



Mr Kirby's Weekly News

Dear Dover Park Family,

Happy New Year to all our families! It has been great to welcome the children back to school this week. After the excitement of the Christmas break, I am pleased to report that the children have returned with fantastic energy and have settled back into their learning routines well. I've already seen some fabulous work taking place, from creative writing, complex problem-solving to stunning artwork. It is great to have our school community back together again.

Attendance Matters: Every Day Counts

As we begin a fresh term, I want to emphasize the vital importance of regular school attendance. Recent research from the Department for Education highlights a clear "attainment gap": children with 95-100% attendance are significantly more likely to achieve the expected standards in Reading, Writing, and Maths compared to those who drop even slightly below 90%.

Beyond academic results, attendance has a profound impact on mental health. Being in school provides children with a stable routine, a sense of belonging, and the social connections that are crucial for their emotional well-being. Missing school can often lead to "learning anxiety," where children feel overwhelmed trying to catch up on missed concepts and social "catch-up" with their peers.

I'd like to remind parents that we do not authorise holidays during term time. While we fully appreciate that travel costs are often lower outside of school holidays, the academic cost to a child's progress is high. Research consistently shows that absence—even for a week—links to a measurable decline in achievement. Thank you for making your child's education the priority.



Focus on Individual Success: IEP Meetings for children with Special Educational Needs

This coming Friday, Mrs Roberts, our SENCo, will be hosting Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings for all children on our SEN register. These meetings are a vital part of our commitment to every child's progress.

During your appointment, you will have the opportunity to talk through the specific targets teachers have set for the coming term, discuss the tailored support we are putting in place to help your child achieve those goals and to collaborate on ways you can further support learning at home.

All parents of children with identified special educational needs should have received a digital link to book their preferred time slot. If you have not received yours, please contact the school office as soon as possible.

Expanding Horizons: Trips and Visitors

We are firm believers that learning should extend far beyond the four walls of the classroom. On a personal level, my fondest school memories are of education visits, so to bring our curriculum topics to life, we aim to arrange a special trip or an expert visitor for every half term. We are incredibly fortunate to live on the Isle of Wight and we make the most of the rich history and environment in our own locality. However, we also strive to provide opportunities on the mainland to broaden the children's understanding of the wider world. Whether it's a local beach study, a visit to a London museum or a residential trip, these experiences are carefully chosen to deepen the children's engagement with their classroom topics.

Across the school we have trips to the beach, to the library, into town, to Osbourne House, the Mary Rose, the Wildheart Sanctuary, Apply Tower, Carisbrooke Castle, The British Museum, Natural History Museum, UKSA, sailing at Seaview, London Science Museum, PGL residential and much, much, more. We also have regular visits to Ryde Lift Academy to ease transition and we have visits from dentists, nurses, police, the fire service, the RNLI, the Wildheart Sanctuary, Mental Health team, the Footprint Trust and more.



Smart and Simple: Hair Accessories

To keep our school uniform looking smart and to ensure there are no distractions in the classroom, we would like to remind parents about our policy on hair accessories. We ask that all accessories—such as clips, bobbles, or headbands—are small, plain, and in navy blue or navy blue gingham. While I know there are some very sparkly options out there, we appreciate your support in keeping to our school colours. Of course, I'm quite lucky in this department—as those of you who have seen me on the playground know, I don't have enough hair left to worry about what colour clip to use!

LEARNING

Reception have been using dice to help them subitise to 6. They played a fun number track game that helped them quickly recall numbers of dots to get to the end of the track. When they got near the end of the track the children had to say how many more were needed. They then threw the dice until they saw an equal number of dots to finish the game. They had to say if the number thrown was too many or not enough or equal.



Year 1 have been looking at different animal groups this week in Science. The children began sorting the animals into the 5 animal groups, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and birds. They were very surprised that elephants are mammals and that frogs are amphibians, not reptiles!

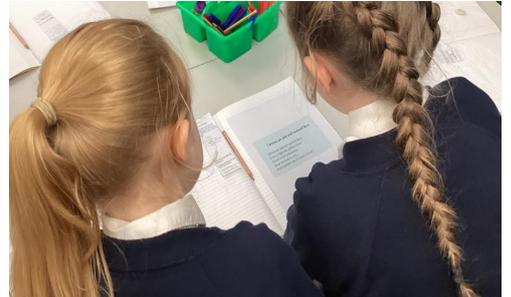
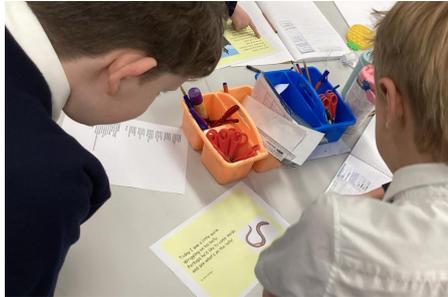


Year 2 will be learning about how to keep safe in our lives this term as part of PSHE lessons. The children started with how to stay safe with medicines. They recognised that medicines should only be taken when supervised by an adult. Then they 'mimed' the things they can do to make themselves feel better when unwell and different ways that they get medicines into their bodies.

Year 3 have enjoyed thinking about how different rainforest animals move around their natural habitat for English this week. We listened to rainforest sounds, and came up with some great adverbs to improve our writing skills.



This week, Year 4 have started to look at different styles of poetry, discussing their favourites and why they like them.



Year 5 brought *The Tempest* to life by creating their own dramatic storm, expertly conducted by pupils who stepped into the role of Ariel, controlling the storm-meter. The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about Shakespeare, exploring the play's mischie-



vous magic and rich, poetic language.

Year 6 have started a new topic in History and are now learning about the Mayans. As well as learning about this in History they are also learning about Mayan Sculpture in Art and are working towards making a Mayan artefact out of clay.



