

Dear Parent

# Welcome to 2020-21

25 August 2020

*It is a very different start to school with our Social Distance Measures and the Classroom Bubbles but the feedback from the children yesterday was that they were delighted to be back at school and meeting their friends. The teachers and staff came into our professions to help and nurture children and we were so pleased to see our pupils back where they should be – being taught in classrooms!*



I should like to extend a warm welcome to each and every pupil back to school and also a very warm welcome to our new families. Yesterday was the first day for the new pupils who have moved to our school and I know they will be made very much at home by their class-mates. We will be welcoming our new P1 children next week. The year actually got under way a few weeks ago for our P7 pupils when they took part in our very successful Summer School.

**Primary 4** - Mrs McClure will teach P4 in a Job Share with Mrs Tumelty teaching P4 one day per week (Thursday) this year.

## New Additional Class in our Learning Support Centre

We were very happy to receive confirmation from the Education Authority that they wished to establish a new class base in our Learning Support Centre. This is a real vindication of the excellent work within the LSC and the staff and also of the whole school as our model of encouraging the integration of the LSC children with the whole school has, quite rightly, been recognised by the EA. I should like to welcome Miss R Dines; she will be teaching the new class. Miss Gill is continuing to teach Miss Thompson's class. We have renamed our LSC classes from this term. They will be known as: The Hedgehogs (Miss Gill), The Rabbits (Miss Dines), The Owls (Miss Bates) and the Foxes (Mrs Montgomery).

**REMEMBER** – From 4 September - school ends for all pupils (P1-P7 including the LSC) at 2pm on Friday afternoons.

## Child Protection

Our collective aim as a staff is to ensure that each one of our pupils will learn in a safe and happy environment. If you have any concerns of a pastoral nature or have any worries regarding child protection issues your point of reference is **Mrs Beattie (Designated Teacher)** or **Mrs McClure (Deputy Designated Teacher)** as well as your child's class teacher or myself.

## SECURITY OF OUR SCHOOL / COVID – NO ACCESS BEYOND THE SCHOOL FRONT ENTRANCE

As you know, we welcome parental involvement in our school life and the development of your child. However, our first concern must be the safety of the school community and due to Social Distancing / Bubble precautions:

**ALL Parents / Visitors ARE NOT ALLOWED BEYOND THE FOYER OR INTO CLASSROOMS UNLESS ACCOMPANIED.**

**CHILDREN ARRIVING AFTER 9am MUST ENTER BY THE MAIN SCHOOL DOOR.**

<p>A Pupil School Meal costs £2.60 per day.</p>
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## School Dinners Dinner cheques are payable to: 'Education Authority'.

From 1 September All children will eat school meals/packed lunches in their classrooms. **Each child must bring in correct dinner money or cheque in a SEALED ENVELOPE on Monday mornings ONLY. ONE DINNER MONEY ENVELOPE PER CHILD PLEASE– no splitting of money between siblings in different bubbles is permitted. – No change will be given.**

Children not taking school meals should bring in lunchboxes and filled water bottles.

Dinner Eating Arrangements will be reviewed later in September.

## Breakfast Club

**This will not be operating in September. This will be kept under review.**

Bus/EA Taxi pupils who arrive before the 8.45/9.00 staggered start times will be supervised in the hall. They will enter school by the door outside at Hub Work-Area.

## After School Care Club

**\* You must Pre-Book on the Monday of the Week**

The ASCC is starting its 15<sup>th</sup> year and I must commend the professionalism and dedication of the classroom assistants who run it so well. You will be able to have your child looked after by qualified staff in our dedicated **After School Care Room** over in the mobile. With Social Distancing the children will be outside as much as possible and we will encourage social distancing in the room. **\*We are no longer able to accept 'booking on the day'.**

The OPENING HOURS will run up until 5.30pm Mon-Fri.

**P1-P3 - 2pm-3pm £4 per session**

**P1-P3 - 2pm-5.30pm £6 per session**

**NOTE: PRICES UNCHANGED!**

**P4-P7 - 3pm-5.30pm\* £6 per session**

**NOTE: Parents must ensure that children are picked up by 5.30pm sharp\* (AT THE LATEST)**

**On Fridays Parents who wish to collect their child at 3pm will be charged the normal 2pm-3pm charge of £4.**

**\*A late charge of £6 (per child) will be applied for pick-ups after 5.30pm.**

**Sacrament Preparation** - We offer parents the opportunity to have their children prepared for First Confession, Holy Communion and Confirmation.

**Details of Sacraments delayed from 2020 will be confirmed shortly.**

Mrs Tumelty will be sending out a letter today to parents who have previously sent their children for Sacrament Preparation and are due to receive a Sacrament in 2021. If you wish your child to avail of this programme and do not receive a letter, please contact Mrs Tumelty as soon as possible.

## Healthy Lifestyles

In line with most current educational and medical research we would like parents to continue to encourage children to bring healthier break and lunch options to school. Fruit or a plain biscuit may be a suitable choice.

**The Tuck Shop will not be open initially but this will be kept under review.** Thought should also be given to the choice of drink you send with your child. **Water bottles must be filled at home as CURRENTLY chilled water is NOT available for the children to top up at school.**

**Foundation Stage 'healthy break scheme' will not be running initially. This will be kept under review.**

**NUT FREE!** – As we have pupils in our school who have severe nut allergies food/snacks with nut ingredients must not be brought into Downpatrick PS. *(This includes Nutella and similar products.)*



## Uniform

Please ensure that your child wears the correct uniform. Visitors to the school are always complimentary about how the children are turned out and we should like good standards to continue.

