands School *Summer Fair*

**SATURDAY
27 JUNE
12-3PM**



**BBQ TEA & CAKE ICECREAM BAR
CRAFT STALLS GAMES
MUSIC & DANCE FESTIVAL
ART EXHIBITION
DOWNLANDS' GOT TALENT
INFLATABLES PLANT SALES TOMBOLA
FREE ENTRY EVERYONE WELCOME**

SCHOOL CANTEEN

CELEBRATING OUR SCHOOL CATERING TEAM

We are incredibly lucky at Downlands to have such a great team of lovely staff in our school canteen, serving up delicious, healthy food with a smile.



SUMMER MENU

Our current menu will remain in full swing until the end of the summer term. To help you stay cool, we are introducing ice lollies, available to purchase from the Year 7 Hub at lunchtime for those enjoying the field. Please see our full menu details below:



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
OPTION #1	Beef Chill Tacos + Wedges	STREET FOOD Marinated Chicken in Flatbread	Roast Turkey With Roast Potatoes, veggies and rich Gravy	SPICE A BIT Curry Day Choice of curries and sides	Fish, Chicken or Sausages + Chips
OPTION #2	Vegetarian Quesadilla + Wedges	Falafel In a Flatbread	Quorn Roast With Roast Potatoes, veggies and rich Gravy	Curry Day Choice of curries and sides	Cheese Pasty
ON THE SIDE	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day
DESSERT OF THE DAY	Chocolate Brownie	Pineapple Upside Down Pudding	Toffee Apple Crumble	Jam and Coconut Sponge and Custard	Warm Oaty Flapjack

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
OPTION #1	Mac 'n' Cheese	PECKISH Original Spiced Chicken	Classic Roast Dinner	SPICE A BIT CURRY DAY Choice of curries and sides	Fish, Chicken or Sausage + Chips
OPTION #2	With selection of toppings	Veggie Burrito	Vegetable Wellington	Curry Day Choice of curries and sides	VEGGIE BURGER with Chips
ON THE SIDE	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day	Vegetables of the Day
DESSERT OF THE DAY	Chocolate Orange Cake	Fruit Muffins	Cherry & Apple Crumble	Chocolate Sponge and Chocolate Sauce	Lemon Drizzle Cake

20TH - 26TH MAY

British SANDWICH WEEK

SPECIAL MENU

caterlink feeding the imagination

IN SEASON:

Tomato

THE ORIGINAL AZTEC NAME FOR THE TOMATO TRANSLATES TO 'PLUMP THING WITH A NAVEL'

LA TOMATINA IN SPAIN, IS A FOOD FIGHT WHERE PEOPLE THROW TOMATOES AT EACH OTHER FOR 1 HOUR

TOMATOES CONTAIN LYCOPENE WHICH PROTECTS ARE SKIN FROM THE SUN

caterlink feeding the imagination

DESTINATION:

SPAIN

caterlink feeding the imagination

OUR Bananas ARE FAIR TRADE

FAIRTRADE WORKS TO SUPPORT BOTH SHARING ECONOMIC AND WORKERS' RIGHTS OF ALL PLANTATIONS

EXTREMELY HIGH IN POTASSIUM YET LOW IN FAT, MAKING IT THE PERFECT WAY TO BEAT BLOOD PRESSURE

MADE IN FRUIT

EASY TO UNPEEL

FULL OF B-VITAMINS AND HELPS PERFECT THE BODY FOR BURNING FAT

FAIRTRADE WORKS TO SUPPORT BOTH SHARING ECONOMIC AND WORKERS' RIGHTS OF ALL PLANTATIONS

FAIRTRADE WORKS TO SUPPORT BOTH SHARING ECONOMIC AND WORKERS' RIGHTS OF ALL PLANTATIONS

caterlink feeding the imagination

SCHOOL CANTEEN

MEAL DEALS IN THE CANTEEN

A Meal Deal in the school canteen costs £2.85 and is the best value for money when purchasing food at school. There are plenty of options available to mix and match, and the catering team will be happy to help and advise you if you are unsure what is included. The meal deal consists of 1 main, 1 side and a bottle of unflavoured water/milk. Meal deals do not include doughnuts, pretzels, waffles, fresh fruit pots, pastries, popcorn, cookies, lentil chips or pre-packaged items. Adult meal deals do not include a bottle of water.

