



THE DOWNS CEP SCHOOL

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

Newsletter – April 2021

What amazing children we have here at The Downs - 97% of our pupils were back in school on Monday 8th, and attendance has remained high since then. An amazing statement of intent from all of our community. The pupils have shown enthusiasm, positivity and resilience since their return. I have observed a real buzz around the school as classes have got back into the swing of school life. I am very proud to be part of such a supportive and nurturing school family.

The road map out of lockdown continues and as of the 29th March the stay at home message is relaxed to allow two households, or up to 6 people, to meet outside. However, as we go in to the Easter break the government's message is still one of caution to avoid a rise in COVID cases. Please do follow the guidance on social distancing, hygiene and not mixing households indoors – this includes not holding birthday parties and sleepovers. We all would like to start term 5 in the best of health (and with a decent haircut)!

Although we are expecting new announcements during the Easter break as the roadmap out of lockdown continues, we are not expecting any great changes to the guidance for schools. As such, we will continue with the current drop off, pick up arrangements, cleaning regimes, adult face coverings, visitors by appointment and year group bubble operations. This means that face to face meetings are still not possible, so our parent consultation will take place via a phone conversation when we return in term 5. Appointments were offered via our website but if you missed the deadline, please contact the school office to see what the remaining availability is.

Have a lovely Easter break and we will see you all again on Monday 19th April in summer uniform – see below.

Red Nose Day Superheroes!

A huge well done to everybody for the wonderful efforts made today for Red Nose Day. We have had some inspired superheroes in school.

Hopefully, you have all remembered to make a donation on the comic relief website. There is still time to donate to this worthwhile cause:

<https://donation.comicrelief.com/cart/1YsYOwm2pHZgBUhWr8ZL13>

Summer Uniform – 19th April 2021

- Plain white polo tee-shirts
- Black/grey shorts/skirts
- Blue check summer dresses
- Sun hat/baseball cap (optional)
- Black school shoes or substantial sandals

What to do if your child has a positive coronavirus test result and is attending school

Inform the school straightaway – you may get test results out of school hours, if this is the case please phone **07756807060**. Please note this number is only for reporting a positive test result out of school hours (weekends & holidays 10am-4pm; evenings 6pm-8pm). At all other times continue to phone the school office.

Response to parent survey

Our "reflection on lockdown" survey had a good return with 40% of the school population represented, with an even distribution across all year groups.

Parental comments were on the whole positive, with the majority of parents commenting on the effectiveness of the phone calls, speedy feedback from teachers via learning platforms, positivity about the weekly timetable, appreciation of the links/clear learning objectives and the flexibility to complete tasks. Most parents felt that the workload was manageable for their child and that the tasks were child friendly.

Developmental comments about the number of platforms we were using, and the delay in introducing Microsoft TEAMS, is an area that we will continue to develop and staff are keen to utilise this more for links with home and school.

The 'Thank You's' for all the hard work that staff put your children's remote learning was very much appreciated and passed on to staff.

Thank you for your feedback



"Why is the Easter egg a symbol for the Easter story?"

*Discuss, with your family, what this means to you.....
Share your best examples with your class teacher*

Parking considerations



There are zig zag lines outside all the school entrances reminding drivers to keep clear. There should be no stopping on these lines during the times indicated on the signs.

When parking alongside the path, please try not to block the safe passageway of pupils and pushchairs. Please keep your own and other families' children safe by parking considerately.

Conduct of pupils to and from school

We encourage children who travel to and from school independently to observe road safety (especially when bikes and scooters are being used), act courteously towards other pedestrians, and to act responsibly at all times.

In doing this they represent their families and the school community in a positive light. We appreciate parents supporting us with this message.

FSM Vouchers – Easter break

The local authority will be accessing their Winter Fund to provide school meal vouchers during the Easter break for children in receipt of free school meals.

If your child is eligible, you will receive an email from school vouchers with details of how to access your voucher. This will come through to the email account school use to communicate with you.

New dictionaries for Year 5

Our Year 5 pupils have been using brand new dictionaries this week donated to them by the Rotary Club of Deal.

This is something that the Rotary Club have been doing for a number of years for the pupils in all Deal primary schools. We are very grateful for their generosity and we know that our Year 5 pupils will make good use of these new dictionaries in their classroom.

Governors

As all of you know, The Downs has worked alongside Northbourne CEP for many years now, in a successful Federation. The two schools have continued to work closely following our move to Academy status in 2019 and the formation of DEALT. Last week marked the final Governing body meeting of the Federation. From next term, both schools will have their own Governing bodies and will cease to run under the Federation banner. Other than an update to our letterhead, you will not notice any changes. We will continue to work closely with Northbourne, as well as all of our other partner schools within DEALT. We look forward to continuing our great working relationship with Northbourne, and DEALT, as we move ahead with our own Governing body.

We will need to recruit a number of governors and are particularly keen to hear from any parent who wishes to be considered, especially if they have personnel, finance or marketing skills.

If you have any questions about the role or would like to be considered for a role on The Downs governing body, please send a message in to the school office with any relevant background information.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme – Open to children eligible for free school meals

We previously shared information with you about an exciting opportunity that your child/children aged between 5 – 16 years may be able to access during the Easter school holidays. The Department for Education is funding local authorities to commission provision during the school holidays, which includes free high quality activities and access to nutritious food for 4 hours per day over 4 days at Easter. Due to the current national restrictions, there will be a smaller number of available providers over Easter. A list of providers will be sent out to you this week. For more information about the HAF Programme please follow this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/holiday-activities-and-food-programme-2021>

Milk – Children can have milk at morning break:

- Free milk for children under the age of five
- Free milk for children who are currently a free school meal child
- £1.10 a week for children aged five or older and not a free school meal child.
- If your child is a pupil premium child contact school if you would like milk for your child at no cost to you

For more information, contact the school office or register at www.coolmilk.com

Dates for diary on the next page

DATES FOR DIARY

Term One 1st September 2020 – 23rd October 2020

Half term break 24th October – 1st November 2020

Term Two 2nd November – 18th December 2020

Christmas break 19th December – 3rd January 2021

Term Three 4^h January – 12th February 2021

Half term break 13th February – 21st February 2021

Term Four 22nd February – 1st April 2021

Easter break 2nd April – 18th April 2021

Term Five 19th April – 28th May 2021

Half term break 29th May – 6th June 2021

Term Six 7th June – 21st July 2021

Staff Development Days when school is closed to children

Tuesday 1st September 2020

Monday 2nd November 2020

Monday 22nd February 2021

Friday 25th June 2021

Monday 28th June 2021

Academic Year 2020-2021

Term Four – subject to change as we await information about the lifting of lockdown

Thursday 1st April

Last day of term four - children to be collected as follows:

1.15 Reception

1.20 Years 5 and 6

1.30 Years 3 and 4

1.40 Years 1 and 2

Term Five

Monday 19th April

Children start

Monday 26th April

Year 3 Forest School starts TBC

All of May

Year 2 statutory assessment month - cancelled

Monday 3rd May

Bank Holiday

Monday 10th May

Year 6 SATS all week - cancelled

Friday 28th May

Last day of term five – normal finish

Term Six

Monday 7th June

Children start

Monday 7th June

Year 6 Forest School TBC

Monday 7th June

Year 4 Statutory Multiplication Tests all week - cancelled

Monday 7th June

Year 1 Statutory Phonic assessments all week - cancelled