



Downham Preparatory School and Montessori Nursery

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Newsletter to Preparatory & Nursery School Parents – Tuesday 9th January 2024

UPCOMING DIARY DATES

Monday 8th January

Reception Parents' Evening (4:00pm)

Sunday 14th January

Cross Country Race at Shouldham (10:30am)

Tuesday 16th January

Class 6/7 Parents' Evening (4:00pm)

Wednesday 24th January

Class 5 Parents' Evening (4:00pm)

Other Parents' Evenings

Thursday 1st February

Class 4 4:00pm onwards

Tuesday 6th February

Class 3 4:00pm onwards

Wednesday 28th February

Class KS1 4:00pm onwards

Nursery Parents' Meetings

Friday 8th March

Miss Richardson 1:30pm onwards

Friday 15th March

Mrs Hmaied 1:30pm onwards

Friday 22nd March

Miss Stannard 1:30pm onwards

Dear Parents,

We hope that you have all had an enjoyable Christmas break and are now refreshed and ready for the New Year ahead. Many thanks to you all for the cards and presents that you sent to the staff and myself.

Mrs E Lafferty-Sharpe

Nursery Staff & Pupils

Following the sudden closure of another local Nursery, we are pleased to welcome 17 new pupils into our Nursery here at Stow. We are also pleased to have recruited new Nursery Staff and therefore welcome Mrs Tara Weatherall. Mrs Weatherall trained with us many years ago at our first Nursery in Downham and her mother, Mrs Monk, worked for very many years in the Nursery until her retirement.

Mrs Weatherall moved away, married and had her own family, but she has recently returned to live in Denver. We are very pleased to welcome her back to our staff team.

At present we are also in the process of interviewing for a new Key Worker in the Nursery. We shall inform parents as soon as we have made the appointment.

Our lovely spacious conservatory has now been designated as a Nursery classroom area. The Music room has been relocated to the upper floor of the Rectory building.

Reminder: Please ensure all items of clothing, including hats, gloves, scarves, etc. are clearly named. Also, please clearly name your child's **packed lunch box**. Thank you.

New Pupils

We also extend a very warm welcome to our new family, Clemens and Ludowika in KS2; and Nikolaus and Anna in Reception. They are visiting from Germany until half-term in February, and have chosen to join us to help them learn English. The other children are eager to include them in their games and conversations.

OFSTED Report

We are very pleased to announce that we have now received our new OFSTED report. All Prep school parents should have received a copy via email yesterday. We are in the process of sending it out to all Nursery parents; you should receive your copy by the end of the week.

After-School & Lunchtime Clubs

After-school & lunchtime clubs will be starting next week. We are pleased to see so many children keen to join the band; therefore the group will be split over 2 days, to make the numbers more manageable. Choir will be held on Thursday lunchtimes.

Winter Uniform

Please remember that your child should have a coat in school every day for outside play. We suggest they also have scarves, hats and gloves this term. They should also have a jumper to wear in the classrooms and we strongly suggest that girls should wear tights instead of socks this term. All items should be navy blue.

Carol Service Collection

Our annual Carol Service was held at Stow Bardolph Church on Wednesday 13th December, with a collection for Church Funds. We have received a lovely letter from the Treasurer of the church, thanking you all for the £190 you kindly donated. The staff and children were thanked for the beautiful service.

Staff Car Park

Please do not drive into the staff car park unless you are a parent with a Disabled permit or a Nursery permit (issued to parents with babies only.) Staff are finding it difficult to park when there are other cars blocking access. We kindly ask that all drivers drive very slowly and carefully at all times near the school entrance, and find a safe place to park and turn round, further down the road, or preferably in the Church Farm car park. We also ask that pedestrians use the footpath along the side of the car park, rather than walk through and across the staff car park. At the end of the day especially, please keep your child close to you at all times when leaving the school grounds. This will help to keep everyone safe. Thank you.

Cross-Country Report - by Mr Lane

Despite this event taking place in our Christmas Holiday, we still had four runners at the 3rd Ryston Runners Cross Country Grand Prix race on Sunday 17th December.

There was a good battle between Archie and Benjamin in the Under 9 Boys' race. Both were given the same time of 3 minutes 40 seconds with Archie coming 12th, just pipping Benjamin in 13th. Both ran personal best times - Archie by 1 second and Benjamin by 4. Good work boys!

Frankie came 12th in the Under 9 Girls' race, which is her highest ever finishing place, in a time of 4 mins 37 seconds.

Freddie was our sole competitor in the Under 11s races. He came 11th in the Boys category, in a time of 9 minutes and 45 seconds.

Latest update on the Schools Trophy competition is that after the second race of the series we moved up one place to 4th out of the 15 Schools who have taken part this year.

Next event in the series is on Sunday 14th January. See below for further details.

Cross-Country Race at Shouldham - Sunday 14th January 2024

The next race in the Ryston Runners Cross Country Grand Prix takes place on Sunday 14th January 2024 in Shouldham Woods. (Then 11th February and 10th March.) The first race starts at 10:30am.

If you or your child would like to enter, please speak to Mr Lane (or the office). The entry fee for children is £4.00 and adults (who are not members of Ryston runners or an affiliated club) is £8.00. There is also more information on the Ryston Runners website, where you will find details of how to enter online.

If you have entered, Mr Lane will meet you there at 10.00am, after you have collected your number. He also does a warm-up with the children before the race, and shows them the course.

New runners are always welcome, particularly from Years 4-7. All runners score points for the school, and there are trophies and individual prizes to be won. At present, we are fourth in the Primary Schools group, where the eventual winners receive a large shield (which we have won several times in the past.) Just 2 or 3 more runners, particularly in the U11 race, could boost our points tally quite considerably! All pupils who enter 3 (or more) races will receive a prize/memento.

<https://www.rystonrunners.org.uk/index.php/cross-country-series>

