

# Newsletter



## Term 1 Clubs

Monday  
Multi-sports

Tuesday  
Drama

Wednesday  
Eco-Club

Thursday  
Construction Club

Friday  
Sports Club

## Anglo-Saxon action!

At the start of the term, Class 3 kicked off their Anglo-Saxon learning with an immersive day at the Forest of Dean Heritage Centre, learning all about Anglo-Saxon life. Children had a chance to wear armour and use a spear, as well as making a formation of an Anglo-Saxon army while being charged at by our Anglo-Saxon guide! They learn all about the use of herbs and plants to make medicines that we still use today and the start of modern surgery, although we weren't terribly keen on having a limb sawn off and sealed with a hot spear. A fantastic end to the day, saw us taking a long walk through the woodland that was used to hunt boar during the period, spotting fruits and seeds that would have made a good meal. We were pretty shocked to find out that children over the age of ten were treated as adults in the Anglo-Saxon justice system and if found poaching from a nobleman's land, would have had a hand cut off!

## Eco-Council Focus on All Saints

The first meeting of the Eco Council was focused on how we can continue to support our community through our sustainability work. Having received our Eco Schools award at the end of 2023, our focus has turned towards helping the church and Reverend Swanton with their work towards gaining a bronze Eco Church award. The children had lots of ideas and we presented them to Reverend Swanton and look forward to a visit to the church grounds to start our habitat mapping.



## Katherine Rundell : Impossible Creatures

As part of the Year of Reading, Class 3 took part in one of our author webinars with one of our favourite authors, Katherine Rundell. Class 3 have read a number of her books over the last two years, including The Explorer, The Good Thieves, Rooftoppers and her new book, Impossible Creatures,

which we were kindly gifted from our PTA book fund. The children really enjoyed hearing about where she gets her ideas and how anyone can write if they have an imagination!



## Prestigious awards gained by Down Ampney Primary School

Children, staff, parents and carers have worked together this year to promote children's personal development across a wide range of areas. We are thrilled to have been awarded our 4th consecutive Eco Schools Green Flag Award with Distinction, our 3rd consecutive School Games Gold Mark and the Gloucestershire Healthy Schools Award.

The Eco Schools topics that we work on help our young people engage with environmental issues that are important to them and our local community. They also cover a huge range of sustainability issues including the climate crisis, plastic pollution and biodiversity loss. To achieve this award, we had to be working on 3 different areas within the Eco School Framework: Healthy Living, Biodiversity and School Grounds. The children, staff and wider school community have worked hard across the year to raise awareness of environmental issues. The judging panel summed up the work of the school over the last 12 months: "You have created passionate young environmentalists who are excited about protecting

our planet and empowered to make a difference. Ultimately this is the number one goal of the Eco-Schools programme."

The School Games Mark is a government-led awards scheme launched in 2012 to reward schools for their commitment to the development of sporting competition across their school and into the community. We have taken part in a huge range of inclusive sporting events across the year, including Girls Active, Cross Country, Bee Netball and Sports Hall Athletics. In order to gain the award, our 3rd Gold Mark in 3 years, the school has demonstrated that we have supported the personal development of young people through youth engagement and leadership; we have worked to ensure there have been equal opportunities for all of our young people in sport, regardless of their gender and taken part in sporting events and competitions which have created positive experiences for our children.

Working with Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning, our Healthy Schools award is based on our strong policies and practice in relation to the health and wellbeing of our children. Children are supported in making healthy choices about their physical and wellbeing and are supported in their mental wellbeing by our Mental Health Lead. Children have learnt life saving skills with the West Midlands Air Ambulance, learnt valuable survival skills in water during Drowning Prevention Week, joined with other local schools in a Colour Run and

Year 5 and 6 gained their Adventurer Badges during our residential to Dartmoor!

## Sports council morning

The sports council have decided that our first priority is to improve our active minutes in school. We worked together to update the equipment trolley and thought about what we might like to have access to, as well as implementing some new playground games. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are now full of children playing games, practising throwing and catching skills and creating different active challenges. The sports leaders have enjoyed taking on their new roles and responsibilities and are excited about working towards our next School Games award at the end of this year.

