



# Newsletter

Positive Ambitious Nurturing

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been wonderful welcoming our children back after a well-deserved half-term break. Everyone has settled back in brilliantly, and it's been lovely catching up with the children and seeing so many smiling faces on the playground and in the classrooms — happy to be learning and playing together once again.

Our Year 6 children have had a fantastic week on their residential trip to Whitemoor Lake. Mrs Hughes, Mrs Farrell and Mrs Brownlow have spoken so highly of the children's behaviour, teamwork and positive attitude throughout the visit. Experiences like these are such an important part of school life — they help children grow their 'character muscles' in ways that go beyond the classroom. It's been wonderful to see their determination, independence, leadership and team spirit shining through.



A big thank you to all the families who supported today's PTFA Halloween Dress-Up fundraiser. The children have absolutely loved coming to school in their costumes, and the effort from everyone has been fantastic. We're very grateful to our PTFA and to all our families for the time, creativity and generosity that go into events like this — they make such a difference for our children.

I've also been pleased to see so many classes working together to earn their treat afternoons over the past few weeks.

These treats are rewarded when the class has worked together to impress their teacher with hard work and excellent behaviour, by reaching an agreed target (for example, some classes fill a jar with pasta, that is earned through showing The Donisthorpe Way as a class).



Have a great weekend and I hope those children who will be out 'Trick or Treating' tonight have fun and keep themselves and others safe. For those children participating in cross country, I will see you tomorrow!



## Year 1 Phonics Workshop

Parents of Year 1 children are warmly invited to a **Phonics Workshop on Monday 25th November at 5.00pm**. The session will provide information about the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, along with practical ideas to help you support your child's phonics learning at home. We hope many of you will be able to join us — it's a great opportunity to learn more about how we teach early reading skills and how you can make phonics fun and effective at home.



## Anti-Bullying Week – week beginning 10<sup>th</sup> November

Anti-Bullying Week is coming up, and we'll be giving it a high profile across the school as we continue our important work in promoting kindness, respect and inclusion.



The week will begin with **Odd Socks Day on Monday 10th November**, when children are invited to come to school wearing odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique. Throughout the week, our assemblies will focus on understanding what bullying is, how we can stand up to it, and how we can all play a part in making sure everyone feels safe and valued.

Our Key Stage 2 children will also be taking part in a BBC Live Lesson, which explores this year's theme of kindness and how small acts can make a big difference.

Each class will also revisit our child-friendly anti-bullying policy and create a Class Anti-Bullying Charter — a shared promise to treat one another with kindness and respect.

Last year, we were incredibly proud to achieve the Beyond Bullying Gold Award in recognition of the fantastic work our whole school community has done to promote anti-bullying values. This week is a wonderful opportunity to build on that success and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring our school is a place where everyone feels happy, supported and included.



## Poppy Appeal 2025



From **Monday 3rd November**, we will be selling poppies and other Royal British Legion items during break times to support this year's Poppy Appeal.

Paper poppies will be available for any donation, while other items such as **slap bands, bracelets and reflectors** will be sold for a **minimum of £1 each**. To ensure as many children as possible have the chance to buy something, purchases will be limited to **one item per child per day** (plus a paper poppy if they wish).

All proceeds will go directly to the Royal British Legion, supporting those who have served and continue to serve our country.

## Attendance/fines

After seeing a lot of discussion around fines on social media recently, I wanted to remind all families that the Department for Education expects schools to **consider issuing a fine** when a child has missed **10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 school days)** within a rolling 10-week period. These fines are issued by the Local Authority, not by the school, and any money from fines does not come to the school.

For this reason, after analysing attendance, I may send a letter to alert you if we have concerns. Please be assured that we do not want to issue fines — our aim is always to work with families to prevent this from becoming necessary. However, in some cases, schools are required to refer persistent unauthorised absence to the Local Authority, who may then issue a fine.

We set a target of **97% attendance** across the year because when children miss school, they can miss important learning, which can lead to gaps in knowledge and confidence.

We understand that sometimes absence is unavoidable. If you do need to request leave during term time, please complete the form on our website and email it to [office@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk) as far in advance as possible.

We are always here to support families if attendance becomes difficult. By working together, we can address any issues early and help children feel happy, confident and settled in school. Please don't hesitate to contact us at [slt@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk](mailto:slt@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk) if you need advice or support.

## Assemblies

In recent assemblies, children have been learning about the word 'consent' and what this means. We discussed how none of our children have the right to touch other children if they do not want to be touched and how if we're asked to stop, then consent is removed. Children also learned about Diwali, including the story of Rama and Sita and ways that many Hindu families celebrate this time of year.



Yesterday, we had a special guest from Ashby Youth for Christ, who spoke to our children about how faith can help us to achieve our goals – both for Christians and non-Christians. Well done to the special helpers from Year 5, who had to pump up an inflatable tree as part of the assembly – children loved it!

## REMINDER: School photos – Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November

On Friday 7th November, JS Photographers will be in school for individual and sibling photographs. If your child has a pre-school sibling you are invited to bring them in for a sibling photograph from 8:15am to 8.40.

## REMINDER: Donisthorpe Book Swap – Friday 28th November

Following the success of our World Book Day Book Swap earlier this year, we are excited to be running another Donisthorpe Book Swap on Friday 28th November. Children are encouraged to bring in any books from home (in good condition) that they no longer want. These will then be swapped at our Book Swap Market in the school hall, giving every child the chance to take home some "new to them" books to enjoy — and giving parents a handy opportunity for a clear out at the same time

## REMINDER: Apply for a School Place – Primary/Secondary

It is fast approaching the time when Year 6 parents need to apply for their secondary school places. To assist you in this, the feeder secondary schools will have open evenings over the coming weeks – see their websites/social media pages or contact schools for details. The deadline for applying for a Secondary School place is **31st October 2025**.

The deadline for applying for a Primary School place is **15th January 2026**. For both applications, visit: <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions>

If you need any further information, please contact the Admissions team on [admissions@leics.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@leics.gov.uk) or 0116 305 6684.

## Are you entitled to Free School Meals/Pupil Premium Grant?

Some families may be eligible for Pupil Premium Grant (PPG). This funding may allow us to provide free school meals and milk for your child, and could also help with the cost of school trips and other educational activities.

You may qualify if you receive certain benefits—for example Universal Credit, Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance or Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit).

Even if you don't wish to take up these benefits directly, applying is still really valuable. School receives important extra funding for every eligible child, and once awarded it lasts for six years, even if your circumstances change.

If you think you may be eligible, or if your circumstances have recently changed, we encourage you to apply online. For help or more information, please contact the school office.

If you have any questions about this or anything else, please telephone school or email [office@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office@donisthorpe.leics.sch.uk)

Regards,



Jamie Williamson  
Headteacher



From 1 September you can apply for your child's school place for the 2026/27 academic year

Secondary school application closing date  
**Friday 31 October 2025**

Primary and Infant to Junior school application closing date  
**Thursday 15 January 2026**

For hints and tips about the process, information on Leicestershire schools and to apply, visit  
[leicestershire.gov.uk/admissions](https://leicestershire.gov.uk/admissions)

The graphic features a green background with a white speech bubble containing the main message. It includes icons for a pencil, a lightbulb, a school building, and a magnifying glass. A pink school bag is visible at the bottom left.