

# Starting School Parent Handbook



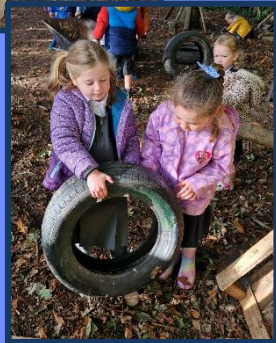
Welcome to our  
Downview family!

We can't wait to meet you!



# Welcome Message

Hello and welcome  
to Downview!



Mrs Purkis  
Headteacher

Starting school for the very first time, is an important milestone for both you and your child. At Downview we believe that this should also be a time of great excitement and opportunity.

We are committed to ensuring that the transition to school is a positive experience for everyone. We believe that by working together we can make the transition smooth and enjoyable. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to share them with a member of the team who will be happy to listen and provide an answer..

We believe that every child deserves the very best start to their educational journey. We pride ourselves on making learning fun to foster the skills that will ensure your child will become a lifelong learner.

Everything that we do at Downview is underpinned by our School Values of Collaboration, Communication, Co-Operation, Creativity, Independence and Resilience, and we believe our journey starts with their Reception Year.

We value teamwork, and understand that working with families is the key to success. We are looking forward to working with your children and having a wonderful first year!



*We didn't realise we were making  
memories, we just knew we were  
having fun  
-AA Milne*

# Getting to know you

## Transition Events



In order for children to transition smoothly into school life, it's important that we get to know them well. Communication is key in children's educational journeys and that starts with building effective Home - School relationships.

### Nursery meetings and visits

In the Summer before you start at Downview, we meet with nurseries to learn about how your children are getting on. This helps us support their transition into school.

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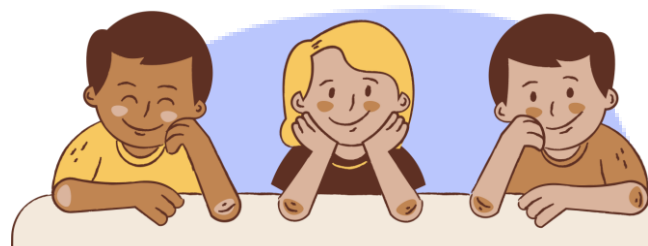
### Stay & Play sessions At Downview

This is a chance to meet the Reception teaching team and explore the learning environments. The children will play in their classroom and in the outside area, and start to interact with new classmates and the teaching team. We encourage parents to leave after a short period of 'settling in' so that the children can start to form new relationships and share stories and songs in their new classrooms.

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### Meet the Teacher

In the first week in September, parents and children will meet their new class teacher and teaching assistant one to one. This is an opportunity to ask questions, and share important information about your child. Your child will get the chance to find their favourite toys, peg and drawers.



# Our Early Years Curriculum

## What do we do?

In Reception we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This consists of three 'Prime' Areas and 4 'Specific' Areas. Each area is broken down into further areas of learning..

### Prime areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (Self-awareness and relationships)
- Communication and Language (Listening, Understanding, Speaking and Communication)
- Physical development (Physical Health, Co-ordination and Self-care Skills)

### Specific areas:

- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Mathematics (Number, Shapes and Measures)
- Understanding the World (Natural World, People and Communities and Past and Present)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials and Being Imaginative)

## How do we do it?

The curriculum is carefully designed to give children the essential foundation they will need to support all future learning. At Downview, we believe that learning should be fun, engaging and inspiring. We spend time learning through play and interacting with children to practise and develop key skills. We use our inside and outdoor learning environments to build and foster independence and ensure we adapt learning experiences to meet the needs of each child..



## How you can help at home.

Strong partnerships between parents and school are essential for learning.. By engaging in activities such as reading, talking and play at home, you can significantly enhance your child's development and early learning outcomes.





# A day in the life...



During our school day, the children have access to learning resources and experiences through Continuous Provision. This helps to develop understanding and skills across all subject areas through play, exploration and discovery. During the Autumn Term, learning becomes more structured and the children quickly begin playing and learning by working in small groups.. A typical day might look like this...

08 : 40

Arrive at school - Classroom doors open at 08:40am and children come into the classroom and settle into their first activities.

09 : 15

Phonics and Reading - Following our Song Of Sounds programme, we learn to recognise, read and write our sounds, letters and key words. Followed by Literacy activities inside and outside.

10 : 15

Snack- We enjoy our healthy snack and milk together.

