12th December 2025 Newsletter

Please find us on instagram and facebook:

@downsviewinfantschool and https://www.facebook.com/DownsViewInfantSchool/

Current Year 2 parents/Prospective parents – KCC online applications for children starting school in September 2026 for both Reception year and year 3 (junior school) is currently open and will close on Thursday 15 January 2026. The web address is: https://kent.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/Synergy/Admissions.aspx	
December	
Tuesday 16th	• **Special Visitor -** A special visitor may pop by each classroom with a gift for all good children! The money raised by The Friends of Downs View and your donations has helped to fund this treat for the children. • **3.10-4.10pm Christmas Movie 'Alien Christmas' -** The children can wear PJ's at this event , please bring these into school to change into at the end of the day, information regarding booking a space on this event is available at https://www.friendsofdownsview.co.uk/events
Wednesday 17th	**Christmas Lunch –** please see menu below - Please email the school office if your child would like the vegetarian option or is bringing their own packed lunch
Thursday 18th	• **Christmas Dress Up Day –** Children are invited to take part in a festive dress up day – this could be a jumper or festive accessory or own clothes. • **Menu Change** – Fish Fingers with Chips Quorn Dippers with Chips Jacket Potato • **Christmas parties in classrooms – Children do not need to bring anything in.** • **Last day of term**
Friday 19th	**Training Day – School closed to children**
January	
Monday 5th	**Children return to school**

Your views, compliments or suggestions…….

We welcome any feedback from you which can be completed formally via parent view (www.parenview.ofsted.gov.uk) or via email (office@downs-view.kent.sch) or via the box in the front Reception area.

Well so many proud moments to share this week! The children were all amazing in their Christmas performances which were all unique and allowed the children's strengths to shine through. We hope you enjoyed them! The Year 2 children had a fantastic time visiting Kennington CE Academy's Winter Experience in their Forest School and the Year R team were very proud of all the reception children who attended their first school trip to the Gulbenkian theatre yesterday, they followed all the school values; what a credit to the school.

This is the last newsletter of the year, so may we take this opportunity to wish you and your family a Happy Christmas and Happy new year and thank you for your ongoing support.
Mrs Collins

Class Recognition

We are pleased to celebrate with you special achievements made by each class this week. All the children have been recognised for doing something that has demonstrated one or more than one of our school values. The table below informs you of each class's special achievement.

Class	Recognition
Bee	Bee Class have been working hard on the school value of being 'safe' by listening carefully to the grown-ups on our school trip.
Ladybird	Ladybird class have been working hard on the school value of being 'safe' by listening to and following the rules whilst on their school trip to the theatre.
Turtle	Turtle class have shown great 'respect' whilst performing their Christmas nativity this week.They have listened respectfully when their friends were performing, joined in the songs and valued everyone's part in the performance.
Dolphin	This week Dolphin Class have been working on the school value of being 'safe' but making sure their welly boots and stored nicely under their pegs.
Starfish	Starfish class have been working hard on the school value of being 'respectful' by waiting our turn when wishing to play with something that our friend is playing with.
Snow Leopard	Snow Leopard class have shown great 'respect' whilst performing their Christmas nativity this week; listening respectfully when their friends were performing and valuing everyone's part in the performance.
Penguin	Penguins class have been working hard on the school value of being 'respectful' whilst performing their Christmas nativity; listening respectfully while their friends were performing and valuing everyone's part in the performance.

