

Downs View Newsletter

Friday 14th Feb 2025

General Information Newsletter: No.7



Term Dates 2024/2025

INSETS

Friday 24 January 2025

Tuesday 6 May 2025

Term Dates 2024/2025

Spring Term

6 Jan-4 April

Summer Term

22 April-22 July

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you're all well, this half term seems to have flown by! As you will see the students have been very busy across all our sites, it's been lovely seeing what they've all been up to.

We had a successful INSET day on Friday 24th January, with training on antiracist education, supporting students with CVI, training from our SALT team, amongst other things. The next INSET day is Tuesday 6th May.

Lewis Stanley, communication lead teacher, did a learning walk focusing on Communication – it was really good to see all the different strategies in use.

On Tuesday 29th April, we will review our Relationships and Sex Education policy, with a Q+A coffee morning – this is your chance to have any questions answered with class teacher Juliette Clitheroe and Deputy Head Juliet Hudson. In the New Hall at school, 9.30- 10.30am.

We are sorry to be saying goodbye to Ann-Marie Hall and Martina Paleschi, thank you both for all your hard work and commitment to Downs View, we wish you all the best in the future!

I hope you all have a lovely half term break and I look forward to seeing everyone back in school on Monday 24th February.

Best wishes
Vanessa



Absence From School/College

There's been lots of sickness over this half term, hopefully this will improve as the weather gets better. **If your child is going to be absent from school/college please call on the numbers below and leave a voicemail before 8am. It is important that you do this so that we can arrange safe staffing levels for every class.**

School—01273 601680

Link College—01273 507719

Life Skills—01273 551028

The Friends of Downs View update is at the end of this newsletter

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Downs View School Primary

Hello everyone,

Spring term is where we often see our children really flourish, as class routines, transitions and strategies to keep everyone happy and safe are so well established. Lots of fantastic learning is continuing all across Primary!

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes are exploring a 'Traditional Tales' topic so much of their art work, cooking, literacy and other activities have centered around The Three Little Pigs or Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Cubs have made their own bear art work and decorated pig biscuits.



At home you could read or act out these stories, explore wet/dry porridge, or pretend to blow down towers built for blocks/recycled boxes. Here is a link to a Goldilocks song:

[When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears - BBC Teach](#)



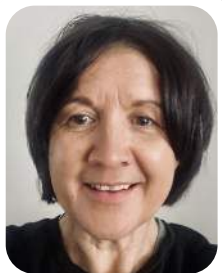
Key stage 2's topic is Outdoor Explorers and they are learning about different animal habitats such as the Arctic, deserts and the jungle. Bears class went to Drusilla's to have a close up experience with our animal friends. Thank you to the Friends of Downs View who fund raise for the annual Drusilla's pass.

At home you could use animals as a stimulus for some physical challenges. Can you hang like a monkey? How long can you hang for? How does it feel to curl up like a snake?

Have a lovely half-term,

Sarah

Downs View School Secondary



Hello All,

This term our secondary theme is Outdoor Explorers, with the children focusing on the natural world. With the days getting longer and hopefully warmer, the students will get to spend more time in our Outdoor Learning area, as well as exploring the local environment.

The school council are focusing this term on our school vision of 'Respect Resilience & Aspiration' and what that means to them, the outcomes will be displayed on the school council notice board outside my office.

The term has started off with many fun activities for students to engage in including, table cricket sessions run by Sussex Disability cricket and tennis from local tennis coach Sam. We will also be taking part in a girls football tournament run by Brighton and Hove Albion and ongoing swimming lessons at St Luke's for some of our students.

On a Friday afternoon secondary students take part in a carousel of exciting activities and can choose from a pamper session, nail art, sing and sign, ball games, board games, gaming and drama games. It is also a great opportunity for students to meet up with peers from other classes.

This term the Parent/Carer engagement event is our annual Spring Parade to be held on the **afternoon of Wed 19th March**, so save the day and come and join us, more information to follow after half term.

In March, CAMHS LD are running positive behaviour support sessions at school. Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) aims to understand what challenging behaviours tell us, with the focus to improve the quality of a person's life and that of those around them. The course begins on 5 March and runs every Wednesday for 4 weeks, 9.30am - 1pm. It will be face-to-face at Downs View School. If you are interested in attending or have questions please email CAMHS LD on: spft.camhs-ld@nhs.net.

Our students love using our bikes, if any parent/ carer could volunteer some time and help keep our bikes in rideable condition please get in touch, it would be greatly appreciated.

Take care all and hope to see many of you at our Spring Parade.

Jackie

Deputy Head



The Mozartists came back to Downs View in Jan, a fantastic musical experience for some of our learners and staff.

Downs View Link College

Hi all,

We've had a busy start to 2025 and the students at DVLC have been engaged in lots of different lessons and activities across the college.

