

NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2024



Over the summer holiday, we were able to create an additional room within the KS2 building, which we are using as a sensory space for some of our SEND pupils.

Smirthwaites Ltd (a Prism Healthcare company based at Heathfield) specialise in designing and creating paediatric products to support SEND children in school and at home.

Smirthwaites were incredibly generous in fitting out our sensory space (at no cost to the school) with bespoke flooring, wall panels, seats, interactive equipment and projector.

Smirthwaites also gave us a new, top-of-the-range changing bench for use with SEND pupils in our Reception classes.

Thank you Smirthwaites!

This sensory room means a lot to my brother, because it helps him to relax. This room helps him when he feels overwhelmed throughout the school day. The soft walls and floor help my brother to explore and fulfil his sensory needs in a safe space. Thank you for giving my brother all of these things. If he could talk, he would say, "Thank you." (Molly, Y6)



School Uniform

Our school uniform is:

Grey skirt, pinafore or trousers

White shirt, polo shirt or blouse

School sweatshirt or cardigan (or plain school-coloured equivalent)

Sensible black shoes



Our PE kit is:

Black PE shorts, leggings or jogging bottoms

White T-shirt or polo shirt

Plain tracksuit top (optional)

Plimsolls or trainers

Jewellery in school

Children can wear small stud earrings to school, but these need to be removed or covered with tape for PE lessons.

Children can wear digital or analogue watches to school, but **not** smart watches.

No other jewellery should be worn, unless worn for religious observance.

Toys and Fidgets

Children should not bring toys from home into school.

We recognise that some children need transitional items or fidgets to support them in school. These should be agreed with the class teacher and/or SENDCo (Miss Strong) before they are brought in.



Hair that is longer than shoulder length, must be tied back for school. No large headbands, please!

School Calendar

The dates for this academic year are included later in this newsletter. However, school dates are also available on Class Dojo and on the calendar on the school's website [click here](#)



The Importance of Regular School Attendance

This is an important update about school attendance for the 2024/25 academic year.

Decoy Primary School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance.

A big thank you to the majority of parents who make sure their children attend school regularly! Your efforts, working in partnership with the school, will ensure that your child has the best chance to achieve their academic potential. It also enables your child to:

- access the lessons needed to achieve their expected grades
- maintain friendships and develop new ones
- have access to social and sporting events
- develop habits such as good punctuality which are essential to thrive in society

The impact upon children's education through lost learning is huge, so it is vital that we make every school minute count. We urge you to ensure that your child is in school and on time every day to prevent them from falling behind with their learning.

It is considered that attendance of 90% or below is persistent absence, which will trigger further action by school. Failing to improve on this 90% can lead to prosecution, which we want to help families avoid. Good attendance is considered to be at or above 94%.



Holidays During Term Time

Holidays and Other Requests for Absence

Law only allows schools, to authorise non-medical absences if requested in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides. A school can only authorise such a request if they are satisfied that there are "exceptional circumstances". However, even if there are exceptional circumstances, schools can still consider any other relevant factors e.g. previous attendance or the ability of the pupil to catch-up on missed work;

It is recommended that this completed form is sent into the school at least three school weeks before the intended absence.

Attendance in school is measured on a rolling twelve-month basis, not on a single academic year. Periods of unauthorised absence are cumulative over this 12-month period. Ten or more unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 days), could result in a penalty notice being issued by the local authority.

What YOU must do:

- Telephone the school (01626 353282) or email admin@decoyschool.co.uk before 8.30am each day of your child's absence. We ask that you are specific about the reason for the absence e.g. rather than saying that your child is ill, tell us that they have been sick/have a high temperature/have a bad cold etc.
- Tell the school in advance, of any medical appointments and bring in appointment cards/letters if possible.
- If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, send them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival.
- Have a backup plan for if your child misses transport or if you are unwell, call on a family member, neighbour or friend.
- Ensure that your child arrives at school on time. If they arrive after the register has closed (9:00am), your child is marked as absent for the morning session.