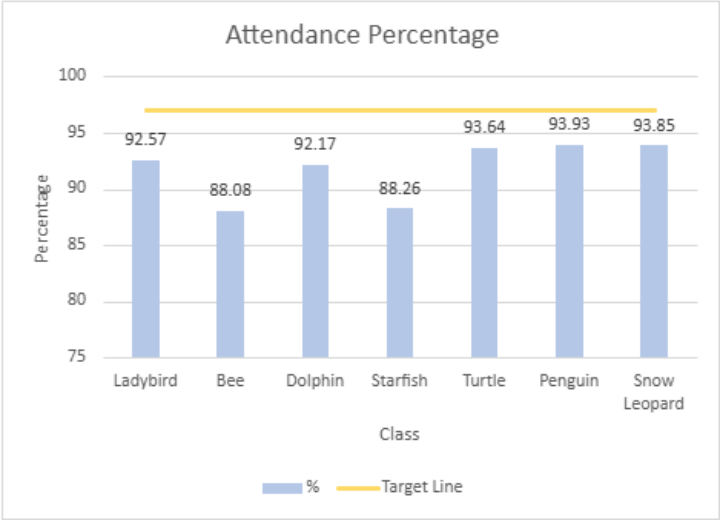
Weekly Class Achievements and updates

EYFS
This week EYFS have been really busy getting even more Christmassy! We hope we have helped you get into the Christmas spirit too following on from our wonderful Christmas shows. We have also been busy using our knowledge of sounds to independently write inside cards. You can encourage your child / children at home to independently write Christmas / Birthday cards that they want to send to others. It doesn't matter if each word is not spelt correctly as using their sounds to write is an important developmental stage.

Year 1
This week in Year 1 we have learnt about the artist Van Gogh. We have discussed his techniques and some of his famous pieces of art. We particularly looked at 'Starry Night' and created our own version in his style. We discussed that Van Gogh uses lot of little brush strokes to layer his paint. Can your child use Van Gogh's style to create their own piece?

Year 2
As the culmination of this term's English work on 'The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark', the Year 2 children wrote their own nonchronological reports about owls. They were also busy rehearsing for their nativity this week. Thank you so much to all the parents for your support with learning lines, preparing costumes and coming along to be their audience. The children really loved performing to you all!

Attendance



Our school attendance for this week is **91.78%**, which is **3%** lower than last week.
This week's attendance has been significantly affected by illness and lateness after registration closes. Every day really does make a difference. When children miss school, they miss important learning, fun activities, and valuable time with their friends. This week was full of exciting opportunities to enjoy and learn from, and we don't want anyone to miss out.

This also includes arriving on time each morning, as it helps children start the day calmly, join in with their friends, and be ready for learning right from the first lesson, lateness this week has meant that **329** minutes of learning has been lost.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us improve attendance. If you would like any help or have any questions, please feel free to reach out, we are here to support you.

Current Vacancies
Downs View Infant School is looking to recruit a **caretaker**. This position is for 3 hrs per day (7-10am) throughout the year (this can be flexible but must include time for opening up the school). There is also potential for additional hours, which can be discussed at interview, and may include work across Kennington CE Academy and Downs View Infant School. If you would like further information please look at the job advert on Kent Teach or contact the school office.

We are also looking to recruit a **temporary cleaner** to cover staff absence on a Wednesday. This position will be fixed term from 5th January 2026 until 13th February 2026 however this will be reviewed and the contract may be extended.

The hours of work are 3.30-6pm Wednesday, term time only.
This is an opportunity to be part of a small, friendly cleaning team who play a key role within the school. The aim of the role is to provide a good cleaning service that is responsive to the needs of the school, resulting in a clean and healthy environment for pupils and staff.

Duties include all aspects of cleaning within a school including the daily cleaning of classrooms, office, corridors and washroom areas.

We are looking for someone who is:
Reliable
Responsible
A good time-keeper
Have some previous experience of cleaning preferably in a school (training will be provided)

If you would like to apply for this role please either phone the school office on 01233 632339 or email office@downs-view.kent.sch.uk by Friday 5th December.

Prospective EYFS Parent/children Tours
Our final tour for prospective parents/carers is at the beginning of January, the date is listed below. If you would like to book on the tour please contact the school office via email: office@downs-view.kent.sch.uk or telephone 01233 632339.