We have taken part in Young Green Briton themed lessons in the last couple of weeks, looking at fast fashion and food waste in particular. Some students have made bird feeders for the gardens and they have enjoyed looking out for the birds.

We will continue with this sustainability theme when the student council meets later this term.

We have been celebrating Chinese New Year with Food Technology and Art activities.

It is Internet Safety day on Tuesday 11th February and we will be having focussed lessons on being safe online. Being safe and healthy are ongoing key themes in our PSHE curriculum. If you would like any information around supporting students with safe internet use please do get in touch.

It was good to see so many parents and carers at our parent/ carer evening at the end of January. The students have been working on their individual targets over the last few weeks and will continue to over the rest of the term.

Just a reminder that on the last Tuesday of each half term, the Fab Cafe is open to parents and carers from 10-11 am so please come along if you can. We have students from across the college doing their work experience in the cafe.

We are looking forward to the rest of the Spring Term at DVLC, let's hope that we get lots of sunshine to enjoy.

Best wishes,

Juliet



Wednesday afternoon arts and crafts group, which is a mix of students from Years 11-14, made this beautiful work as part of Chinese New Year art activities.

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Downs View Link College



Downs View Link College has had a lovely term and been very busy with lots of different activities. We were pleased to have representatives from the Young Green Briton Challenge come into the college to involve all the year groups in a sustainability project. The 3 themes were fast fashion, bio-diversity and food and waste. The pupils got involved in the process of thinking about all 3 themes and ways to help support these ideas. We have now rolled out bird making as part of bio-diversity, mending and customising clothing as part of fast fashion, cooking more sustainable food and a food waste audit across the whole college. All took part and got involved.



On Weds 29 January, 50 students from 4 local FE colleges entered into the 3rd inter-college sports event at Stanley Deacon Leisure Centre, organised by Downs View. 22 students from DV Link College and DV Life Skills participated, alongside students from GB MET and St Johns colleges. The students played a range of games in football skills, football games, dodgeball and other fitness activities. It fostered stronger links between the different college students and, importantly, helped improve their health and fitness. It was a great success with the next event planned for Wednesday 14 May.

News from Room 6

Room 6 pupils have had a great term. They have worked hard on their regular lessons of Write dance, tac pac and sensory as well as enjoying a sensory story all about the Chinese new year. They have enjoyed various trips out this term, mainly indoors due to the weather, to local libraries, garden centres and cafes. They are very happy with the new sensory room and enjoy time spent there to look at and engage with the new equipment including a snow tube, interactive magic carpet, light and sound machine and switch work. Well done room 6



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Downs View Life Skills College

Dear learners, parents and carers,

Spring term has been very busy and exciting.

We recently had the first Life Skills community garden event of the year. Learners worked hard in planting, making bird-feeders and bug-hotels, and looking for wild life. I particularly enjoyed seeing learners working alongside staff and community volunteers.



Learners have continued discussing themes of their interest in the learner's board and making choices that will impact the college. For example, they choose "the colours of the rainbow" as the theme of the year for the Open House and World Book day. They will focus on celebrating diversity and respect! Other themes have included being kind and working together, as well as recapping our college values of respect, resilience and aspiration. This week we will learn about key areas of E-safety.

We are pleased to see learners enhancing their work skills in the current placements including Junk Food, Scope, Speak Out, Caterlink, City Parks and Fab Cafe. This includes preparing food, organising events, customer and serving skills, sorting items and gardening skills.

Keeping fit and healthy is very important for all of us. We are currently running table cricket sessions and learners will attend a local competition where 2 learners will support running the event. They are working towards achieving a sports leader's award. Other young people will soon start accessing dance leaders award. We can't wait to see all the performances!

Room 6 learners have been exploring the kitchen through sensology. They have been using their sense to smell, taste, feel, see and hear to make meaningful choices and have a better understanding of the experience of cooking.

Have a lovely half term,

Raul



The Garden Enrichment Team have been busy

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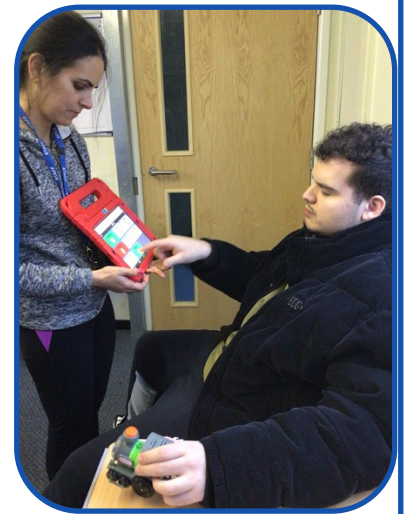
At Life Skills College the Garden Enrichment Team have been busy twice per week in the garden getting ready for spring. In addition to this, the whole College has been getting involved with the wider community on Community Garden Work Days. We have pruned and cared for the fruit trees, filled raised beds and supported the wildlife. Life Skills College has achieved the RHS School Garden Awards Level 5, the highest award, in recognition of all the hard work the learners have completed, well done team.

