



Newsletter

Respect, Compassion, Responsibility, Courage

Term: Spring 2026

Issue No: 11

Date: 6th February

Dear Parents, Carers and Children

Welcome to another bumper Newsletter! We have much to share with you this week, including details of up and coming events relating to World Book Day, Children's Mental Health Week and Safer Internet Day, the focus for which this year is on the use of AI. The Breck Foundation is coming in after half term, on Tuesday 24th February to lead sessions with each year group from Years 1 to 6. Their message can be very hard hitting, but is focused on educating our children on how to interact safely online, making sure they are aware of the risks they are potentially opening themselves up to.

In order to provide information about what will be covered with the children, and also to provide support to parents on how to keep children safe online at home, the Breck Foundation are offering an online session - on Monday 23rd February from 6.00 - 7.00pm, the day before the sessions with the children. Please do join if you can. The link for this online Zoom sessions is:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86570164377?pwd=0Cw9rUXdRlIXApMDRvs1Qg2f400SG5.1>

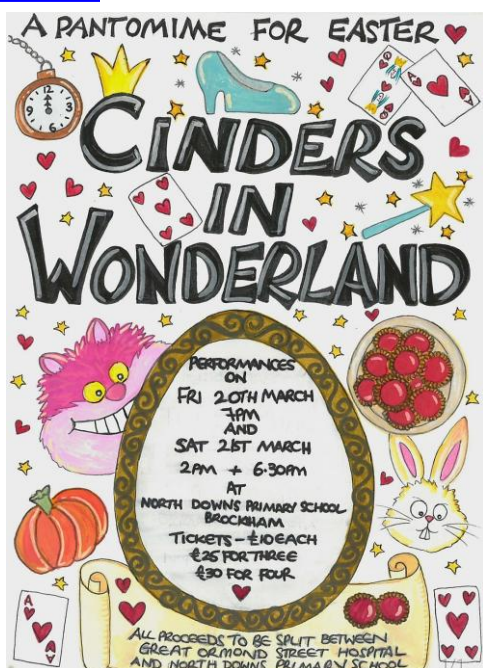
Meeting ID: 865 7016 4377

Passcode: 552125

Thank you to Miss Witcher for organising and to FONDS for funding these sessions for the children, along with the parent online session.

North Downs Panto... is back by popular demand! This year we're proud to present 'Cinders in Wonderland', an Easter Pantomime. On Friday 20th March (7pm) & Saturday 21st March (2pm & 6:30pm). Tickets cost £10 each (or 3 for £25, 4 for £30). All proceeds will be split between North Downs Primary School and Great Ormond Street Hospital. Book your tickets online at

<https://www.fonds.org.uk/events/cinders-in-wonderland/>



Half Term Football Camps

DORKING WANDERERS YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

FEBRUARY HOLIDAY COACHING CENTRE

WEDNESDAY 18TH & THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2026

- 1v1 Attacking & Defending Principles
- Passing & Receiving Drills
- Ball Striking & Shooting Practices
- Ball Mastery & Manipulation with both feet
- Strength & Conditioning Games

INCLUDES A DISCOUNTED DAY RATE FOR ALL OUR DWYFC PLAYERS!

Location: Meadowbank Stadium, RH4 1DX

Email: dwfdevelopment@dorkingwanderers.com **9:30am - 3:30pm**

Sports Update from Mrs Stowell

On Saturday 17th January some of our top cross country runners from Years 5 and 6 took part in the Surrey County Cross Country championship. The standard was extremely high with pupils from all over Surrey competing. Results were as follows: Year 5 Girls : Emily Jane - 29th, Year 5 Boys: Elliott -32nd George 39th Freddy- 67th Year 6 girls: Imogen - 36th Ruby-61st Year 6 boys: Monty - 21st James W - 40th James S - 44th Teilo - 52nd William - 53rd Stanley- 54th Our next schools cross country event takes place on 9th March.



Year 6 Boys Football County Finals

After winning the Dorking Schools Boy's Football Competition our Year 6 team represented Dorking schools in the Surrey County Finals held at Dorking Wanderers FC on Friday 30th January. Our team played well together in a very evenly contested competition. They won two against Merrow and Reigate Priory, drew two against West Ashted and The Minster and lost one game against Hurst Park to finish 3rd in their group. They missed out by just one point in qualifying for the semi-finals, the best result from our teams so far! Well done! The team have been chosen to represent Dorking Wanderers FC in a regional clubs competition on 23rd March at Maidstone FC.



Sportshall Athletics

The Years 5 and 6 Sportshall Athletics Team has been training hard to prepare for the Dorking schools competition held at The Spectrum in Guildford on Wednesday 27th January. The team of fifteen boys and thirteen girls took part in twelve track and twelve field events. In the field we achieved eight 1st places and four 2nd places. Whilst on the track the team achieved four 1st, seven 2nd and one 3rd place. The team came 1st in the girls' competition and 1st in the boys' competition and 1st overall!

Overall Results:

1st North Downs - 550, 2nd St Martins - 518, 3rd Weald- 414

Congratulations to all the team who go forward to represent Dorking in the County final on 25th March 2026 at Guildford Spectrum.



'Understanding SEND Support at your school'

Come and join us for cup of tea and an engaging session designed especially for parents of children who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) on **Thursday 26th February** from 2.00- 2.45pm at the **Betchworth** Site. It will be hosted by Surrey County Council's Team Around the School Support Hub. We'll cover key topics and clear up common misconceptions, including:

- What SEND really means and why it's important
- The Graduated Response to additional needs (SEND)
- How the Graduated Response works at North Downs
- The purpose of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Addressing misconceptions around SEND Support and EHCPs

This is an opportunity to boost your understanding and ask any questions you may have! Please do come along.