KCC on line applications for children starting school in September 2026 for both reception year and year 3 (junior school) will open on 7 November 2025, and will close 15 January 2026. Please see information below on how to apply
We are hosting open sessions at Downs View Infant School on:

Date	Times
Thursday 8th January 26	9:15am

Term 2 – Monday 27th October – Thursday 18th December 2025
(Friday 19th December – Training day – school closed to children)
Term 3 – Monday 5th January – Friday 13th February 2026
Term 4 – Monday 23rd February – Thursday 2nd April 2026
(Friday 3rd April – Bank Holiday – school closed)
Term 5 – Monday 20th April – Friday 22nd May 2026
(Monday 4th May 2026 – Bank Holiday – school closed)
Term 6 – Monday 1st June – Friday 17th July 2026(Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st July 2026 – Training Days – school closed to children)

May we take this opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoy special family time together and look forward to seeing you on Monday 5th January 2026.

Admission to

Junior school in Kent 2026

Apply online at *kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions*

Opens Friday 7 November 2025 and closes at midnight on Thursday 15 January 2026

For children born between **1 September 2018** and 31 August 2019, Transferring to Junior school in September 2026

What to do

Choose a school

It's important to find out more about the schools you are interested in before you decide to name then on the application form.

Read the guide to Primary admissions at www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions.

You can name up to three Junior schools, inside or outside of Kent. You are unable to name Primary schools on this application.

Apply for a school place

A simple, fast, convenient process which opens Friday 7 November 2025 and closes at midnight on Thursday 15 January 2026.

You will first need to set up an online account. The applicant is you, the parent/carer; you will then need to add your child's details before starting an application. You will receive an email confirmation that your application has been submitted correctly.

You can log back in at any time to view the information submitted.

Receiving your offer

On offer day (Thursday 16 April 2026) an email will be sent after 4pm informing you of your offer.
You must accept or decline the school place you have been offered by Thursday 30 April 2026.

A link to a guide with information you will need to provide the school with will be in your offer email.

If it has not been possible to offer your child a place in your preferred school, you have the right to appeal. You can also add their name to the school's waiting list.

Moving house during the application window will likely complicate your application and we therefore advise you to pay special attention to key dates in the admissions process. KCC has no discretionary authority to vary the process for parents who cannot complete address moves in time to make use of them for admissions purposes. If you have queries relating to this, please email the team on one of the email addresses below.

Key dates

Friday 7 November 2025	Online application process opens. Go to www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions to register and apply.
Thursday 15 January 2026	Online application process closes for the main round. Any amendments after this date must be emailed to *kentonlineadmissions@kent.gov.uk*
Thursday 16 April 2026	Offers of school places sent to parents via email after 4pm.
Thursday 30 April 2026	Parents should contact the school to accept/refuse the place that has been offered and can use the link in the offer email to ask for their child to be added to the waiting list of schools named on the original application.
Wednesday 13 May 2026	Appeals need to be lodged by this date to be heard before September – appeals information can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/schoolappeals. You can only appeal for schools that were named on the application form.

Need help?

Email *primaryadmissions@kent.gov.uk*
Full information booklet can also be viewed online at *kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions*

Only one application per pupil will be accepted. If you apply online, do not complete any other form of application. Keep your login details safe and use your registered email address for all communication with the team.

The confirmation email may go to your junk/spam folder of your email – please check here before contacting our team for confirmation.

Please note applications can only be made via Kent County Council if the child resides at a Kent address. If your child does not reside at a Kent address, you must make an application via your Local Authority.

Kent County Council
kent.gov.uk

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

SETTING UP NEW DEVICES FOR CHILDREN

At Christmas, millions of lucky children will be excitedly ripping the wrapping off new phones, tablets, computers or consoles. However, in the rush to let young ones enjoy their shiny gadgets, many parents neglect to set these devices up safely – increasing the chances of children going online and stumbling across adult content, making expensive downloads or installing unsuitable apps. A little time configuring the device properly can save a lot of anguish later. Here are our top tips to ensure that a dream gift on Christmas morning doesn't turn into a nightmare by New Year.

PASSCODES FOR IPHONE/IPAD

If your child's getting their own iPhone or iPad, you can set parental controls that make it difficult for them to access inappropriate content or download expensive apps. Once the device is set up, go to the Settings app and tap Screen Time, then select Use Screen Time Passcode and enter a passcode. Keep it to yourself so your child can't switch the protection off.