Photos - On Friday we had a workday in DVLSC community garden. Learners and staff joined volunteers to plant a hedge, fill the raised beds, plant garlic and make bird feeders. We had a great day, in spite of the weather, and really appreciated our hot tea in the shelter!



News from Room 7

In room 7 we have been working on our communication skills, and having a lot of fun learning about household tasks, such as how to clean a car. We did a great job cleaning Elena's car! Some class members also joined in with a football tournament, showing our skills with a ball.



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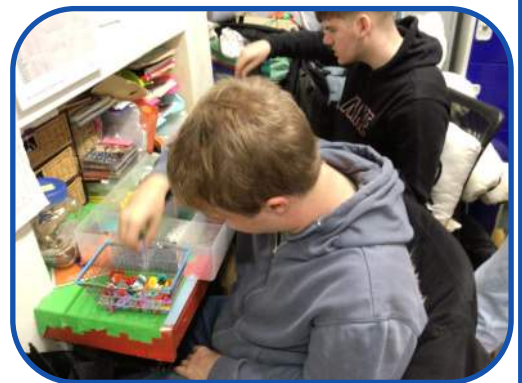
Downs View Life Skills College

News from Room 1

This term we have been focusing on our community garden. It has had a lot of work completed so far such as accessible paths and more raised beds added. As part of our work in the community we visited an organisation called Special Branch based in Stanmer Park to collect trees. These were donated to our community gardens to help create a hedge-row. Many students were part of collecting and planting these in the community garden. These have been planted and are growing well!



We have also started our work experience programme at Life skills. Some students have been attending Scope charity shop. Here students have learnt to sort donations, organise clothing with tags and hangers and complete a variety of shop assistant tasks as part of our employability learning. For learners in room 1 it is their last year so many are developing independence skills and lifelong work skills.



Finally, we enjoyed a book fair this term. Different classes helped run the book fair and make suggestions for others. They were in charge of collecting the book orders and writing the purchasers name. It was our first book fair at the college and we hope to have one again. (links with the last two photos).



Downs View School Governors' Update

Welcome to the first Governors' school newsletter of 2025.

2025 has started quietly from a governors' point of view but as the year progresses, we are easing into a busier schedule. On 10 February the first Finance Committee Meeting of the year was held at which committee members discussed the budget for 2025-26 as well as reviewed the spend over the past year.

One area of spend which we focused on was the investment across key curriculum areas. We have invested well on several different curriculum areas this year and we are on budget. Subject leads have been purchasing resources based on agreed action plans and we have also improved resources available to two School class playground areas.

Particular highlights include:

Outdoor learning: improvements to the forest school and outdoor learning areas including new shed/workshop, water tanks and outdoor learning resources.

Communication: investment in a few key communication learning resources including new Eye Gaze technology at school and link college. We have also invested in resources and activities to support several parental engagement events across the year.

As far as the next school year is concerned, we will continue to invest in our curriculum and curriculum leads will be preparing their action plans for the coming year.

On 24 February, the first Full Governing Board (FGB) of 2025 will be held at the school. We are delighted to be welcoming three new governors to the Board, and we look forward to introducing them over the next few governor newsletter updates.

One of the items on the FGB agenda concerns a safeguarding focus. As part of the Governing Body's monitoring responsibilities, Governors will present updates on safeguarding, health and safety, curriculum and finance.

On behalf of all the Governors, we wish you all an enjoyable half-term break.

FRIENDS OF DOWNS VIEW SCHOOL & LINK COLLEGE

FRIENDS OF DOWNS VIEW UPDATE

- **AGM** – this was held in mid January and my thanks to the core committee members for attending. It was a productive meeting, discussing ways to keep the charity going, with a focus on daytime family events. New projects large and small were put forward, based on the need highlighted by Executive Headteacher Vanessa Hickey on behalf of the staff. The posts of **Chair** and **Treasurer** remain unchanged, filled by **Lisa Burgess** and **Peter Mapledoram** respectively. The post of **Secretary** remains vacant.
- **Brighton 10k run, Sunday 6th April – two places left!** If you run, please consider running the 10k for Friends of Downs View. If not, please tell your family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues etc and spread the word so we can fill these final places.
- **Playground Play Date** – as Spring gets closer, we plan to hold a playground play date on a Sunday afternoon, as they have proved popular with families. Please keep a lookout for the date and further details.

Have a lovely half term break,

Lisa Burgess, FODV

EMAIL: friends@downsview.brighton-hove.sch.uk • www.friendsofdownsview.org.uk

Charity no: 1013621 • www.justgiving.com/FriendsofDownsViewSchool • www.facebook.com •

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