10 : 30

Mathematics/PE/Woodland - We learn about numbers, shapes and measures in activities and games both inside and outside. We have one PE lesson a week.

11 : 45

Lunch - We have half an hour to eat our lunch and half an hour on the playground.

12 : 45

Afternoon session - Learning activities based on our topic or theme.

14 : 45

Story time - All classes have a shared story, rhyme and/or singing time every day.

15 : 20

Home time - Please collect your child from their classroom door.

If your child is unwell, please report their absence to the office. If they are a little under the weather please send them in and we will call you if we need to. Attendance is very important to your child making good progress at Downview.

# Uniform



- Plain or logo sweatshirt or cardigan - navy
- Plain trousers / skirt / pinafore - navy blue, grey or black
- Plain or logo polo shirt / shirt / blouse - white or navy
- A blue and white checked dress
- Smart, low-heeled shoes or trainers - black or blue
- Outdoor coat, weather appropriate

ALL CLEARLY  
NAMED PLEASE

Logo uniform can be purchased from JVV sports. Second-hand uniform is available in our school reception area. Please make a donation if you are able to.

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## PE day

- Round necked T-Shirt - white
- Plain shorts - navy or black
- Trainers
- Plain jogging bottoms - navy or black
- Plain sweatshirt - navy or black

No sports club attire or logos  
No earrings or jewellery  
No hooded or zipped sweatshirts

ALL CLEARLY  
NAMED PLEASE

On your class PE day, please come dressed in your PE kit.  
School jumper/cardigan can be worn for P.E.

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## Outdoor learning

- Waterproof coat
- Wellies
- Warm hat and gloves
- Sunhat

ALL CLEARLY NAMED PLEASE

Please remember, we work  
and play outside all year  
round, whatever the  
weather..



# Food and Drink

At lunchtimes, the children eat in the hall and then play outside after eating. They are supported by the Mid-day Meals Team, the Reception team and our Year 6 Play Leaders.

## Universal Infant Free School Meals



All children in Reception are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM). You must select and pre-order your child's meal from our provider, ISS. If you prefer not to have a hot meal, please provide a packed lunch.



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## Packed Lunches

We are a nut-free school. Please help us keep our children safe by checking packaging of items in packed lunch boxes, in particular spreads and snacks.



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## Milk

Milk is free until your child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. If you would like your child to have milk at school, please order this online by registering with 'Cool Milk'. If you need any support with this please call in at the office.



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## Water

Please send children in to school with a named EMPTY water bottle. We will fill this and empty it at home time. We encourage the children to drink throughout the day. Please remember no squash please.



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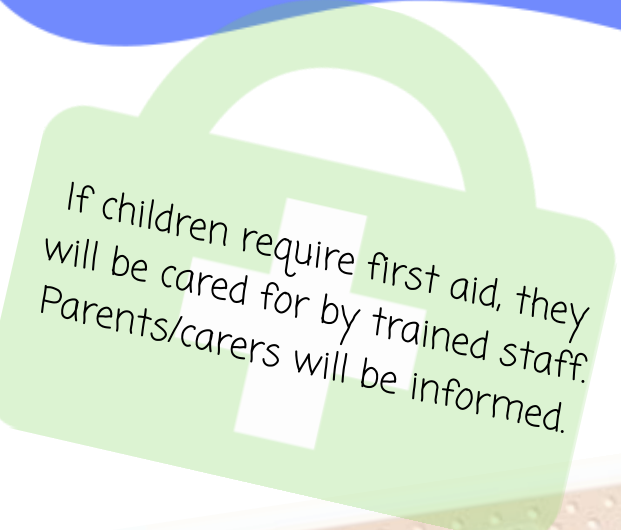
## Snacks

We provide a free healthy fruit or vegetable snack each day.



# Health and Safety

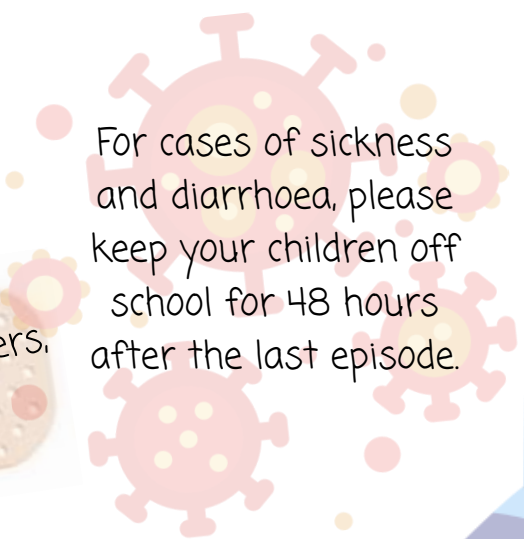
Please ensure that all contact numbers are always kept up to date. Please ensure we are aware of any conditions, medications or allergies. Medicines must also be checked for expiration dates regularly.