What WE will do:

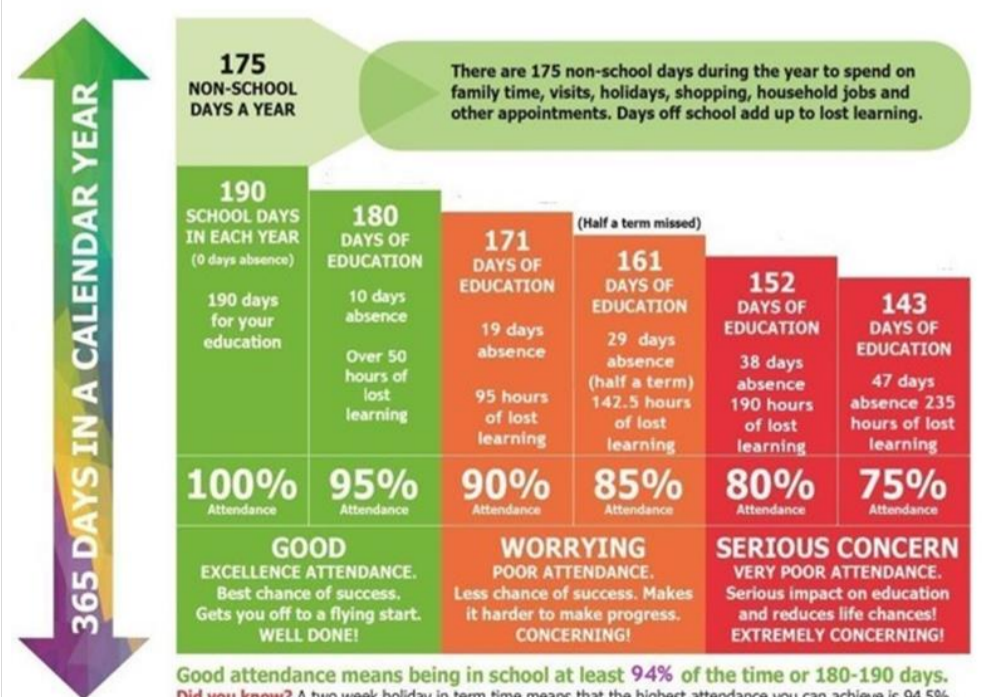
- Check your child's attendance every day.
- Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you.
- Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned.
- If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we may make a welfare home visit.

From August 19th 2024, the Government introduced a new 'National Framework for Penalty Notices'. There are significant changes that parents need to be aware of:

- If your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 school week rolling period, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. These 10 sessions may include any unauthorised absence, including leave in term time and do not have to be consecutive.
- Penalty Notices are increasing to £160 from September 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.
- Any second Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160.
- A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three year rolling period - alternative action or legal measures may be taken
- Penalty notices are issued per parent-per child. So a family of four with two parents and two children would receive a First Penalty notice totalling £640 for the family (reduced to £320 if paid within 21 days)

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Don't miss out on the education you deserve.



Blossoms' Music Room

Thank you to
 Laura and
 Chris from
 Blossoms
 Music School
 for our new
 music hub.



Music is a very important part of school life at Decoy. An additional space for music lessons is a great resource for the school.

