9th January 2026 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	
January	
Wednesday 14th	**Class Photographs -** – please let the school office know if you would **not** like your child to be photographed – Year 2 children to wear school uniform not PE kits on this day please. Please ensure all children wear full uniform on this day.
Thursday 15th	**Themed Lunch – Jungle Day –** The children can choose meat fest pizza, cheese and tomato pizza or jacket potato – dessert is chocolate and orange brownie.
Monday 20th	**2.30pm - ID Play and Stay sessions –** parents/carers are welcome to attend to find out more about what happens during ID lessons in your child's class
Wednesday 21st	**2.30pm - ID Play and Stay sessions –** parents/carers are welcome to attend to find out more about what happens during ID lessons in your child's class
Tuesday 27th	**Special Lunch Menu – Around the World China –** please see special menu below
Wednesday 28th	**School Nursing to conduct Year R Hearing Screening –** a parentmail has been sent regarding opting out
February	
Tuesday 10th	**Safer Internet Day**
Friday 13th	**Last Day of Term**
Monday 23rd	**Children return to school start of Term 4**

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.

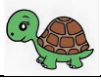
Happy New year!

We hope that you managed to have some quality family time over the Christmas break. This week we have faced some challenges with the drop-in temperature but the children have adapted well. We have sent out information about our adverse weather guidance via parentmail, as explained in this we will keep you updated of any school closures via Kent Closures website, Kent Closures - Kent County Council, **and parentmail. As the temperature and weather is unpredictable currently, we would request that the children have a warm coat, hat and mittens or gloves. The children need wellington boots in school to access the outside areas and if they would like to use the grass areas during play and lunch time they will need to wear waterproof trousers. Thank you for your continued 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 'respectful' by sharing and cooperating with friends and other peers.
Ladybird	Ladybird class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by embracing the new structure of our handwriting lessons and independently writing within their books.
Turtle 	Turtle class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by trying new ways to put their wellies on for playtime.
Dolphin	Dolphin class have been working hard on the school value of being 'ready' by quickly changing into their waterproofs at break time and lunch time.
Starfish	Starfish class have been working hard on the school value of being 'respectful' and 'ready' by discussing how we can show good learning behaviours
Snow Leopard	This week Snow Leopard Class have been working hard on the key value of being ready by showing they are confident learners ready for Term 3.
Penguin	Penguins class have been working hard on the school value of being 'safe' by writing reports to warn other children about dangerous dragons in the classroom!

Weekly Class Achievements and updates

EYFS

Welcome back to Term 3! In EYFS this week we have started our new Literacy book 'Let's all creep through crocodile creek'. In the story, the three characters are going on an adventure. It encouraged us to think about an adventure that we have been on. We then looked at an image from the book and used our phonic knowledge to give it some labels.

When reading with your child this week perhaps choose a page and get them to think of labels that they could add to the chosen page!

Year 1

In Year 1 we have been learning about teen numbers. Can you practise counting to 20? Make sure you really over pronounce the 'teen' at the end of the words. Can you discuss how many 10s and 1s are in each number?

Year 2

Happy New Year from the Year 2 Team. While we were away, some cheeky visitors have invaded the Year 2 classrooms. Ask us where they are hiding!

Independent Catering Company

The children have experienced a tasty, varied new menu this week from our new catering company, Independent Catering. We are very pleased with the food that has been on offer, it has smelt and tasted delicious, lots of the children have tried new foods and have adapted well to the new set-up in the hall which is helping to foster independence. The children are pouring their own drinks, finding their cutlery and selecting their own salad and pudding. If your son/daughter normally has a packed lunch but would like to give the new menu a go then this is easy. They can select to have a school meal each day when the register is taken in class and if you want to send a packed lunch just in case that is fine. Please speak to the school office if you have any questions.

Current Vacancies
We are looking to recruit a **temporary cleaner** to cover staff absence on a Wednesday. This position will be fixed term 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 .