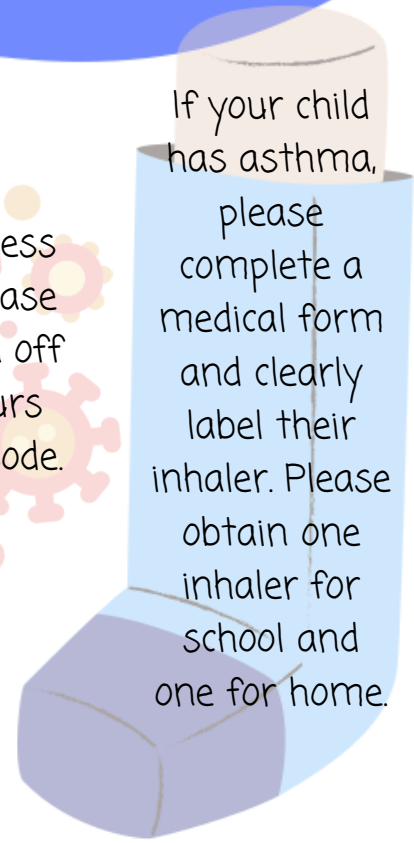
If children require first aid, they will be cared for by trained staff. Parents/carers will be informed.



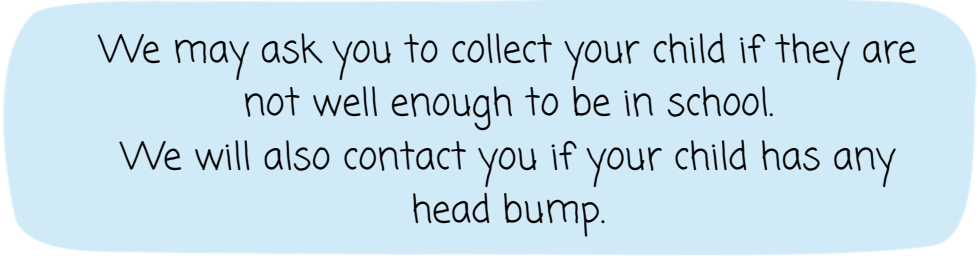
If your child is allergic to plasters, please let us know.



For cases of sickness and diarrhoea, please keep your children off school for 48 hours after the last episode.



If your child has asthma, please complete a medical form and clearly label their inhaler. Please obtain one inhaler for school and one for home.



We may ask you to collect your child if they are not well enough to be in school.  
We will also contact you if your child has any head bump.

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## Birthdays



At Downview, birthdays are special!  
On their birthdays, children are welcome to come into school in their choice of non-uniform to celebrate.

If their birthday falls on a weekend or holiday, please choose a different day to wear non-uniform.



# Top Tips for starting school



## Label EVERYTHING!

Belongings sometimes get lost in our big school!

We will be able to get things back to your child if they are clearly named.

## Practise 'goodbyes' 2.

If your child finds it difficult to say goodbye, try "popping out", leaving them in an environment they feel happy in, and with people they trust, for short periods. You can build up the time you spend away from them gradually, and help to increase their independence.



## 3. Self-care tasks

It is important for children to be as independent as possible with the following things. Please practice these at home:

- Toileting independently (including wiping)
- Putting on and zip or button up their coat
- Blow their nose using a tissue
- Using a knife and fork
- Recognise their name
- Tidy away toys

# Key Dates

You will receive a letter to tell you when your 'Meet the Teacher' appointment is.

Parent meeting - Thursday June 18<sup>th</sup> 6pm

Stay and play - Wednesday 1st July,

9:30am - 11am      **OR**      1.30pm - 3pm

Meet The Teacher -by appointment

Thursday 3rd September, Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September,

OR Monday 7th September

Starting School in September:

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> - 8:50am - 11:30am

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> - 8:50am - 12:30pm (lunch at school)

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> - 8:50am - 12:30pm (lunch at school)

Friday 11<sup>th</sup> - FIRST FULL DAY! - 8:50am - 3:20pm