CHOOSE A MAIN	CHOOSE A SIDE	500ml Harrogate still water Or unflavoured carton of milk
Main meal of the Day veg/meat at the main counter	Hot dessert of the day	
Filled Sandwich or Baguette to the value of £2.30	Small cold desert Pot	
Grab and Go Dinner Box	£1.28 cake	
Hot Pasta with Sauce	Apple	
Jacket Potato with filling	Orange	
Large Salad or Yoghurt Pot from the self-help bar	Banana	
PIZZA DEAL 1 slice of pizza, 1 side and a bottle of unflavoured water/milk		
Plain pizza slice	Fries	500ml Harrogate still water or unflavoured carton of milk
Topped pizza slice	£1.28 cake	

**Free
School
Meals**



Are you entitled?

Downlands receives extra funding for all students eligible for free school meals, called the Pupil Premium. This funding is extremely valuable to us as it enables us to support our students to be happy, confident learners and make the best possible progress.

Those children and families that are not eligible for FSM will be able to access urgent support for food via the WSCC Community Hub. The Community Hub can be contacted on 0330 222 7980 and is open 9:00 – 17:00 seven days a week. Further information can be found via the [West Sussex County Council website](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/#how-to-apply)

For more information please visit :

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/#how-to-apply>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INSET DAYS

- Monday, 29th June 2026

2026-2027

- Tuesday, 1st September INSET DAY
- Wednesday, 2nd September – School closed – staff training
- Thursday, 3rd September – School reopens to students

TIMINGS OF THE SCHOOL DAY

- 8.35am First (warning) bell
- 8.40am Registration
- 9.00am Lesson 1
- 10.00am Lesson 2
- 11.00am Break
- 11.20am Lesson 3
- 12.20pm Lesson 4
- 1.20pm Lunch
- 1.55pm End of lunch
- 1.55pm Lesson 5 (including 10 minutes DEAR Time ** for Key Stage 3)
- 3.05pm End of school day

The school site is open to students from 8.20am, students will not be able to enter the school building until 8.35am (unless the weather is inclement).

Years 8 to 11 will assemble on the playground, Year 7 at the amphitheatre. The gates will be locked at 8.39am and the students will be marked 'late' after this.

**** DEAR time – Drop Everything And Read – all Key Stage 3 students are required to bring a reading book.**

COMMUNICATIONS FROM FINANCE AND TRIPS OFFICE

May we take this opportunity to remind you to top up your child's canteen account to ensure sufficient funds are available for them to purchase food, if they use the canteen. Students requesting debt from the Finance department should only be in extreme circumstances.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in helping us to promote independence, organisation, and personal responsibility among our students.

Please note all communications for Trips and Finance are now being sent by SCOPAY, we have noted that some parents/carers may have unsubscribed from this in the past. This may mean you miss important communications such as;

Canteen notices such as Christmas lunch dates and payment details

Trip application letters

Reminders about upcoming trips and final details

Please click on the link below to resubscribe and add downlands@scopay.com to your safe email address list;

<https://www.scopay.com/resubscribe>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ORDERING SCHOOL SUPPLIES VIA SCOPAY

Please be aware that after ordering supplies on SCOPAY from the Library, Maths or PE department, students will need to go to the respective department offices and collect their items. Each department will have a list of students who purchased items.

UPDATING CONTACT DETAILS - MCAS

Please ensure that any updates to your contact information are made through the MCAS app rather than via email. This helps us keep records accurate and up to date efficiently. Thank you for your support!

MCAS - PHOTO PERMISSIONS

We enjoy sharing photos of the students participating on trips, sports and clubs, on our newsletter and on social media.

If you are happy for your child to be included in these photos please ensure that you have given consent by ticking the following on MCAS -

Photo Online

Photo and name in Press

Photo Print use externally.

REPORTING ABSENCE



If you haven't already, please download the free Studybugs app, or register on the Studybugs website, and use it to tell us whenever your child is ill and unable to attend school. You can call us to leave a message to report an absence, however Studybugs is our preference for absence reporting as it feeds directly in our registers.

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Please remember to leave a message for attendance (ext 228) before 8.30am to advise if your child will be late due to medical or illness. Likewise, a child will not be released from school without prior notice (before 8.30am) of an appointment.