Learning Outside the Classroom - Update from Mrs Ottaway

As you are aware, at North Downs, we have developed an innovative and exciting Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) curriculum which has been at the core of school development activities. Taking learning beyond the classroom makes learning more memorable for children and appeals to different learning styles. We have been working on embedding LOtC into the everyday curriculum; LOtC is not an addition our curriculum but is integral to it and a regular part of teaching and learning. It not unusual for the learning to take place in various different places, in the school grounds, on trips, out and about in the Villages - it is just one way we deliver the curriculum.

The staff are always seeking to use the grounds creatively. In order to help us achieve this we continue to develop areas into outdoor learning spaces for classes to use. We have provided seating areas and resources to enable classes to be able to use different areas around the school sites for learning. The children have been working hard to enhance the Eco-field at Brockham, creating two wild flower meadows, a bee bank and bug hotels. This is obviously making a difference as deer have been spotted on the field, and many more butterflies were also seen around last spring/summer.



Year 3 are about to take part in the RSPB Big School Birdwatch so hopefully they will see lots of different birds too. We also have resident Badgers and a rather large set in the corner of the Eco Field. On the Eco Field this term the children have been busy creating a new seating area for classes and a sensory circuit all planned and created using their ideas.

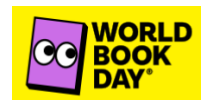
In the Autumn Term Year 5 had one Wilder Schools day at Leigh with two more planned. While there, they worked with both Puffins and Woodpeckers undertaking activities on the points of view of different animals, sensory walks, planted some bulbs, with the main focus being on how we can improve the grounds for nature. It's always great to see how the older children support and help the younger ones. Last year on Betchworth site with the help and support of Betchworth Parish Council we have been able to create a wonderful wildlife garden on their field. One Year 6 class spent a day there helping Owls plant wildlife flowers and build a Bug Hotel.



Following on from this day and using the children's ideas we would particularly like to improve the pond area at Leigh. I know it needs a new liner, or the liner needs to be repaired, but I could do with some extra advice, help and support so if anyone has any knowledge they could share with us about ponds please do get in touch! With regards to LOtC I am always on the lookout for things that will enhance our Learning environment not just for the children but the wildlife too, such as logs, woodchip, birdfeeders, bird food, bricks, pebbles and gravel. Maybe you have knowledge or experience you could share, I would love to hear from you too!

World Book Day and Book Character Dressing Up!

World Book Day is on Thursday 5th March. As part of the National Year of Reading, the children will be looking at how they can 'GO ALL IN' by reading books about their interests - 'If you're into it, read into it.' The focus this year is reading for pleasure. We are then inviting the children to come into school on **Friday 6th March** in a book-related costume preferably with their book to share. It would be wonderful if they were able to share how they read about their interests. Costumes may link to the interests or hobbies the children read about, a favourite book or may even be their favourite book-time clothes or pyjamas. The QR code will take you to the WBD website where there is further information and some ideas for costumes. Whatever they are wearing, we hope that they will be able to share how it links to their reading. As part of planning for this day, your child may like to visit a Surrey Library to choose a book about their hobby. On Friday, there will be a whole school assembly and time to share activities in class linked to these themes. The children will also bring home a £1 book voucher which can be used to collect a free book from participating shops.



Futures Fridays Update

Last week we had a very special visitor for Futures Friday. Rory Gibbs was a Gold Olympic medal winner at Paris 2024. He was part of the eight man rowing team and we were very lucky that he brought his Gold medal with him for all the children to see and hold (it's heavier than you think!). Since the Olympics, Rory has been busy writing some children's books which he mentioned and talked about, which linked perfectly with our National Year of Reading. If you wanted to investigate Rory's books further, here is some more information about where to find them.



Both the staff and the children at Brockham and Leigh thoroughly enjoyed his assembly and the buzz as the children returned to class was a credit to how interesting and inspiring he was. A huge thank you must go to Sophie Spear for introducing Rory to North Downs. We hope we can get him back again for assembly!



Childrens Mental Health Week

Don't forget...Children's Mental Health Week 2026 runs from February 9th to February 15th, 2026, focusing on the importance of belonging and encouraging supportive environments for children and young people. Children are invited to wear a bright colour to school on Friday 13th February to support awareness of this important issue.



Diary Dates

Monday 9th February - Children's Mental Health Week
Tuesday 10th February - Safer Internet Day
Tuesday 10th February - Year R Trip to The Hawth Theatre
Tuesday 10th & Thursday 12th February - Parent Teacher Consultations
Friday 13th February - Break up for half term
Monday 23rd February - Children return to school
Monday 23rd February - Online Safety Session for parents - 6.00 - 7.00pm
Thursday 5th March - World Book Day
Friday 6th March - Book Character Dressing Up Day
Friday 27th March - Break up for Easter: Infants finish at 1.00 & Juniors finish at 1.15pm
Monday 13th April - Children return to school
Monday 4th May - Bank Holiday
Thursday 21st May - Maypole on The Green at Brockham
Thursday 21st May - Break up for Half Term
Friday 22nd May - INSET Day
Monday 1st June - INSET Day
Tuesday 2nd June - Children return to school

Wilf and George - Scafell Pike

Wilf and George, along with their brothers Rex and Henry and their friend Adam, are taking on the climb up Scafell Pike at the end of March to raise money for UNICEF's Gaza Children's Emergency Appeal. After seeing news coverage and learning about the difficult conditions children in Gaza are facing, the boys wanted to do something to help, and have decided to turn their hike into a fundraising challenge. They've set a team target of £500, and would be incredibly grateful for any support from the North Downs community.

Donations can be made via their JustGiving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/page/the-brockham-hiking-boys?utmmedium=FR&utmsource=CL>