DUNCTON CE JUNIOR SCHOOL
Tel : 01798 342402
E-mail : office@dunctonjunior.org.uk

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

GRAFFHAM CE INFANT SCHOOL
Tel : 01798 867324
Email : office@graffhaminfant.org.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's hard to believe that November is already drawing to a close and the festive season is almost upon us. Across both schools, there is a real sense of excitement building as the children prepare for their Christmas performances. We are looking forward to welcoming families to these special events and celebrating the talents and achievements of our pupils.

Learning continues to thrive at both Graffham and Duncton, with many highlights over the past few weeks. The Musical Takeover Day was a fantastic success and provided memorable experiences for all the children. We have also been incredibly proud of our Year 6 pupils for their moving Remembrance poetry, as well as the high-quality writing being produced throughout both schools.

Our new school lunch provision continues to go from strength to strength, and we are grateful for the support and encouragement we have received from families. It has been wonderful to see our new chef, Laura, and kitchen assistant, KT, settling so well into their roles. The children are already looking forward to the special Christmas lunch on the final day of term, which will be a lovely way to celebrate the end of a successful year together.

We have recently welcomed several prospective families to our schools through open mornings and personal tours. It has been a pleasure to showcase all that makes Graffham and Duncton such special places to learn and grow. If you know of any families looking for a school place for September 2027, please do encourage them to get in touch. I would be delighted to show them around either of our wonderful schools and share what makes our federation so unique.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. As we approach the final few weeks of term, I wish you and your families a happy and peaceful start to the festive season.

With best wishes,

Charles Beckerson

Christmas Events in School

Tuesday 1st December – Christmas Card Post boxes up in both schools – This is between friends (unfortunately, we are unable to deliver to Father Christmas) Name and Class on envelope please

Thursday 10th December - Graffham Nativity Thursday 1.30pm

Friday 11th December - Graffham Nativity Friday 4pm

Tuesday 15th December - Graffham Christingle Service, 2.30pm @ St Giles Church, Graffham

Wednesday 16th December - Duncton Carol Concert @ School 5.30pm

Thursday 17th December - Duncton Christingle Service 9.30am @ Holy Trinity Church, Duncton

Friday 18th December - Christmas Lunch in both schools - All children can wear Christmas Jumpers

Friday 18th December - Early pick up for all children- 1.15pm for Graffham & 1.30pm at Duncton.

Buses will run at the earlier time on this day NO WRAPAROUND available on this day

Wrens

This month has been another busy one with so many lovely learning opportunities for all of our children. Wren class are making huge strides in their blending in phonics and are now having a go at writing cvc words! Amazing progress children!

In maths we've been learning about number 5, subitising 5 and the numbers below. We've enjoyed playing dominoes and have even created some of our own by drawing the dots on blank dominoes.

Wild Wednesdays are getting a bit chillier so we're trying to keep active by walking and exploring around us. We've loved walking in the woods to find autumnal leaves and found other exciting animal trails in the field. Early on in the month we read stories based on Diwali about Rama and Sita who returned from their battles with Ravana to their home and were welcomed back with rangoli patterns and diya lamps! We've also been a part of some amazing musical workshops and we've started practising our Nativity show which we hope will be a dazzling success!!!

Have a lovely weekend everyone.








Kingfishers

This month has flown past in Kingfisher class and all the children have worked fantastically hard. We've been covering different ways of adding in maths, using physical resources, number lines, part whole models and near doubles. We've continued developing our writing and children are now experts in using the past tense. We've begun some interesting experiments around our science and talked a great deal about Christianity through our religious education. The children have a really good understanding of the Christmas story and have been really reflective about the way in which this story might be told differently in a modern setting.

Of course, we're also putting in a huge amount of effort to our Nativity practice now - a big thank you to all those parents who have been putting in practice at home with their children. We're looking forward to seeing you all at the church for the big day!






Kestrels

Kestrel Class have had a busy and productive few weeks across the curriculum.

In Mathematics, the children have continued developing their fluency with times tables and have also been learning how to interpret line graphs, bar charts and pictograms. They have enjoyed exploring and analysing data, becoming increasingly confident in explaining what information different graphs and charts show. It has been wonderful to see their mathematical confidence continue to grow.

In English, the children have been writing a retell of *When the Giant Stirred*. They have worked hard to sequence events carefully, use ambitious vocabulary and include descriptive language to engage their readers. We are delighted with the progress the children have made in both their writing and handwriting this term. Their confidence, creativity and pride in presentation have improved enormously, and they are developing into fantastic young writers.

In Computing, we have been learning how to use spreadsheets. This has been a challenging topic that has required the children to think carefully and apply new skills. They have shown great perseverance and determination, and they should be very proud of the progress they have made.

In Science, we have been learning about rocks and their different properties. The children have investigated how rocks are formed, compared different rock types and explored how they are used in everyday life. They have approached their investigations with enthusiasm and curiosity.