ROAD SAFETY

We are pleased to advise, for safety reasons, we have recently erected a directional arrow sign on our roundabout, indicating that drivers should follow the roundabout to the left. We have also painted double yellow lines on the roundabout. As this is a working roundabout, all parents and visitors are reminded that parking, drop-offs, pick-ups, and setting down are not permitted on the roundabout.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping to ensure the road safety of everyone at Downlands.

LOST PROPERTY

Please ensure you name all items belonging to your child. All items found around the school are handed in to lost property. Children can look for items at break and lunch time from the Attendance Officer. During the term we give named items to your child's tutor or PSO to return to them, if your child hasn't claimed them. Due to the amount of unclaimed unnamed items, we donate these items to charity at the end of every term. We cannot be responsible for lost items not handed in to lost property.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL ROOM

Please ensure that your emergency contact information is up to date. If you move home, get a new mobile number or your work number changes, please remember to let us know; we need to be able to contact you in an emergency or if your child is unwell.

Please do not send your child to school if they have sickness or diarrhoea. You should keep your child at home for 48 hours after their last episode of sickness or diarrhoea

Hay fever – the school does not administer antihistamines for the symptoms of hay fever. We ask that this be administered at home before the start of the during the school day must be provided to us in the original pharmacist's container.

We would ask that where possible you ask your GP to administer a three-dose medication to avoid the impact on the school day. A 'Request for School to Administer Medicine' form must accompany it. Under exceptional circumstances, where it is deemed that their administration is required to allow the student to remain in school, the school will administer non-prescription medication for a maximum period of 48 hours. Any non-prescription medication administered in school must have been administered in the past without adverse effect. Again, a 'Request for School to Administer Medicine' form must accompany it. Students must not carry their medication in school, apart from asthma inhalers and Anaphylaxis Auto Injectors, all other medication must be stored securely in the medical room.

TES UPDATE



We're making important updates to how parents log in to Tes Parents Meetings and Clubs & Events.

What's changing?

Starting mid-2026, parents will log in using their email address and password via Tes' Universal Login system. This means:

Schools will no longer configure parent login methods

Legacy login options (e.g. login codes, DOB-based access) will be removed

Why are we doing this?

To improve security, simplify the login experience, and align with modern authentication standards.

What do you need to do?

Please ensure your parent contact data includes valid email addresses. We'll be in touch closer to launch with further information and support materials to help you navigate the changes smoothly.

For further information in the meantime, please view our [Tes Universal Login FAQs](#).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

TO VIEW THIS DOCUMENT AND EXPLORE OUR FULL RANGE OF E-SAFETY GUIDES, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE HERE:

<https://www.downlands.w-sussex.sch.uk/about-us/safeguarding-at-downlands-2/>

<https://www.downlands.w-sussex.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Wake-up-Wednesday-Online-Grooming.pdf>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE GROOMING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Online grooming is when someone builds a relationship with a child or young person online to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, or criminal activity – such as sending them or sending them to someone else. According to the NSPCC, police in the UK received over 7,000 reports involving sexual exploitation with a child in a single year – an increase of 88% since 2017/18.

STRANGERS USING FAKE IDENTITIES

Someone often poses as a friend or a teenager online to build trust. They may make something of this profile, share photos and messages that are not real, or use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

EXPLOITATION THROUGH GIFTS AND FLATTERY

To gain trust, groomers often send gifts, gaming codes, or money. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

GROUP CHATS AS HIDDEN PATHWAYS

Group chats are often used as a way to build trust. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

THE RISE OF SEXTORTION

Sextortion is when someone sends a child or young person a message asking for a photo or video. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

GAMING PLATFORMS AS GROOMING GATEWAYS

Gaming platforms are often used as a way to build trust. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

CRIMINAL & RADICALISATION RISKS

Online grooming can lead to criminal or radicalisation risks. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

Advice for Parents & Educators

KEEP CONVERSATIONS REGULAR

Regular conversations are important. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

CREATE A "TELL ME" CULTURE

Children should feel safe to tell you about online risks. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

UNDERSTAND THE PLATFORMS CHILDREN USE

Understanding the platforms children use is important. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

STAY ALERT TO WARNING SIGNS

Being alert to warning signs is important. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves. They may also use the trust to get the child to send them photos or videos of themselves.