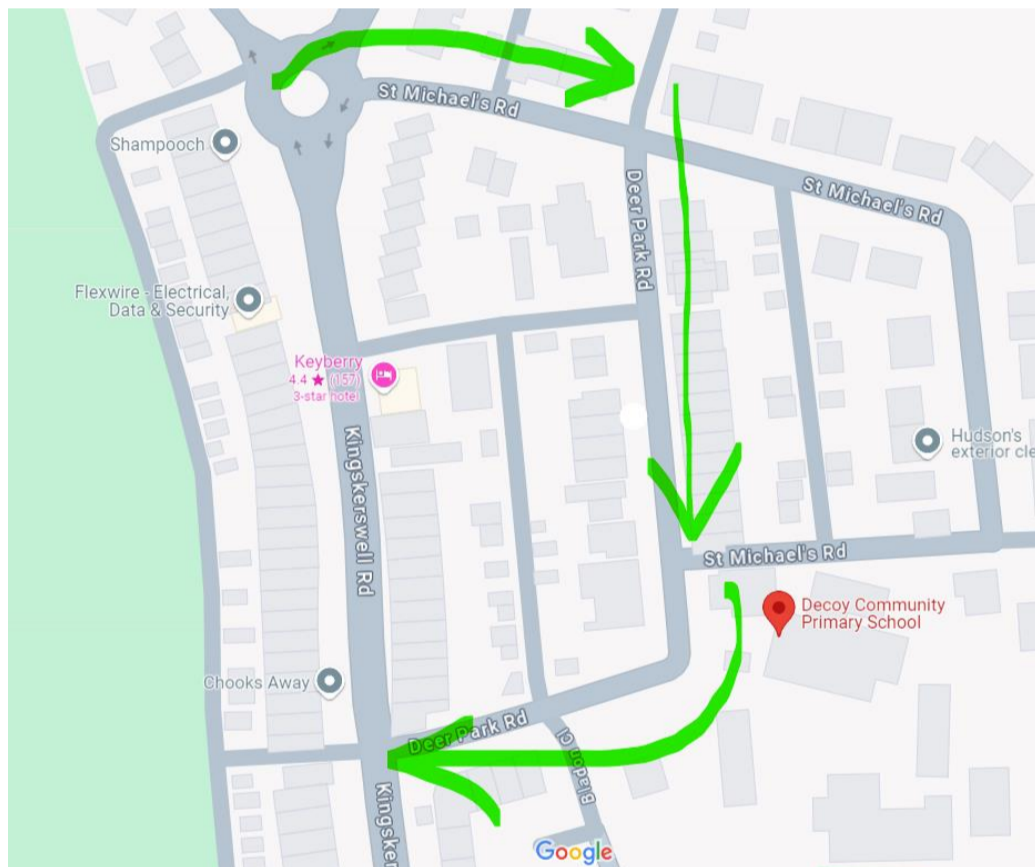
If you are interested in your child learning to play a musical instrument, have a look at Blossom's website:

<https://www.blossomsmusic.co.uk/> or contact Laura on 07515805812 or email her at laura@blossomsmusic.co.uk

We say a special 'thank you' to Decoy dads Joe McGrady and James Pearson who volunteered their time and skills to construct the music room over the summer holiday.



Parking and Driving Around School



Please help us to avoid an accident on the roads around school. At the beginning and end of the school day, we have hundreds of children, parents and carers arriving and leaving via the main gate.

The Parking D outside the main entrance is for Blue Badge holders only. Please respect the barriers that are put out to enable badge holders to park in this area and remember that not all disabilities are visible.

If you are in the Parking D, be aware that small children may not be seen in mirrors. No cars should be reversing out of this area - please wait for the vehicle in front to leave. If you are parked in this area, avoid leaving your car for a long period, as this causes others to become blocked in.

You might not be aware that, at the start and end of the school day, there is an un-official one-way system along Deer Park Road. If vehicles follow the direction indicated by the green arrows on the map, traffic can flow more easily.

Don't forget that we can issue you with a parking permit which enables you to park for free at Decoy park at drop off and pick up times. The safety of Decoy's children is worth the slight inconvenience of a short walk. Please speak to Donna, in the office, to get a permit.

Mid-Morning Snacks

Children can have fruit and/or vegetables for their mid-morning snack.



Acceptable snacks:

- Fruit - fresh or dried (including raisins but not yogurt or chocolate covered ones)
- Vegetables e.g. carrot sticks, cucumber, sugar snap peas

All children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 will continue to receive free fruit and vegetable snacks in school each day.