Hot Chocolate Friday

Year 1— Harry S
Year 2— Amberlee
Year 3— Beaudi
Year 4— Emerson
Year 5— Vaishnav
Year 6— Alfie

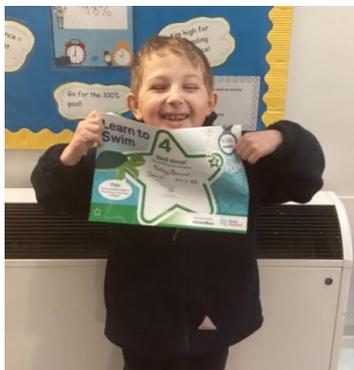


Reader of the Week

Year 1— Emily
Year 2— Amelia
Year 3— Kaelen
Year 4— Isabelle
Year 5— Madison
Year 6— Alina



Well done to all of our pupils who have been rewarded with certificates for activities and skills that they have learnt at clubs outside of school.



Hot Chocolate Friday

Year 1—

Year 2—

Year 3—

Year 4—

Year 5—

Year 6—



Reader of the Week

Year 1—

Year 2—

Year 3—

Year 4—

Year 5—

Year 6—



Diary Dates

30th January —Year 3 Music Workshop

9th February —Year 4 Art Workshop

13th February — Year 2 Assembly

4th March —Year 6 Music Workshop

12th March —Year 2 DT Workshop

16th March — Year 4 Music Workshop

18th March —Year 5 Assembly

20th March — Easter Egg donation — Dress Down Day

26th March — Year 1 Assembly

27th March —Easter Egg Tombola

4th May —Year 5 Music Workshop

14th May — Year 4 Assembly

20th May — Year 1 Music Workshop

21st May — School Disco

29nd May — Reception Music Workshop

5th June — Year 3 Parent Workshop

19th June— Whole School Teddy Bear Picnic 12:15-1:00

25th June — Year 2 Music Workshop



Family Assist
Solent



Hampshire and
Isle of Wight Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

Helping to keep your child healthy

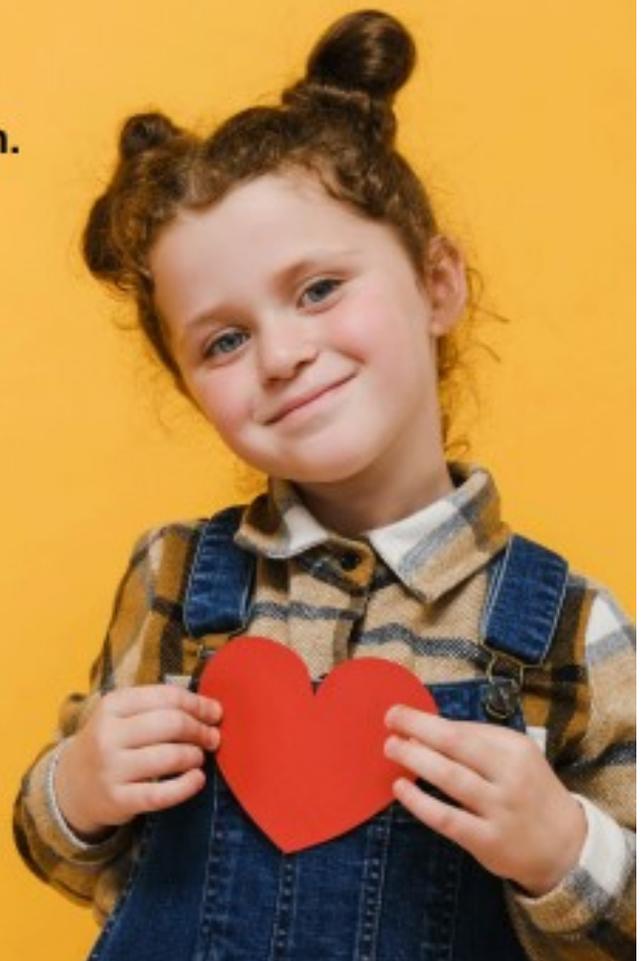
The Isle of Wight 0-19 Team is made up of Health Visitors, School Nurses, Community Nurses, Associate Practitioners and Administrators.

We use our skill mix team to ensure that all families are offered mandated health contacts for needs assessment, advice and support.

Please see Family Assist for additional support information.



If you have any questions or would like to speak to a Health Visitor or School Nurse, please ring the 0-19 duty desk on **0300 123 5224**





Isle of Wight SENDIASS Online Workshops

- Free impartial advice relating to SEND for 0-25 years.
- Confidential sessions not recorded.
- Peer support, talking to others experiencing a similar journey.
- A dedicated session with an experienced support worker

**6
JAN
13:00**

Considering an EHC Plan?

Independent and impartial information to guide you through the process

**7
JAN
12:00**

Responding to a draft EHCP

If you are in that critical time frame having received your draft

**8
JAN
17:30**

Appeals to SEND Tribunal

A step-by-step guide through the appeals process

**14
JAN
11:00**

Ordinarily Available Provision and SEN Support

Looking at support available for those who do not have an EHCP

**19
JAN
12:00**

Alternative Provision

What constitutes as a suitable education in relation to section 19 of the education act

**23
JAN
10:00**

Responding to a draft EHCP

If you are in that critical time frame having received your draft

www.iowsendiass.org.uk/workshops

Ryde
Superbowl

QUIDS IN



£1 PER GAME

PRE-BOOKED ONLY

**OFFER VALLID FOR JANUARY
2026
TUESDAY _ WEDNESDAY**

BOWLING AND LASER QUEST





**PLEASE
DON'T PARK**

**ON DOUBLE
YELLOW LINES**