HASSOCKS TWINNING ASSOCIATION



HASSOCKS TWINNING NEEDS LOCAL HOSTS!

22-25 MAY 2026

(LATE MAY BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND)

Let's warmly greet our friends from Wald-Michelbach
(Germany) and Montmirail (France) and
connect with new faces.

COULD YOU HOST FOR THE WEEKEND?



- Host from Friday evening to Monday morning
Singles, couples, or small families.
- No special requirements - just a warm welcome, a
smile and a willingness to meet new people!



JOIN THE WEEKEND EVENTS!

Hassocks Twinning is organising, and sponsoring, a
programme of social events and activities
throughout the weekend, and hosts are warmly
invited to join in as much as they wish.



Full event details coming soon.



GET INVOLVED!

If you're interested in hosting, or would like more information,
we'd love to hear from you!

Please get in touch at hassockstwinning92@gmail.com



**BE PART OF A WONDERFUL
HASSOCKS TRADITION IN 2026**



COMMUNITY BOARD

Hi my name is Kate Chandley and my son Noah is in Y7. This July and August, I'll be joining a determined group of women to take on "The Route", a charity challenge for Cure Leukaemia, trying to raise £10,000. We are tackling all 9 stages of the official Tour de France Femmes avec Zwift route, spanning 1,175 kilometres and a staggering 18,795 metres of elevation – just 24 hours before the professional peloton. Find out more about what I'm doing here: <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/health/40-year-old-west-sussex-mum-takes-on-european-cycling-challenge-to-raise-funds-for-children-with-blood-cancer-8551838>

Charity quiz

Can you help support this challenge?

On Friday 5 June I will be hosting a quiz night at Downlands. You can purchase your tickets to the event here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/charity-quiz-night-in-aid-of-cure-leukaemia-tickets-1989553837084?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

If you can't make the quiz then I'd be so grateful if you could donate to this really important cause: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/kate-chandley>

Thanks so much for your support and if you'd like to follow me on my journey please check out my Insta here: https://www.instagram.com/kate.rides.the.route?igsh=MXJxeHB4ZnNOaDR4Zw%3D%3D&utm_source=qr.



* JUST ADDED

Charity Quiz Night in aid of Cure Leukaemia

📍 Downlands Community School · Keymer, England

📅 Friday 5 June • 7 PM - 10 PM

£6.13
Fri 5 Jun • 7 PM

Overview

Join us for a fun Charity Quiz Night to support Cure Leukaemia and make a difference together!

Are you a total genius or a bit of a plonker? Either way, you're in for a great night of drinks, quizzing, and making a difference for people living with leukaemia.

HASSOCKS BRICK LIBRARY IS NOW OPEN!



Hassocks Brick Library: lower prices and a new library system!

My name is Christopher, I am 13 years old and I go to Downlands School. I love Lego but I also know that it is made of plastic which harms the environment, so I have started up Hassocks Brick Library. Hassocks Brick Library is a non-profit local organisation which will help to make Lego more affordable and eco-friendly. It's aimed at anyone aged 8 or above **INCLUDING ADULTS AND TEENAGERS!!** You can take Lego sets out for a week from only **£1.50** including free delivery or collection.

The library is now open and ready for borrowers. Just go to our website, navigate to the library page, and fill in the form for your chosen Lego Set. **Our library system has been changed to make it easier to use** and is now built into the main website. As well as that, there is **no sign-up**, you can just start borrowing. All the money will go towards **improving the library, funding the club and providing reduced rates for those on low incomes.**

We will also run a monthly club in Hassocks on a Saturday morning, where you will be able to join fellow builders and take part in fun activities. There are only 15 club spaces available, so **sign up now** on the website! There will also be a members group who will meet once a month after the club, to discuss the next steps for the library and club and to share ideas. In the future we are interested in starting a home-education group and expanding the library to include **local schools**. To join or ask any further questions, please contact us at hassocksbrickclub@gmail.com. To find out more or to join either group, search online for **'Hassocks Brick Library'**. Also, if you have any **spare Lego sets**, or any **unsorted Lego** that you don't need any more, please get in touch as we are always in need of more **donations**. All donations will go into the library and/or club and will be much appreciated. Thanks!

