

Newsletter

*Wishing everyone in our school community a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. **School is closed to children on Monday 5th January 2026 for an INSET day.** We look forward to welcoming you back to school on **Tuesday 6th January***



Interfaith Week

To celebrate interfaith week this year, we took part in lots of activities across school the week, including stories, assemblies, visitors in class and a range of video clips. Thank you to our parent and community visitors who came to talk about their faith, to our volunteers who carried out a community litter pick and to everyone who donated to our NHS Key Worker Hamper.



Our Christmas Performances

We are so proud of all the children who took part in our Christmas performances from NEST through to Year 6. Everyone worked hard to learn lines and songs, lots of them performing in front of an audience for the first time! We hope everyone who came to watch enjoyed the performances as much as we did!



Our School Charity 2025-26

Our School Council led an assembly and taught us all about some of the charities our school could support this year. We then exercised our UNCRC Children's right to our own opinion and our fundamental British Value of individual liberty and democracy and voted for the charity we wanted to support as a school. After voting was counted by our school councillors, Ashgate Hospice received most votes and will become the charity we fundraise for this year. A local charity which you can learn more about here: [Save A Precious Bed](#)



Congratulations Miss King!

We're thrilled to share that Miss King tied the knot this week! Wishing her and her new husband a lifetime of happiness together. She'll be back with us in January as **Mrs. Whittingham**, and we can't wait to welcome her back!



New School Logo Competition

Thank you once again to everyone who submitted designs for our new school logo. We wanted a logo which reflected our community heritage and links and lots of the designs reflected this. Caitlyn's winning design not only links with the mining heritage of the community but also recognises the 'light' that knowledge, relationships and working together brings to our school. Well done Caitlyn for your thoughtful design!

Redhill Festive Foodbank Collection

Our school community has been generously collecting all month for the Redhill Festive Foodbank Collection which is supporting The Trussell Trust Foodbank again this year. Thank you to everyone who was able to donate. Your contributions will support families in need across Chesterfield.





BBC 500 Words

Well done to everyone who submitted a piece of writing to this year's BBC 500 words young writers' competition. We have been so impressed with the stories that you created. 7 of the writers have also made it through to the next round so a huge well done to them!

Travelling Panto

This year's travelling Panto turned our school hall into a theatre for the day as we enjoyed a performance of Dick Whittington, filled with all the classic panto elements without having to leave school! Thank you to the parents who helped school to prepare our super snacks to enjoy whilst we watched!

Carols at Ravensworth & Markham Court



We have been spreading Christmas cheer around the local community this month. Our Christmas choir visited the residents at Markham Court to sing carols and our Year 6s did the same at Ravensworth Care Home. We always enjoy our annual visits, and our classes were warmly welcomed on both occasions. Thank you for having us!

We



Santa's Special Visit

On the last day of term, Santa paid a festive visit to our EYFS classes, much to the children's surprise! He also made sure every child in school, from EYFS right through to Year 6, received a book to enjoy over the holidays. A small gift from school to mark the end of the school term. We also received gifts for all of the children from Smurfit Westrock Markham Vale who continue to support school. Thank you!



Rocksteady Performances

This term we've enjoyed welcoming Rocksteady into school, working with children to learn new musical skills and play together in bands. In the final week of term, we were treated to a special performance from our school bands, showcasing all their hard work. Well done to everyone involved for learning something new and having



the confidence to perform — it was a pleasure to watch.

St John the Baptist Church – Christmas Tree Festival



Smurfit Westrock also provided the templates for our school Christmas decorations. Every child has created a 'bauble' with some being used as part of our tree on display as part of the Staveley Christmas Tree Festival (its free to attend!) and the rest have been used on our beautiful school tree.



WOW Ambassadors 2026

We have chosen our Wow travel tracker ambassadors for this year, encouraging children to walk, scoot, bike or park and ride to school. We are logging how everyone comes to school every day and encouraging as many as possible to be active rather than using the car! You could earn a new badge every months!



TuckShop

Our School tuck shop runs every Friday from 8:30–8:45am. Children should be accompanied by a parent/carer, and we ask that purchases are limited to three items. Snacks may include occasional treats, which are allowed on Fridays only. While we aim to keep food in school nut-free where possible, some pre-packed items may carry “may contain traces of nuts” warnings, so please check labels carefully. If your child walks to school independently, you may wish to speak with them about checking packaging if needed. Thank you for helping us keep tuck shop safe and enjoyable for everyone. You can read our food policy in full here: [Duckmanton Food Policy](#)

School Site

A friendly reminder that we do not allow the following on the school site:

- Dogs – any size or breed
- Smoking – any form of cigarette including E-cigarettes
- Electric scooters or bikes
- Bikes and scooters – please do not ride them on the site, but you are welcome to push them.
- Anti-social behaviour including swearing, intimidating or aggressive behaviour
- Parent cars between the hours of 8.00am and 4.30pm

If you or your child is registered as disabled, please contact the school office, who will be able to issue a carpark pass.

Bus Bay

The bus bay at the front of school should not be used by parents or the community for parking. It is a particular issue when we take the children out on trips, as the coaches are not able to get close enough to the school for collection and drop off. Thank you to Cllr Mick Bagshaw for installing a sign to make everyone aware.

Upcoming Key Dates

You can find a comprehensive list on our website or at this link: [Duckmanton Key Dates](#)

Our next parent event is our Sleep Routines workshop delivered by the Changing Lives Team. This is a great way to get support and advice for managing bedtime and also a great chance to meet the Changing Lives Mental Health team in a supportive, non-judgemental session. This will be held at school on **Tuesday 6th January 3:15 – 4pm** (Our first day back at school!)



DO YOU WORRY ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SLEEP ROUTINE? 

COME ALONG TO A PARENT WORKSHOP

with Compass Changing Lives - Mental Health Support Team

Holiday requests during term time

Any requests should be an official school Leave of Absence Request form which is available on the school website or collectable from the school office. This should be handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 came into force. The regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaired, this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.



Absence following a School Holiday

We regularly experience absences following a school holiday. Although many are valid, unfortunately we are having an increasing number of absences due to holidays, which run into the academic year. **Sadly, we have become aware that some parents are asking their child to lie to school staff regarding the reason for their absence.** This is uncomfortable for the child and promotes being untruthful, which goes against our school values.

For wellbeing reasons, we will carry out home visits for children who are absent following a school holiday.

Attendance


Our attendance target for this academic year is 96%+

Key

Attendance is at or above the school target of 96%

Attendance is between 92 – 96%, below school target and being monitored

Attendance is below 92% and significantly below the school target of 97%. Action to improve attendance needed

Class	Attendance for November	Winning Class
NEST & Nursery – Mrs Orme	91.03 %	WELL DONE  RECEPTION
Reception – Mrs Pickering	94.37 %	
Year 1 Miss Smyth	90.37 %	
Year 2 Mrs Daysh	93.33 %	
Year 3 Mrs Siddall	90.83 %	
Year 4 Mrs Wright / Draper	90.17 %	
Year 5 Miss King / Miss Hill	93.84 %	
Year 6 Mr Beeden / Miss Hill	89.48 %	
Whole School	91.37 %	

Governors of Duckmanton Primary School

Miss S Scarborough	Chair of Governors
Mr C Martin	Co-opted Governor
Mrs E Levers	Headteacher
Mr J Beeden	Staff Governor
Mrs M Lane	Co-opted Governor
Mr D Barlow	Staff Governor
Mr M Copestake	Parent Governor

Contact: Miss S Scarborough

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