



The Federation of The Downs & Northbourne Church of England Primary Schools



Chair of Governors: Dr A Eyden
Vice Chair of Governors: Rev D Ridley

"if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible."
(Matthew: 17 v20)

The Downs CEP School
Owen Square, Walmer
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Website: www.downs.kent.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Miss T Leighton
Deputy Head: Ms N Luxford
SENCO: Mrs N Barnes
Safeguarding Lead: Mr M Turner

Northbourne CEP School
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Kent CT14 0LP
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Website: www.northbourne-cep.kent.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Mr M Reynolds
SENCO: Mrs K Morrison
Safeguarding Lead: Mr M Turner

1st February 2021

Critical worker school places

As we approach the end of term three and begin the process of planning for term four, not knowing how long the current restrictions on school will last, this is a good opportunity to share with you our current operational status.

During this most recent lockdown we have seen a significantly greater demand for places in school compared with the first lockdown in March. At the same time, the expectations for what learning looks like for those that remain at home has also significantly changed. This demand means that we are operating year group bubbles on site and using teaching staff on a rota to provide on-site and off-site remote learning. However, should onsite numbers continue to increase it will be harder to juggle the commitment to providing face to face care as well as attending to the needs of those pupils working from home as almost all our staff will be required on site.

Therefore, to ensure we avoid reaching our limit on any given day, we will continue to prioritise those children whose parents are critical to the coronavirus response. With this in mind, I would like to remind parents and carers to ensure that they use our onsite provision as it is intended – a final resort. We must all remember that the best place for children right now is at home and if there is any possibility they can be home they should be. We recognise and sympathise with the difficulties this presents, especially when supporting a number of siblings across varying age group, whilst perhaps parents are also working from home. Yet, the overarching message from the government has been that "those that can stay at home, should stay at home".

To keep our numbers to a COVID safe number in school, and to allow staff the ability to provide for both onsite and offsite learners, priority will be given as follows:

- Both parents are critical workers (and both are out at work during the day)
- Single parent as a critical worker
- One parent is a critical worker (other parent is not at home during the day)
- Child has a Social Worker or Early Help worker
- Child has an EHCP (*places will not always be offered to siblings – factors such as being a critical worker will apply*)

Parents who believe they are eligible under this criteria, will need to **complete the following survey**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tEv95ELZVUWRDRte6tq9Z4gLFCq74w9BoZhnsY9LR6BUMjgyVIJSTU0xREJTVZITkM4WINPMkIBTI4u> **by 3pm Thursday 4th February**

Letters will be sent out week beginning 8th February inviting eligible families, who have completed the survey, to book places for term four. Numbers will be capped for each year group (*priority will be given to frontline services*); this may be reviewed once the Prime Minister has outlined his plans for schools next term.

We are here to work with you, to support you but most of all to protect the health of our extended community. I know that so many of you are already doing this and appreciate your support in this matter – we know it is not easy but hopefully it won't be for much longer.

Yours sincerely
Miss T Leighton
Headteacher

