5th 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	
Monday 8th	**Year 1 Christmas Performances** 9:10am – Dolphin Class 10:15am – Turtle Class 2.30pm – Starfish Class Parents/carers are welcome to attend – 2 spaces per family have been allocated. We appreciate some families have asked for an additional space, there may be a few extra spaces available on the day. We will assess at the door if there are any additional spaces and if possible one additional adult per family may be admitted. Please be aware that we may have to turn extra adults away on the day. We ask where possible that younger siblings do not attend.
Tuesday 9th	**2.30pm – Single Equality Meeting** – please see further information below we are looking for a couple of parents/carers to attend this meeting
Wednesday 10th	• **Year R (EYFS) Christmas Performances –** 9:10am -Ladybird Class 10:15am -Bee Class Parents/carers are welcome to attend – 2 spaces per family have been allocated. We appreciate some families have asked for an additional space, there may be a few extra spaces available on the day. We will assess at the door if there are any additional spaces and if possible one additional adult per family may be admitted. Please be aware that we may have to turn extra adults away on the day. We ask where possible that younger siblings do not attend.

	• **2:15pm – irock end of term concert -** parents/carers of children who attend these sessions are welcome to attend.
Thursday 11th	• **Year 2 Christmas Performances –** 9:10am – Year 2 joint class performance – Penguin Class parents 2.15pm – Year 2 joint class performance- Snow Leopard Class parents Parents/carers are welcome to attend – 2 spaces per family have been allocated. We appreciate some families have asked for an additional space, there may be a few extra spaces available on the day. We will assess at the door if there are any additional spaces and if possible one additional adult per family may be admitted. Please be aware that we may have to turn extra adults away on the day. We ask where possible that younger siblings do not attend. • **Year R Trip to Gulbenkian Theatre-** a letter has been sent home regarding this trip
Friday 12th	**Year 2 to visit Kennington CE Academy's Winter Forest School Experience in the afternoon.** Please ensure the children have a coat and their normal school wellington boots in school on this day.
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 PJ day & Christmas Movie 'Alien Christmas' -** 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 Cheese Whirl 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.

Registered Charity Number 1122114

Wow a big thank you to our Friends for all their hard work. The Christmas Fair was a real success, raising over £2,000. We had lots of families at the fair on Saturday, enjoying the variety of activities, games and stalls on offer; especially Santa's Grotto. Thank you to everyone who supported this event.

The lantern workshops on Monday and Tuesday this week were very popular and the children were very creative with their individual designs. Thank you to all that turned out for the Community sleigh walk on Wednesday too. We will let you know what was donated to the school from this event once we know. Our Friends have worked so hard during the festive season to offer fun and exciting activities/events for the children at our school and your support at the events has helped to raise much needed funds for the school.

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 'respectful' by taking turns in conversation & listening to each other.
Ladybird	Ladybird class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by giving encouragement to others whilst practicing for the Christmas show!
Turtle	Turtle class have been working hard on the value of being 'ready' by learning the songs and actions for the Christmas play.
Dolphin	Dolphin class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by following instructions from the adults in the classroom.
Starfish	Starfish class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by knowing when to join in with our part of the nativity.

Snow Leopard	Snow Leopard class have been working hard on the school value of being 'respectful'. They have been taught by different adults this week and have demonstrated good manners, welcoming them and working together.
Penguin	Penguins class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by helping each other with their learning.

Weekly Class Achievements and updates

EYFS

Well, what a busy week we have had with our Christmas show dress rehearsal and some extra creativity. We can't give too much away but know that you will love it all! We can though share that in Maths this week we have been comparing groups of items and looking for similarities and differences. We used the book Which one doesn't belong? By Christopher Danielson to look at four images on a page. We asked the children the questions:

What do you notice?
What makes all the items alike?
What makes them different?
Which one doesn't belong?
Can you share your reasoning to justify your answer?

To encourage them to focus on mathematical vocabulary, to solve problems and focus their attention on the attributes of number and number relationships. Have a look a this image with your children and use the same questions?

