

The Downs Primary School and Nursery

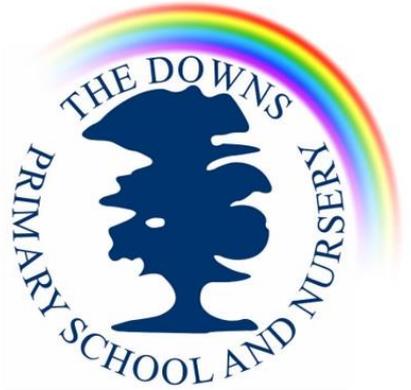
The Hides, Harlow, Essex, CM20 3RB.

Headteacher: Ms Jeanette Allen

Telephone: 01279 445538 Fax: 01279 438482

E-mail: admin@downs.essex.sch.uk

Website: www.downsschool.com



Friday 28th August

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you have had a good summer and are starting to feel reassured by all the recent guidance and news updates on children returning to school. **Our children return to school on Thursday 3rd September.** We are very much looking forward to seeing everyone again and have been busy preparing for this return.

I couldn't possibly answer all of your questions, but this letter is an attempt at clarifying and providing more information so that you feel as confident as possible about your child's return.

In the last newsletter, in July, I provided information about some important changes to what a return to school would look like and I am adding it again with some additional information.

We have continued with additional measures to ensure we comply with all the guidance for keeping children and staff safe. We have thought very carefully about planning lessons for children returning and we will be following a recovery curriculum for the first few weeks to allow children an opportunity to readjust to school, new routines, and each other.

Children will remain in their year group bubble. Their break and lunchtimes will be in these year group bubbles. Children will eat together, regardless of whether they are having a school dinner or packed lunch and a member of staff will stay with them throughout.

Children will have PE and some lessons outside (weather and space permitting). Additional cleaning and hygiene measures are in place if children do use the hall. In class, children will be sitting in rows, facing forward and they will have their own labelled equipment to use in school.

We will be having a staggered and soft start and end to the day. We urge you to leave quickly to allow room for others to get through the gates and only one parent needs to drop off and pick up. All children under 8 need to hold a parent's hand unless in a buggy. No children are allowed to use the play equipment before or after school as this is assigned to year group bubbles each week.

Only one person at a time will be allowed in the school office. If you do need to come into the school building, we will ask you to wear a face covering.

All teachers will be in their classroom from 8.40am. The timings set out below will allow for less congestion around the school site.

For Years 1, 3 and 5 Children should arrive between 8.40am -8.45am
They will end the day between 3.05pm -3.10pm

For Years 2, 4 and 6 Children should arrive between 8.50am - 8.55am
They will end the day between 3.15pm -3.20pm

Reception – Once the children are attending a full day (as from Monday 14th September) children should arrive at 8.50am and will finish at 3.15pm.

Nursery – Once the children start they will continue with their current start and end times

AM children - 8.30am until 11.30am

PM children - 12.30pm until 3.30pm

Full-time children - 8.30am until 3.30pm

If your Nursery child has a sibling, please drop off in one visit from 8.40am.

Both **pedestrian** gates will be open as normal to ease congestion. The **car park will remain closed to all vehicles** during drop off and collection times to allow for more space and safety.

We will be open for breakfast club as normal from 7.45am. Children attending will not be in a year group bubble during breakfast club. We will of course group them where possible and follow additional hygiene measures. **Children attending breakfast club will need to go in through the newly assigned breakfast club door which will be signposted, this is near the library and not through the main office.**

We will continue to provide children in class with a FREE breakfast, of cereal, if they want it. If you do not want your child to be offered cereal please **inform us in writing**, so that we know.

Children will be wearing school uniform, will need their PE kit in school as normal and a jacket in case it rains. Children are only allowed to bring in a **pack of tissues, water bottle, snack and their school reading book** to reduce the number of additional resources going between school and home.

Children will be sent home with a Home School Agreement. This covers changes in relation to COVID and needs to be signed and returned to the class teacher as soon as possible.

We will update you further with additional information on what the school procedure is for a suspected and a confirmed case of COVID in school.

We hope this early letter reassures you that we are very much looking forward to seeing children in school on Thursday, but equally that we are taking precautionary measures. Please don't worry about not knowing where to go, staff will be on hand to assist and direct you and your child.

Children in Years 5 and 6 will be using the fire exit doors by the office and not the playground.

Parents are encouraged to visit [gov.uk/backtoschool](https://www.gov.uk/backtoschool) for information and practical guidance to help them plan for their children's return to school. This includes the latest update to the guidance for parents and carers on what they need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges in the autumn term.

'Back to School With Confidence' resources are also being launched as part of the council's Every Family Matters campaign. The aim is to support parents, carers, children and young people to be confident returning to school. <https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/back-to-school-support-for-essex-families>

We look forward to seeing you all again next week.

Kind regards



Ms Jeanette Allen
Headteacher