SET AN ADMIN ON PCS

On Windows PCs and laptops, it's important not to let your child share a general user account or be the main admin on the device. If you're booting up a new family PC or a child's own device, set it up using your own account details and you'll become the admin by default. Then set up children with their own separate account: Settings > Accounts > Family & Other Users > Add Other User.

SCREEN TIME SETTINGS ON IPHONE/IPAD

Once you've set a Screen Time Passcode, you can adjust various safety settings. You could, for example, only allow communication with people from the Contacts app, place restrictions on App Store purchases and apply age limits to movies, music and web content. There are many more protective options available within the Screen Time settings section.

SET WINDOWS LIMITS

Once your child's account has been created, a parent admin can go back into the Family & Other Users menu and apply limits to it. These include restricting screen time, the type of games and apps that can be installed, web filters and more. Microsoft also includes reporting tools which, for example, can email you with a weekly summary of your child's activity on the device.

FAMILY LINK FOR ANDROID

Parents can manage Android phones and tablets, as well as Google Chromebooks, through Google's Family Link app. This gives your child some independence (and their own Google account) but lets parents monitor which apps are being used, set limits on content and ensure that parental permission is required to install apps. Look for Family Link in the Google Play Store.

TREAT AN XBOX LIKE A PC

The same control settings you use for a PC can be used to apply parental controls on an Xbox. Again, once your child is signed into the Xbox with their own account, you can then monitor and regulate their activity from a PC or web browser. Microsoft's dashboard allows you to manage voice communication through the console: so you can limit who can contact your child, for example.

ADD A CHILD TO FAMILY LINK

The easiest way to add a child's device to Family Link is to set it up with its own Google account. It's a good idea to create this before they use their new phone, tablet or Chromebook. Once they're logged in, open the Family Link app on your phone, press '+' in the top right and add a new family member using their Google account details. Then follow the on-screen instructions.

PLAYSTATION PARENTAL CONTROLS

With parental controls for the PS5, you'll need a PlayStation Network account (as the 'family manager') and the child will need their own account, which they should sign in with on the console. This all needs to be set up in advance, so you might want to do it before the big day. Go to PlayStation.com and search 'family account' for instructions.

INSTALL XBOX FAMILY SETTINGS

If you don't have a PC, but your child does have an Xbox, it might be easier to use the Xbox Family Settings app for iPhone or Android. Here, you can restrict console screen time (particularly handy if the console is in a bedroom), restrict communication and monitor the types of game being played. There's also a feature where you can allocate spending money for games or in-game purchases.

FAMILY SHARING ON A MAC

Families using a Mac get similar screen time options to iPhone and iPad users. Again, if you're setting up a Mac for a child, make yourself the main admin and add them as a user. This is handled through Apple's Family Sharing service, which not only allows you to put controls on child accounts but share apps and other purchases with them too. Search 'family sharing' at https://support.apple.com.

DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR CHILD

If you're planning to implement any kind of restriction or protection settings on your child's new device, we'd recommend having a discussion with your young one first about what these controls do, and what they are for. If you try to impose parental controls surreptitiously or with no advance warning, don't be surprised if your child tries to find a way around them.

STAY VIGILANT

It's important to remember that none of these methods is 100% foolproof. Nobody will ever invent flawless filters or parental controls – not least because what's unacceptable to some parents is perfectly acceptable to others. So although devices' parental controls will help to keep your child safe online, they work best side by side with good old-fashioned parental vigilance.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *Newsnight*, Radio 5 Live and *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 22.12.2021

Ashford Family Hubs

Christmas HAF Events

29th- 31st December 2025

Ice Skating and Rockits Soft Play

Please note these events are open only to those who are eligible to benefit related free school meals.