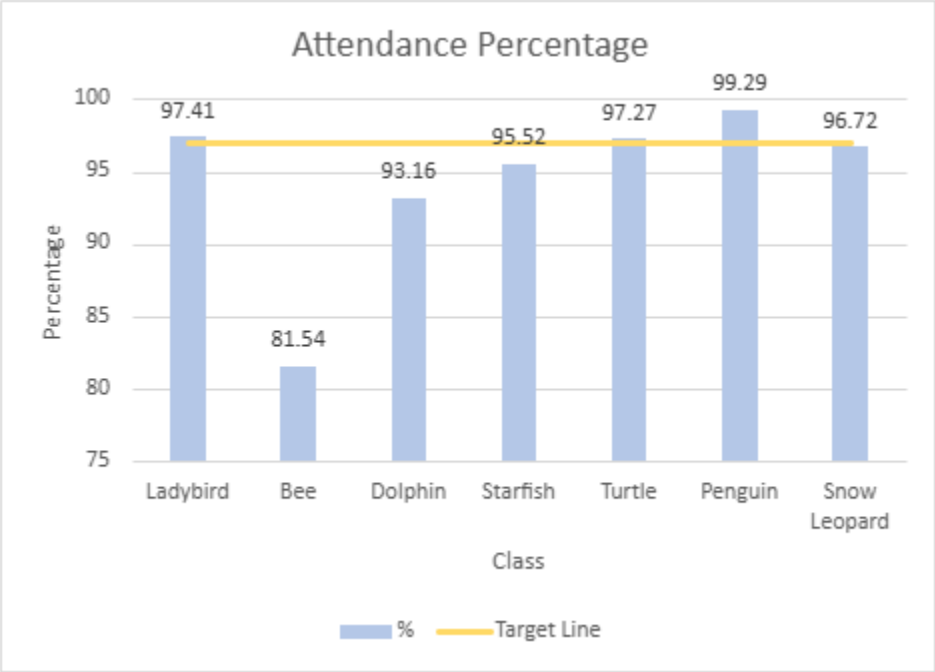
Year 1

This week we have been learning about 3D shapes, can you spot any 3D shapes at home? We have learnt about cubes, cuboids, spheres, cones, cylinders and square based pyramids.

Year 2

This week, we have been learning how to find 10 less and 10 more of a given number. We used base ten blocks to make each 2-digit number. This helped us to spot patterns and solve problems easily.

Attendance



Our school attendance for this week is **94.55%,** which is **2%** higher than last week.

This week's attendance has been significantly affected by illness and lates after registration closes. Well done to three classes who are above **97%** attendance.

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 **393 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.

Christmas Fair

Thank you to the Friends for organising this event and for all the support/generosity of all families who joined in with the fun and kindly spent lots of money. The children thoroughly enjoyed this event and it was lovely to see so many families, old and new in school, we raised over £2,000! What a fantastic achievement! We are very grateful for all the support from all committee members and their families gave on the day! This money will go straight back to your children. More details will follow from the Friends within their newsletter. If you would like to get involved more, please contact Katy, Chair of the Friends who would welcome new ideas or any support via email: friendsofdownsview@gmail.com.

Current Vacancies
Downs View Infant School is 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
We will be holding tours of the school during October, November, December and the beginning of January for prospective parents/carers, dates are listed below. If you would like to book a 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)

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 The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION 13+ (Certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Adults tend to associate online videos with YouTube – but among teens, TikTok is king. The app provides a stream of short clips tailored to users' interests, based on what they've already watched. Around half of British children use TikTok, and while much of the content is benign, Ofcom considers it the app where youngsters "were most likely to encounter a potential harm".

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

CENSORED

While TikTok's Following feed only displays videos from familiar creators, For You is a collection based on a user's previously watched clips. Most of these videos will probably be inoffensive, but the app *could* potentially show something unsuitable. If children then engage with this content, more like it will follow. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the huge number of uploads means that a small amount inevitably slips through.

BODY IMAGE AND DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

According to Ofcom, most online harms for teens are body image related for girls (promoting unhealthy eating, body shaming and so on) and dangerous stunts for boys. Both are prevalent on TikTok. One extreme example of the latter was the 'blackout' trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. This led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase gifts for content creators. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; while that may not sound appealing, the app still generated £7.9 billion in user spending in 2023. TikTok's policy is that under-18s can't make in-app purchases, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birth date.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With more than 1.5 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-16s (or young people using a fake date of birth) are set to public by default. This means that not only is someone's profile visible to everyone else on the app, it also suggests their videos to others and enables *anyone* to download or comment on them.

MISINFORMATION AND RADICALISATION

Although the short videos on TikTok tend to be more frivolous than the longer ones on YouTube, clips can still influence impressionable minds in a negative way. Not only is there plenty of dangerous misinformation on TikTok, but Ofcom reports that nearly a third of 12 to 15-year-olds use TikTok as a news source – so you should be wary of misogynistic, racist or conspiracy-themed material shaping how they see the world.