Hope this all works, if you need me to change anything please just ask.
Best wishes,

Christopher Manocchi(They/Them)

COMMUNITY BOARD

CREATE
SPACE
STUDIOS

THEATRE FUN Dance & Drama Workshop

Thursday 28th May
9.30am - 12.30pm/1pm - 4pm/All day

Ages 5-8 & 9-13
Hurstpierpoint

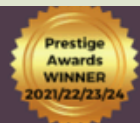
EARLYBIRD discount available

www.createpacestudios.com



@createpacestudios

 **DANCE**
Burgess Hill and Hassocks



Ballet - Pointe - Jazz - Tap - Modern Theatre - Acro - PBT
Under 5's Dance Classes
Recreational, Grades and Vocational Training 4-18 Years

COMMUNITY BOARD



SPEECH & DRAMA LESSONS

Do you have a child who loves to act?

Or maybe your child lacks confidence and wants to develop their communication skills?

If so, I am here to help!

My name is Liz Meredith-Jones and I offer 'Speech and Drama' lessons for students of all ages at Downlands School.

I trained at LAMDA and worked professionally before retraining as a teacher nearly 20 years ago. Since then I have taught both in schools and privately, helping students develop confidence, creativity and performance skills in a warm and supportive environment.

I use the 'New Era examinations syllabus, which I particularly value for its broad, flexible and creative approach. Students can explore acting, poetry & prose and public speaking through a wide variety of texts and material tailored to their interests and abilities. Examinations are entirely optional.

Lessons are 30 minutes long and take place in a dedicated room within the school on Thursdays and Fridays. Students attend on a rota system so that they do not miss the same academic lesson twice within a term.

Current fees are:

- £17 shared lesson
- £21 solo lesson

Fees are limited and allocated on a first come, first served basis. To register your interest please complete the online form below

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfSjCPqG8vgmxxRHviTdSsbm3qOKhtYzJroVuTJyN_xS4B5Q/viewform?usp=publish-editor

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at mrs.meredith-jones@bhsfg.com. Alternatively you may speak to Mrs Robertson, Head of Drama at Downlands.

I am really looking forward to starting at the school and working with your child.

Liz Meredith-Jones

COMMUNITY BOARD



Torb Football and Nurf Battle
coming to Hassocks Sport Centre

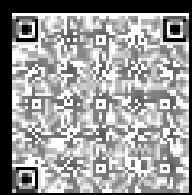
Limited spaces available!



Tuesday 26th May . Aged 10 - 16 . £15 each or BOTH for just £25



Scan Me



excel
ACTIVITYGROUP



f **freedomleisure**
where you matter

Join Us To Celebrate 20 Years!

You're warmly invited to celebrate the

20th Birthday of **Hassocks Sports Centre**

Friday 29th May
10.30am

Hassocks Sports Centre

Garden Party Celebration

Bring your friends and help us celebrate
two decades of community, exercise and fun.

Enjoy a relaxed morning with :
Tea, Coffee and Cake

We'd love it if you could bring your
own homemade bakes to share!

Raising money in support of

CoppaFeel!
breast cancer awareness

We look forward to seeing you there!



freedomleisure
where you matter

DOWNLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Looking for the perfect venue for your next event, club, class or performance? We offer a wide range of high-quality facilities available for hire during evenings and weekends:



- Spacious **Main Hall** – ideal for large events and gatherings
- **STEM Suite** large room with tables and chairs and adjoining **kitchen area**
- **Canteen** space with access to the **school kitchen** (if required)
- Blacked out **Drama Studio**
- Purpose-built **Dance Studio**
- Modern **Classrooms**
- Outdoor **Amphitheatre** – perfect for performances or talks
- Full-size **Astroturf Pitch** – suitable for sports and training

Whether you're running a community group, hosting a workshop or event, or need space for rehearsals or sports, we offer flexible options at excellent rates.

ENQUIRE TODAY
sfairbank@downlands.org


DOWNLANDS
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

COMMUNITY POINTS & FUTURE EVENTS

ROCKS POINTS - CURRENT STANDINGS

1. SOUTH DOWN COMMUNITY 9781
2. BEACON COMMUNITY 9011
3. WOLSTONBURY COMMUNITY 8391
4. WEALD COMMUNITY 7687



EVENTS AFTER HALF-TERM

There's lots to look forward to after half term – take a look below at some of the exciting events we have coming up.