Bookings by 18th December 2025

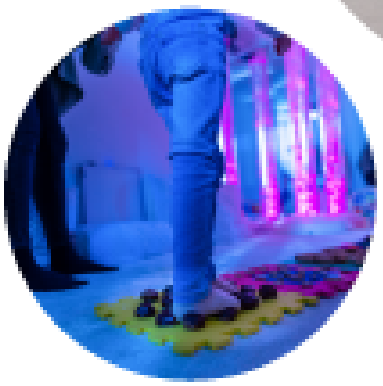
Contact us on any of the numbers below to book:

Between 9am - 3.30pm Monday to Friday

Ashford North Family Hub - 03000 417567
Bockhanger Family Hub - 03000 416600
Tenterden Family Hub - 03000 416400
The Willow Family Hub - 03000 416800
Waterside Family Hub - 03000 416700

Find us on:

Facebook or Instagram at ashfordfamilyhubs and ashfordfamilyhubs11to19



Family Hub Sites are run by Kent County Council

Harper's Cafe

Eat, Make & Be Merry

with The Elves

Join our cheeky elves for a tasty Christmas breakfast, then enjoy a fun arts and crafts session making festive cones and Christmas cards.

Sunday 14th December 2025

Harper's Cafe Victoria Park

Breakfast (£12 pp): 10.00-11.30am

Crafts (£3 per child): 12.00-3.30pm

Book online or in person.

Rockits Sensory and Soft Play

Monday 29th December 2025

Tenterden

Rockits Sensory
and Play
TN30 6BN

10.45am - 12.45pm
Ages 5 - 10

Join us for a Soft Play and Sensory session with lots of festive fun to break up the Christmas holidays with your little ones.
Please contact us if your child has younger siblings

Food for all children will be provided

Booking Required

HAF

Ice Skating

Tuesday 30th December or Wednesday 31st December 2025

Booking Required

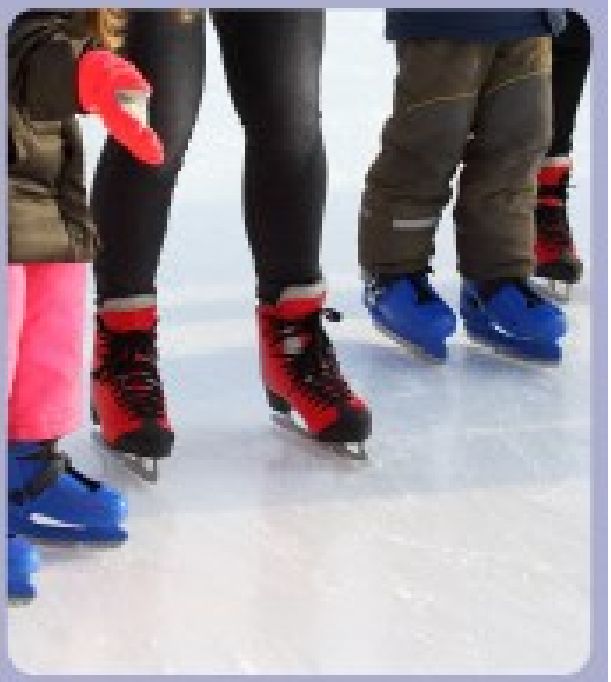
Ashford North Family Hub
Mabledon Avenue,
Ashford, Kent TN24 8BJ

Skating fun for the whole family and young people, with snow machine with music and floodlights.
Please only book one session per family to allow others to have fun too.
Set numbers per session to ensure safety.
Food provided for children and young people

Note: there will be no onsite parking available and we request attendees to park in the nearby streets or to use public transport.

Sessions available throughout the two days. Later sessions available on 30th

HAF



THE READING AGENCY Winter Mini Challenge

Story Garden

Kent Libraries

Join in with this year's Winter Mini Challenge!

A fun **free** Challenge that encourages children to keep up their reading from 1 December to 20 February 2026.

It's free to take part online, where children can unlock special digital rewards and earn a printable certificate once they meet their reading goal!

For more information, speak to your local library team, scan the QR code or head to **wintermini.org.uk**

SCAN ME

kent.gov.uk/libraries

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE CSE

Kent County Council kent.gov.uk

Story Garden illustrations by Dapo Adelola, and logo artwork © The Reading Agency 2025