## Worship council morning

The worship council were very busy during our council morning as they undertook discussions and planned some key events. We started off by discussing how our worship table could change to match the different seasons of the Church. Our first worship table will be themed around Harvest; they considered what colour cloth should be on the table and any items that will sit on it. As a group, we discussed which charities we would like to support this year. Our first chosen charity is the Cirencester

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 3rd Oct - Charity Non-Uniform Day  
 Friday 4th October - INSET  
 Monday 7th October - INSET  
 Tuesday 8th October - Parents' Evening Class 1  
 Wednesday 9th October - Parents' evening  
 Thursday 10th October - Anglo Saxon Writing Day Class 3  
 Wednesday 16th October - Parents' evening  
 Wednesday 23rd October - Spirituality Day  
 Friday 25th October - Harvest Festival 1.30pm  
 Friday 25th October - End of Term 1



Foodbank and then we will be supporting the Salvation Army and Christian Aid. These charities have linked to what the children have learnt about in Religious Education.

## School council morning

The school council were very excited to put together a plan for the year ahead and discussed which charities they would like to support. They were careful to plan a variety of events to engage all children. The events they were keen to do included sporting events, sleepovers, trips and ensuring that the school is as environmentally friendly as possible. The school council were also very keen to invite members of the community to events such as the nativity play. They were also keen to think about what makes Down Ampney a great school and how we can be the BEST we can be every day.

## Student Leadership

We are delighted that all of our Year 6 children have taken on their new roles as captains very seriously. The house captains Isabel and Arno delivered a presentation to the PTA to explain what they would like from their final year at school.

Sports captains Charlie and Lucy have made a positive start organising break and lunchtime games and will start in earnest when the school games events start next in October. The Worship captain Anaya opens and closes each worship and is looking forward to joining other schools at the spirituality day next term. The Eco captains Ava and Dan have started in their quest to ensure the school is environmentally friendly by producing signs to remind people to turn off lights and to water the plants.

The house captains Zea, Fraser, Evie and Qhuinn are enjoying their roles as house captains and looking forward to judging the house bake offs next term.

## EYFS Settling In

Our 9 Reception children have settled in well to the school (with one of them only joining us this week!). They have enjoyed playing both inside and out, listening to stories, creating and mark making and constructing with different materials. As part of the class Geography unit, Class 1 went on a walk around the village, which was the perfect opportunity for the new children to get to know their locality surrounding the school. The older children in the school have been amazing at looking after our new starters and supporting them when needed. Down Ampney is continuing to prove that we are always striving to be the BEST we can be.

## Subject in Focus – Music

The children have been very enthusiastic in their music lessons this term. Class 1 have been learning the Menu Song which is about some tasty dishes that you might eat during the course of a week. They have had to use their skills in listening, keeping a steady beat, and developing their sense of pitch.

Class 2 have been working on a pentatonic song called I've been to Harlem. They have learned how to play simple accompaniments and how to sing as a round. The children were very excited when we managed to add a cup rhythm to the song.

Class 3 have really enjoyed their work on sea shanties and developing their own version of What shall we do with the drunken sailor? They have had the opportunity to find out more about the context, history, and purpose of sea shanties as work songs. Their ability to learn and perform 2 different cup rhythms to accompany the song has really impressed Mrs Walters!

## Joining the Corinium Education Trust

We are still on track to join the Corinium Education Trust in January 2025 and we have already started working more closely with them as staff for professional development opportunities and to share great practice in subject leadership. Behind the scenes, myself Mrs Woodruffe and the governors are completing the legal and financial side of the conversion. The children have become very used to seeing Ms Henson, the trust lead, visiting school each fortnight to see the school in action and check in with staff. We are delighted that the Trust supported the school's recent decision to make two staff contracts permanent before the conversion and this demonstrates their commitment to ensuring that all staff are looked after during the process. As children they are benefitting from shared resources, as we are now borrowing class sets of books from another primary school in the trust who have a wider range of class sets than we do. We are also looking forward to joining other CET schools at the upcoming Stroud Book Festival events.