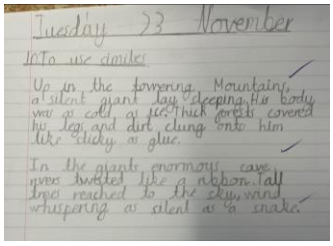
During our SPLASH assembly, we explored the role of a Comfort Buddy and discussed how small acts of kindness can have a positive impact on others. The children reflected thoughtfully on how they can support their classmates and help create a caring and inclusive school community. We were also delighted to meet Vimto, a wonderful canine partner who supports people with disabilities. The children learned about the important role assistance dogs play in helping people lead more independent lives and asked some excellent questions during the visit.

In RE, we have been discussing the thought-provoking question, *"Has Christmas lost its true meaning?"* The children shared their ideas respectfully and listened carefully to the views of others, demonstrating maturity and thoughtful reflection.

In Art, Kestrel Class have begun an exciting project inspired by the work of Nicholas Roerich. We have been studying his dramatic paintings of mountains and volcanoes, focusing on his use of shading and contrasting colours to create atmosphere and express drama. The children have enjoyed experimenting with these techniques and are beginning to apply them in their own artwork, producing some impressive early pieces









Peregrines

As November draws to a close, Peregrine Class has enjoyed another busy and memorable month packed with learning, creativity and opportunities to make a difference. From leading important assemblies to representing our school in competitions, the children have continued to demonstrate enthusiasm, resilience and kindness in everything they do.

Anti-Bullying Week: Breaking the Silence;
We began the month with a thought-provoking anti-bullying performance that encouraged us to consider the impact of staying silent when we witness unkindness. This powerful message led perfectly into our Anti-Bullying Week, themed **"Choose Respect: Break the Silence."**

The children took part in a range of activities, including wearing odd socks to celebrate individuality and discussing the effects of bullying and the importance of speaking up. As part of their homework project, pupils designed informative and eye-catching posters to display around the school, helping others understand how to seek support and stand against bullying.

Forest School Adventures Our Year 6 pupils continue to thoroughly enjoy their weekly Forest School sessions. This month, activities have focused on wellbeing, environmental art, mapping skills and den-building challenges. Alongside these practical experiences, the children have developed a greater appreciation of the seasonal changes taking place around them and have learnt more about the rich flora and fauna of our beautiful woodland setting.

Success in Debating We are incredibly proud of our two debating teams, who recently represented Duncton in an inter-school debating competition. The standard was exceptionally high, and our team achieved an impressive second place, missing first position by just one mark.

Congratulations to Ilinca, Sophie, Imogen, Alfie, Jackson and Elizabeth for their excellent debating skills, confidence and teamwork. They were fantastic ambassadors for our school.

Remembrance Assembly One of the highlights of the month was our Year 6-led Remembrance Assembly. The children approached this important occasion with great maturity and sensitivity.

They confidently recited *In Flanders Fields* and shared their own poignant and thoughtful poems, written especially for the event. We were immensely proud of the way they supported our community in reflecting on the sacrifices made in conflicts both past and present.

A Month of Musical Creativity November has also been filled with exciting musical opportunities. We were delighted to take part in Petworth Festival's Musical Takeover Day, which included a wonderful performance by opera singer Anna, providing a unique and inspiring experience for the children.

Building on their visit to Petworth House last month, pupils composed original music to accompany the lyrics they had previously written. The day concluded with a special performance for parents, giving the children the opportunity to showcase their creativity and hard work.

Our sincere thanks go to Petworth Festival for providing such a memorable opportunity.

Visit from Canine Partners We were delighted to welcome Ewen and his remarkable assistance dog, Vimto, from Canine Partners.

The children learnt about the incredible work carried out by this charity to support people living with disabilities. Vimto amazed everyone by demonstrating a range of helpful skills, including switching on lights, pressing buttons, picking up keys and credit cards, and assisting with everyday tasks.

The visit left a lasting impression on us all, and we are now planning a sponsored outdoor challenge next month to help raise money for this exceptional charity.

Learning in the Classroom

There has been plenty of exciting learning taking place across the curriculum:

- **Mathematics:** Developing fluency and confidence with the four operations.
- **English:** Continuing our World War II-themed narrative writing, focusing on character, setting and atmosphere.
- **Science:** Exploring the solar system and learning about the inspirational mathematician and scientist **Katherine Johnson**.
- **Geography:** Investigating natural disasters and the impact they have on communities around the world.
- **RE:** Our enquiry question is based on the Christmas story.
- **PE:** Basketball and gymnastics
- **PSHE:** Celebrating Difference






School Absences

Pupils are only in school for 190 days each year, this leaves 175 other days for holidays and other activities. 90% attendance is the same as a day off every fortnight and is designated "persistent absence" by the authorities.

Absence for holiday - barring exceptional circumstances - will never be authorised

If you do have a holiday coming up please ask for a withdrawal from learning form in advance from the school office.