ADDICTIVE DESIGN

With its constant stream of eye-catching videos, TikTok can be addictive to young brains. In 2024, UK children spent an average of 127 minutes per day on the app: that's twice as much as in 2020. Excessive use can interfere with young people's sleep patterns – often leading to irritability – and distract them from other, healthier activities. The instantly skippable nature of bite-size videos may also impact children's ability to maintain focus.

Advice for Parents & Educators

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account to their child's, and control settings remotely. Parents can then turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content), set screen-time limits, make accounts private and manage whether their child can send messages – and if they can, to whom. Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

BLOCK IN-APP SPENDING

If a child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter their settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend enabling this feature, as it can be quite easy for a young person to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins to unlock more features of the app – sometimes without even realising.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If a child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's good practice to discuss the potential risks. Ensure that they don't share any identifying personal information, and that they know to talk to a trusted adult if they're worried by interactions on the app. With more teens using TikTok for news, it's also worth talking about misinformation and propaganda, and how to identify it.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that a child is spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the signs. Increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as is failing to complete homework or skipping meals. Remember, the parental controls are there for a reason, and it's never too late to introduce limits.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for the likes of Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: https://nationalcollege.com/guides/tiktok-2025

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 15.01.2025

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

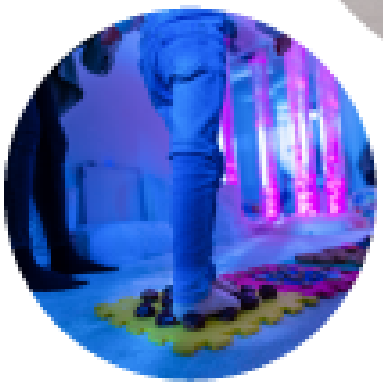
Contact us on any of the numbers below to book:

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

£5 per child
Harper's Cafe
Christmas Crafternoon
Sunday 7th December 2025, 12.30pm-3pm
Harper's Cafe, Victoria Park, Ashford
Book your child's slot online or in person.
Decorate gingerbread biscuits and reindeer food.

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

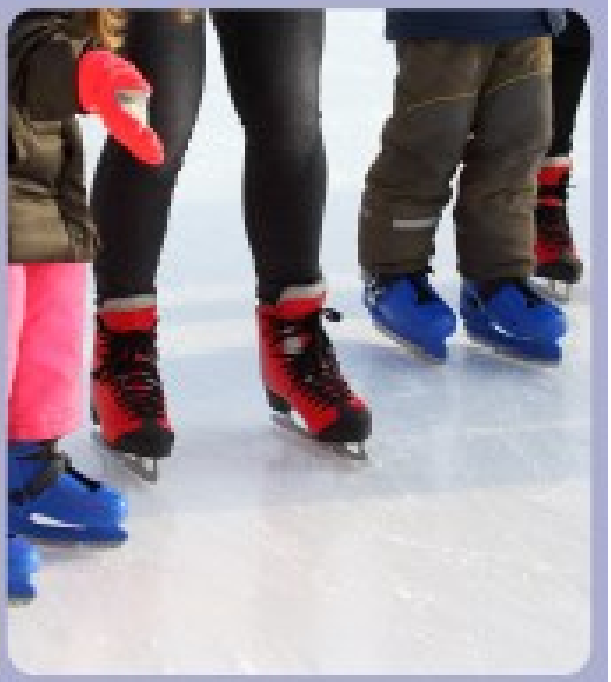
Ashford North Family Hub
Mabledon Avenue,
Ashford, Kent TN24 8BJ

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



EAT WELL, SPEND LESS & WELLBEING ROADSHOW

PROVIDING YOU WITH RESOURCES, SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES TO THRIVE IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIVING

NEXT ROADSHOW

The Ashford Cinema

Elwick Place,
Elwick Road Ashford,
TN23 1AX

Wednesday 10th December 2025

10am – 2pm

- **FREE** NHS health checks
- **FREE** fresh fruit & veg, food and hygiene items
- **FREE** financial, housing, benefits, health and safeguarding advice from Ashford Borough Council and local organisations

www.ashford.gov.uk/ewslwr

EAT WELL SPEND LESS & WELLBEING ROADSHOW

Funded by UK Government

NHS Kent Community Health

Ashford Borough Council

FareShare

NHS

PREMIER FOODS

Christmas Wednesday 17 December 2025

Please email the school office if your child would like the vegetarian option or is bringing their own packed lunch. A Christmas lunch will be ordered for all children unless you have told us they are having a packed lunch.

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