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)

INDEPENDENTCATERING | EDUCATERLIMITED

Around the World

CHINA

TUESDAY 27 JANUARY

MENU

Chicken Chow Mein with Vegetable Fried Rice (1, 7, 8, 9)

Vegetable Spring Roll with Sweet Chilli Sauce with Vegetable Rice (1, 8) VEGAN

Chinese Spaghetti (1, 8)

Jacket Potato with Choice of Toppings

Stir Fry Vegetables

Chinese Sponge Cake (1, 7, 9)

WE ONLY USE

FRESH UK BEEF | FRESH UK PORK | FREE RANGE EGGS | LOCAL FRUIT & VEG | WHOLEMEAL PASTA

freshingredients freshfood

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

GENERATIVE AI SAFETY

Generative AI tools – such as ChatGPT – are now commonly used by children. In fact, 3 in 4 pupils in the 2024 Annual Literacy Survey reported using generative AI, up from just 2 in 5 the previous year. While these tools can boost learning and creativity, they also raise concerns around misinformation, privacy and overuse. This guide explores the key risks and how to support safe use.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

MISINFORMATION AND ACCURACY

Real / Fake

Generative AI can sometimes produce false or misleading content. Children – and even adults – may assume the information is accurate and trustworthy. This can affect learning and understanding of important topics. It's vital to teach children to critically assess all information, even when it comes from AI.

EXPOSURE TO INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

CENSORED

Because generative AI is trained on vast datasets from across the internet, there is a chance it may occasionally generate harmful or inappropriate content. Without supervision, children could encounter disturbing or unsuitable material. Active monitoring and clear usage boundaries can help reduce this risk.

PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

Some AI tools ask for personal details or store users' interactions. If privacy settings are not correctly configured, children's personal data could be exposed or misused. Teaching good digital hygiene and setting strong privacy controls is essential for protecting children online.

REDUCED CRITICAL THINKING

Relying too heavily on AI-generated responses may reduce children's willingness to think independently. If they consistently use AI to solve problems or complete tasks, it could impact their ability to reason, analyse and form their own ideas. Encouraging thoughtful reflection is key.

DIGITAL DEPENDENCY

Regular use of generative AI can contribute to increased screen time and less real-world interaction. If left unmanaged, it may affect physical activity levels, sleep, and social development. Striking a healthy balance between online and offline activities is important for wellbeing.

UNCLEAR ETHICAL BOUNDARIES

Children may not fully understand the ethical implications of using AI to complete homework or creative tasks. This can lead to unintentional plagiarism or dishonest academic practices. Conversations around responsible use and academic honesty are crucial.

MATHS

ALL THE ANSWERS

12+12 = 1212

NEWS

IDEAS

Advice for Parents & Educators

ESTABLISH CLEAR GUIDELINES

Set clear, age-appropriate rules for when and how generative AI can be used. Reinforce these regularly to help children develop a healthy, respectful and informed relationship with the technology.

ENCOURAGE CRITICAL EVALUATION

Help children to question the accuracy of AI-generated information and seek out additional trusted sources. This builds essential digital literacy skills and supports better decision-making.

PROMOTE ACTIVE SUPERVISION

Keep an eye on how the children in your care use AI tools. Check in regularly to ensure they're using them appropriately and be ready to step in if something doesn't feel right.

ENHANCE PRIVACY AWARENESS

Talk to children about the importance of keeping personal information private. Make sure privacy settings are in place and explain how data shared with AI tools could be used.

Meet Our Expert

Brendan O'Keeffe, Deputy Headmaster and Director of Digital Strategy at Eaton House Schools, has extensive expertise in digital safety, safeguarding, and generative AI in education. As an author and speaker on digital literacy and online safety for institutions such as The National College, Brendan guides parents and educators in creating safe digital learning environments.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 11.06.2025

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

EAT WELL, SPEND LESS & WELLBEING ROADSHOW

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

NEXT ROADSHOW

SWAN Community Centre & Waterside Family Hub

Turner Close, Ashford, TN24 0PQ

Wednesday 21st January 2026

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

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Ashford Borough Council

Family fitness

DANCE AND CHEER

get fit and have fun

Thursday 6:30 pm - 7:15pm

£7 per adult £3 per child

FUTURE DANCE

studio 5, Little Burton,

kennington, ashford

come join us for

Dance multi skills

stage1 age 4 to 7
stage 2 age 8 to 13

stage 1 THURS 4:30pm -6pm
stage 2 THURS 5:15pm - 6:30pm

Includes musical theatre, street, cheer, gymnastics, hoop and ribbons

£10 per week

FUTURE DANCE

Future Dance, Little Burton, Kennington

HIGH FLYERS

CHEER TEAM

Weds – Stour Centre 6:10pm

Fri - Towers School 4:45

age 4 to 13

Contact Us

www..futuredance.info

whatsapp 07896198442