For children with particular sensory or dietary needs, an alternative snack can be agreed with the class teacher or SENDCo (Miss Strong).

Golden Ticket Lunch Competition

Thursday October 3rd 2024

All children that have a school dinner on 3rd October, will be in with the chance of winning a prize. This is a themed 'Build Your Own Burger' day. One golden ticket will be up for grabs per class; tickets will be hidden at random under the children's dinner plates. Meals can be booked in advance on ParentPay.



BBC Teach 500 Words Writing Competition

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/500-words>

There are 2 categories: 5-7 and 8-11 year-olds. If your child would like to enter, please bring their story to Mrs Green in Kestrels. She will enter the story on their behalf.



The closing date is Friday 8th November 2024 at 9pm.

School Performances and Productions

Nursery	Christmas Nativity	Tuesday 10 th December 2.30pm Thursday 12 th December 2.30pm
Reception	Christmas Celebration - Singing	Tuesday 10 th December 9.15am Wednesday 11 th December 2.30pm
Year 1 and Year 2	Christmas Nativity/Show	Monday 16 th December 2.30pm Tuesday 17 th December 9.15am Tuesday 17 th December 2.30pm
Year 3	Harvest	Tuesday 15 th October 2.30pm Wednesday 16 th October 9.15am
Year 4	Easter	Tuesday 1 st April 5.30pm Wednesday 2 nd April 2.30pm
Year 5	Carol Service	Wk beginning 9 th December? TBC
Year 6	End of Year Show	Tuesday 15 th July 5.30pm Wednesday 15 th July 2.30pm Wednesday 15 th July 5.20pm

School Events

Date	Time	Event
23 rd -27 th September		Heatree Residential (Year 6)
8 th October		Macmillan Coffee Morning
10 th October		World Mental Health Day
24 th October		PTA Discos
30 th November		PTA Christmas Fair (Saturday)
4 th &5 th December		Parents Evening
26 th &27 th March		Parents evenings
12 th May	TBC	Year 6 SATs – GPS
13 th May	TBC	Year 6 SATs – Reading
14 th May	TBC	Year 6 SATs – Maths
15 th May	TBC	Year 6 SATs – Maths
15 th May	2.30pm	Year 6 Hoodie Presentations
2 nd June		Year 4 Multiplication check week
9 th June		Year 1 Phonics Screening Week
2 nd July	KS1 am KS2 pm	Reception, KS1 and KS2 Sports Day
8 th July	KS1 am KS2 pm	Reserve sports day
11 th July		Reports sent out to parents
22 nd July	1pm	Year 6 Graduation followed by family BBQ and games on the field

**Decoy Community Primary School and First Steps Nursery
School terms and Holiday Dates - 2024/2025 Academic Year**

	Sep-2024					Oct-2024					Nov-2024				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tuesday	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thursday	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Friday	6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29
Saturday	7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	
	Dec-2024					Jan-2025					Feb-2025				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24
Tuesday	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Thursday	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Friday	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Saturday	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	1
Sunday	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	2
	Mar-2025					Apr-2025					May-2025				
Monday	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26
Tuesday	4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27
Wednesday	5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28
Thursday	6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29
Friday	7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30
Saturday	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31
Sunday	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25	
	Jun-2025					Jul-2025					Aug-2025				
Monday	2	9	16	23	30		7	14	21	28		4	11	18	25
Tuesday	3	10	17	24		1	8	15	22	29		5	12	19	26
Wednesday	4	11	18	25		2	9	16	23	30		6	13	20	27
Thursday	5	12	19	26		3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28
Friday	6	13	20	27		4	11	18	25		1	8	15	22	29
Saturday	7	14	21	28		5	12	19	26		2	9	16	23	30
Sunday	8	15	22	29		6	13	20	27		3	10	17	24	

	School Holiday
	Non-Pupil Day
	Bank Holiday