THE DOWNS CEP SCHOOL

This term we will be focusing on the value: Faith

"Jesus walks on water" Matthew 14:22-33

September 2026

Term 1 – Newsletter 1

Nothing is impossible

Jesus said: "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see."
Matthew's Gospel 5: 14 – 16

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school. I hope that you had an enjoyable summer break and that everyone is looking forward to this new academic year.

Over the next week we will welcome our new children into year R and I know that everyone across our school will help them settle into our community in no time at all.

Over the Summer the building works have completed within our new specialist resource provision. The Lighthouse, formally The Blossom children's centre, is now a part of our school and will soon be welcoming children with ECHPs as part of a bespoke direction from the local authority. Mrs Wiseman is the lead teacher for The Lighthouse and will also join our senior leadership team. The Lighthouse is a very exciting development not just for our school but for children across the local area. We will be able to offer an inclusive approach to education for children with specific needs that cannot always be met within a full-time mainstream placement.

From time to time, you may need to contact the school for a variety of reasons. Below is a guide to help you identify the person best suited to assist you:

Absence from school due to sickness: Mrs DeCicco or Mrs Osborn in the school office

Pastoral matters: Mrs Tysoe

Attendance: Ms Luxford (Headteacher)

Matters linked to the classroom: Children's teachers are contactable via the school office or are available for a brief conversation at the school door at home time

Other matters linked to teaching and learning: Mrs Underdown (Senior leader)

Matters relating to additional educational needs: Mrs Barnes (SENCO)

Safeguarding concerns: Ms Luxford (Head teacher) and Mrs Ewins (Deputy Head teacher)

As always, the senior leadership team will be on the gate every day and we look forward to catching up with you all again.

Ms Luxford

Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Term dates 2026-2027

Term 1: Wednesday 2nd September – Friday 23rd October

Break: Monday 26th October –Friday 30th October

Term 2: Monday 2nd November – Friday 18th December

Break – Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January

Term 3: Monday 4th January – Friday 12th February

Break – Monday 15th February – Friday 19th February

Term 4: Monday 22nd February – Thursday 25th March

Break – Friday 26th March – Friday 9th April

Term 5: Monday 12th April – Friday 28th May

Break – Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June

Term 6: Monday 7th June – Wednesday 21st July

INSET DAYS

Wednesday 21st October 2026
Thursday 22nd October 2026
Friday 23rd October 2026
Friday 25th June 2027

Term 1 PE Days

Year R – Friday

Year 1 – Wednesday

Year 2 – Monday

Year 3 – Monday

Year 4 – Tuesday

Year 5 – Friday

Year 6 – Thursday

Important Dates for Term 1

Monday 7th September – Year R - Stay and Play sessions

Tuesday 8th September – Year R in 9am – 11.30am

Wednesday 9th September – Year R in 9am – 11.30am

Thursday 10th September – Year R in 8.35am – 1pm

Thursday 10th September – Kent Test

Friday 11th September – Yr R in all day

Tuesday 15th September – Year 3 Trip to Kingsdown Beach

Monday 21st September – Year R Police Car Visit

Tuesday 22nd September – Flu Vaccinations

Thursday 24th September – Year 2 Trip to Tyland Barn

Friday 25th September – Ootiboo Money Matters Workshop for Year 4 & Year 6

Monday 28th September – Year 4 Trip to Kearsney Abbey – TBC

Thursday 8th October – Fire Brigade Visit – Whole School

Monday 12th October – Harvest

Tuesday 13th October – Parents Evening

Wednesday 14th October – Parents Evening

Tuesday 20th October – Last day of term – *normal finish time*

Attendance in our school will now be monitored and supported by Ms Luxford. Working with the local authority, we will liaise with parents to support all children coming to school every day.

School day:

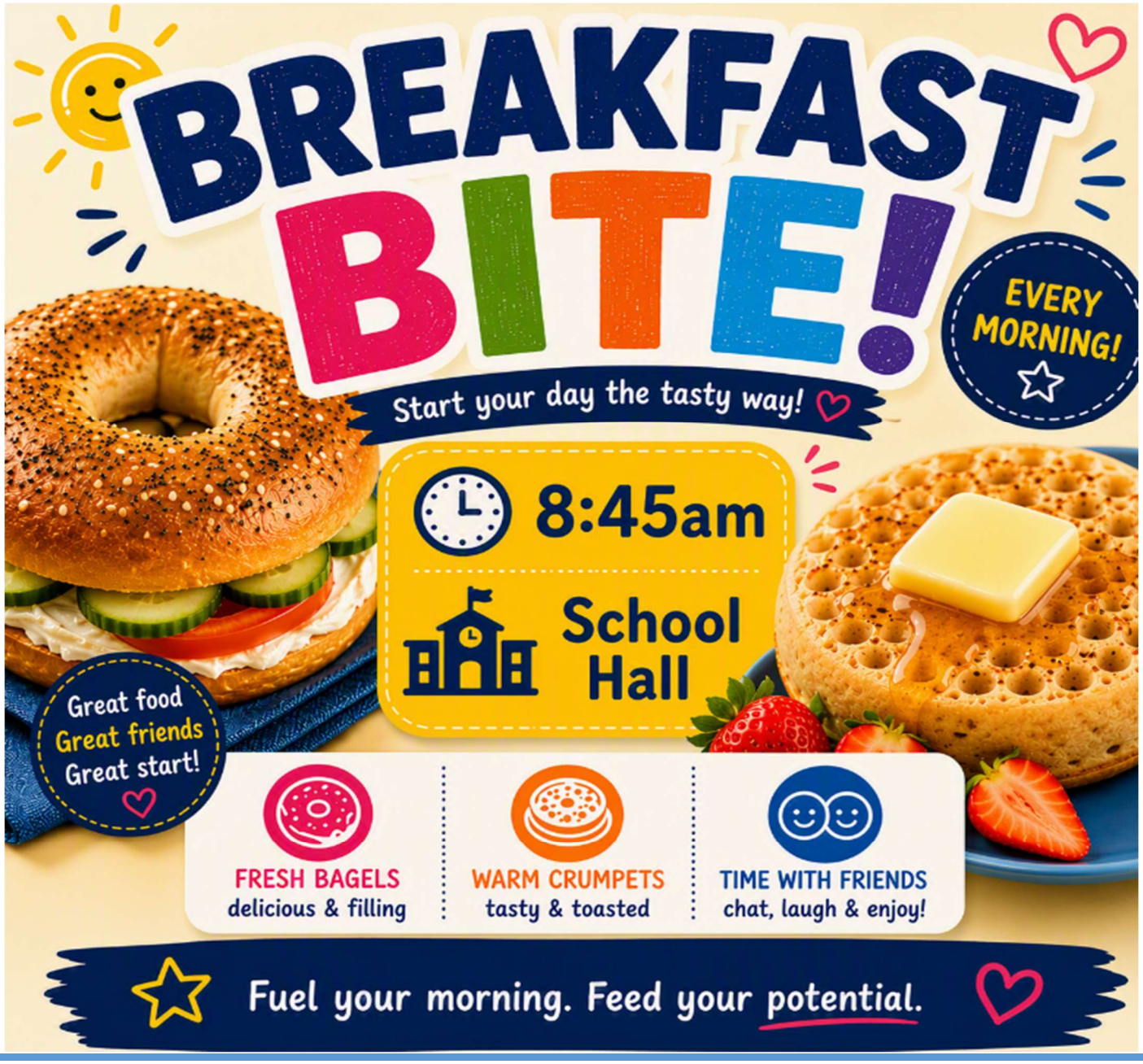
To support our children in getting to school on time and having a joyful start to their day we will be offering a breakfast bite and wake up activities.

From 8.35am all children will be able to enjoy a bagel or crumpet with marmite or cream cheese. Dietary requirements will be catered to.

Children will be supported by adults to independently organise their breakfast bite.

We will then break into a variety of activities for a wake-up session.

Collective worship will move to 2.50pm where we will gather to celebrate the success of each day.



Breakfast Club

In response to feedback from our families, from September 2025 we are offering two bookable sessions for our Breakfast Club provision.

Session 1: 7:45 - 8:35am
£4.50 per child
(breakfast provided)
Session 2 - 8:15 - 8:35
£3 per child
(no breakfast provided)

Sessions must be booked via the Gateway App by midday the day before booking date. Please contact the school office to discuss access to Tax Free Childcare (Government scheme)

After School Clubs

provided by Team Theme

STAY 'n' PLAY
The Downs Primary

TEAMTHEME KENT

Please note that, where as the timing structure will remain the same, sometimes there may be occasional need for some individual activities to differ from those that are shown here