Y11 GCSE ART EXHIBITION

SUMMER FAIR

CHARACTER AWARDS EVENING

PE & DANCE AWARDS EVENING

PRIDE MONTH

DUKE OF EDINBURGH EXPEDITION

FEDERATION DANCE SHOW

SUMMER REFLECTION SPACE

YEAR 11 PROM

CHARITY NETBALL MARATHON

YEAR 6 TRANSITION DAY

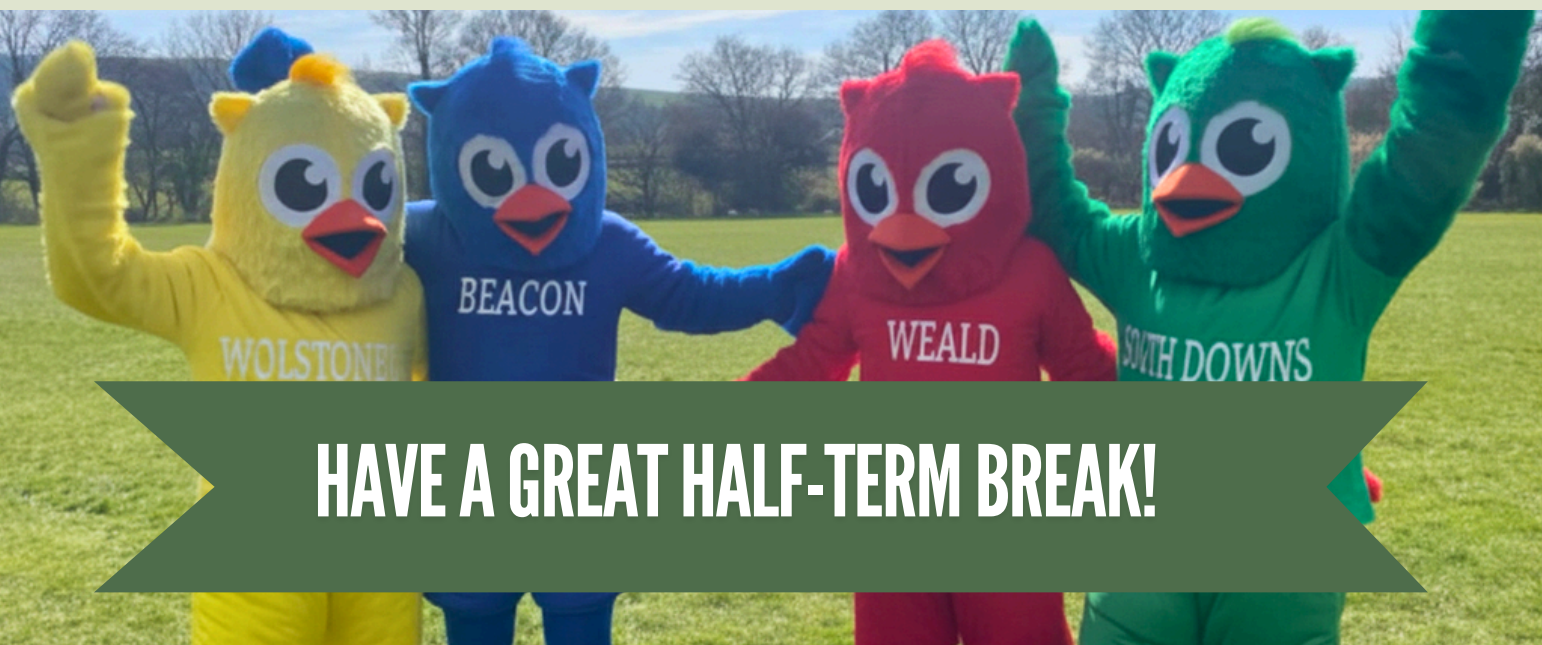
ROCKSTARS ASSEMBLY

YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

CURRICULUM ENRICHMENT WEEK

SPORTS DAY

RISEING MATHEMATICIAN FESTIVAL



HAVE A GREAT HALF-TERM BREAK!