START	HALF TIME	FULL TIME
3.15pm	4.30pm	6.00pm

WELCOME · OUTDOOR OR CREATIVE PLAY* · BRAIN BREAK · OUTDOOR ACTIVITY OR CREATIVE PLAY* · WIND DOWN

3:15 · 3:30 · 4:30 · 5:00 · 5:45

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Sign In	Sign In	Sign In	Sign In	Sign In
Fruit snack / Activators	Fruit snack / Activators	Fruit snack / Activators	Fruit snack / Activators	Fruit snack / Activators
Outdoor play OR Creative play	Outdoor play OR Creative play	Outdoor play OR Creative play	Outdoor play OR Creative play	Outdoor play OR Creative play
Sign Out & Collection A	Sign Out & Collection A	Sign Out & Collection A	Sign Out & Collection A	Sign Out & Collection A
Meal time / Quiet play	Meal time / Quiet play	Meal time / Quiet play	Meal time / Quiet play	Meal time / Quiet play
Outdoor activity OR Creative play	Outdoor activity OR Creative play	Outdoor activity OR Creative play	Outdoor activity OR Creative play	Outdoor activity OR Creative play
Wellbeing time/Quiet play	Wellbeing time/Quiet play	Wellbeing time/Quiet play	Wellbeing time/Quiet play	Wellbeing time/Quiet play
Sign Out & Collection B	Sign Out & Collection B	Sign Out & Collection B	Sign Out & Collection B	Sign Out & Collection B

*Outdoor activities include: Forest School, Football, Monkeyball, Nerf, Adventure Playground, Goalball, Tennis, Archery, Basketball, 4Square etc.
*Creative/quiet play options include: Lego, Arts & Crafts, Makery Make, Puzzles, Board Games, Card Games, Chrome Books, Reading etc.

Please use the QR code to book

THE DOWNS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Enhanced curriculum

Self sustaining Environmentally sound

Personal development

Enhanced Curriculum Curators

This team, made up of children from across the school, will meet Mr Thrower weekly and will lead on projects within their allocated year groups.

This is an exciting leadership opportunity for our children.

As our children can access the enhanced curriculum every day it is helpful if they have suitable welly boots to change into. These should come into school with names inside them please.

September 2026 class teams:

	Teachers	Class TA / SENSA
R	Mrs Brown Miss Graham	Mrs Tomlin / Mrs Hodgson Curd
1	Miss Davis Mrs Heatlie / Miss Kingston	Miss Park / Miss Lawson
2	Miss Hollis Mrs Soules	TBC / Miss Thomas
3	Miss Ridall Miss Chantler/Mrs Tysoe	Miss Borg / Miss Marshall
4	Mrs Blackwell Mr Thrower/Mrs Glanville	Mrs Jones/ Miss Marshall
5	Miss Balch Mrs Underdown	Mrs Wells/ Miss Hall
6	Mrs Oram Miss Mckenna	Mrs Neary/ Miss Hardwick/ Miss Hall
SRP - Lighthouse	Mrs Wiseman	Mrs Curry

Online safety tips for parents and carers are now available on the school's website:

The Downs Church of England Primary School - Online safety

Church and school community leader.

Mrs Newport will continue her wonderful work within our school and across the local community.

Our team of community advocates will be announced soon!

School Uniform – ready to learn and play:

Following our consultation we have made the decision to extend our school uniform options.

Winter uniform	**Summer uniform**
Blue or black unbranded joggers Traditional grey school trousers/skirt/pinafore White polo t shirt (school ones are available) Royal blue school jumper or cardigan Royal blue zip hoodie (school ones will be available) **Black** school shoes or trainers (unbranded)	Blue or black unbranded shorts (jersey material only) Traditional grey school shorts Blue gingham dress/skort/jumpsuit White polo t shirt (school ones are available) Royal blue school jumper or cardigan Royal blue zip hoodie (school ones will be available) **Black** school shoes or trainers (unbranded)
PE kit School house t shirt Blue or black shorts Black trainers	

https://www.mapac.com/education/parents/pages/find-my-school

- unbranded means no logos such as Nike/Adidas etc. This will be monitored daily.
- sandals and boots are not permitted

Log on today!

All passwords are in reading records.

In the same way that we send reading books home we are going to start sending maths games home too!
Children across the school will have the opportunity to select different games from their classroom and bring them home to enjoy with you.

Spelling Shed

Spelling Shed's online games for Years 1 to 6, can be played at home!
Please see the link below for the website.

https://www.spellingshed.com/en-gb/

There is now a new feature on this website…Grammar Arcade!
Please do have a go at home.

https://www.spellingshed.com/en-gb/grammar-arcade