**ONLINE UNIFORM SUPPLIER!**

Order ONLINE at [www.downuniforms.co.uk](http://www.downuniforms.co.uk)

OR Telephone: 028 4484 2136 or 07904 111 383

This on-line service is available throughout the year.

## Absence Notes

The school requires a note from the parent or guardian, which should be given to the class teacher after each absence by the pupil. I would ask that parents arrange for family holidays to take place during the school holidays and do not take their children away during term time.

## School Holidays

The **20-21 Holiday list** is being sent home today as well.

## Staffing for 2020-21

Principal + 11 class teachers + 1 SEN Teacher (13 Classroom Assistants) (as of 24 August 2020)

Teacher	Class	Teacher	Class
K Cooke	P1	K Beattie	P6
K. Fitzsimons	P2	D Maginnis	P7
R Cleland	P3	S Gill	Hedgehogs
C McClure / S Tumelty	P4	R Dines	Rabbits
E Thompson / A Alexander	P5	M Bates	Owls
S Tumelty	SEN (4 days)	H Montgomery	Foxes

## Medical / Contact Numbers

Letters have been sent out which enable you to update details including an email address. Please make sure that the school has up to date medical information if your child has a particular need. Please inform the school if your contact details have changed in any way. You should also include the phone number of anyone who regularly looks after your child after school.

Appropriate inhalers should be given to the class teacher.

Please make sure that expiry dates have not been exceeded.

## Road Safety in the Mornings and Afternoons

**PLEASE DO NOT DRIVE YOUR CAR DOWN THE LANE AT 9AM, 2PM OR 3PM!  
CARS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE YELLOW LINES OUTSIDE THE GATES**

As you are aware the car access to school is very limited.

**Parents are not allowed to use the school staff car park to turn or pick up/drop off their children.**

We have a number of EA buses and taxis which need to come down the lane to pick up children. I ask that all other parents park their cars in the car park next to Down High School and collect their children on foot.



Please be aware that the traffic wardens patrol regularly and they have ticketed parents' cars in the past. Only use the pedestrian gates and please take special care while buses/taxis are reversing or turning.

**Remember to develop your child's independence! – See the note on the next page!**

### Staggered Entry / Home Times from 1 September:

Please do not come before your allotted Class Start Time – You may get wet if it is raining!

*In the morning there may be a small number of siblings coming to school at different times – they may come together and go straight to their class access door.*

#### P1-P3 classes

8.45am	Hedgehogs	Rabbits	Owls (P3s Only)
1.45pm			
9am	P3	P2 (Class Fire Door)	P1
2pm			1/9/20 onwards

#### P4-P7 Classes

8.45am	P7 (Class Fire Door)	Owls (P4 & upwards)	Foxes (Class Fire Door)	P4 (Lower KS1 Building Door)
2.45pm				
9am	P6 (Class Fire Door)	P5 (Class Fire Door)		
3pm				

*In a small number of cases there may be siblings leaving at 1.45 & 2pm or 2.45 & 3pm. The older child can leave earlier to accompany the younger child e.g. The 2pm sibling can leave at 1.45pm.*

On a Personal Note:

I am delighted to see everyone back in school for the new year.

All the pupils are looking very well and so smart in their new uniforms and shoes.

As I walked round the rooms today it was a pleasure to see everyone happy and glad to meet up with their friends again and to be able to make new friends with the children who have joined us.

The school is sparkling and bright and ready for our pupils. I must thank Philip, our caretaker and the cleaner staff for their hard work over the summer – the school is looking wonderful.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or queries about school.

Yours sincerely

Niall Stevenson

For the safety of our children and

# Developing Independence



**INSPIRE**  
Improvement, Nurture, Success, Potential  
Innovation, Responsibility, Endeavour

In order to foster independence all children in P2-7 should be encouraged to walk from the top of the lane to their classes without parental assistance whether they have travelled by car or on foot.

1. Parents are strongly encouraged to walk their children to and from school wherever possible.
2. **Only buses/taxis should go down the lane to school.**  
The buses cannot turn unless they have adequate room.
3. Parents who leave their children to school by car should **not** park their cars and bring the children down the lane to the school but instead say goodbye to the children in their cars and then quickly depart.
4. **Parents who walk their children to school should also say goodbye at the school pedestrian gate.**
5. **Entrance to school from 8.45/9.00am is through the class access doors.**  
Teachers are in class from 8.40am. Parents who wish to speak to a teacher must make a prior appointment through the school office.  
**Parents are not allowed to go into the building unless by prior appointment.**
6. **The school day starts at 8.45/9.00 depending on your child's class.**
7. Please ensure that your child is in school on time.  
The school will issue 'Late Cards' to pupils who are persistently late.  
These cards will have to be taken home and signed by parents.

Yours in safety

N. W Stevenson

# HOLIDAYS FOR 2020-2021

Dear Parents

25 August 2020



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Below are the holidays for the next academic year at Downpatrick Primary School. Parents are requested that any arrangements for family holidays take account of the dates below and these have been issued at this time to allow for such planning. **Downpatrick PS does not condone or sanction family holidays during term-time.** Teachers will not set work for absences of this nature.

**\*SDD – School Development Days** – The school has five of these throughout the year. To make it easier for parents we try, where possible, to have these days joining on to existing holidays. However, please note that one or two of these may be subject to change if CCEA or EA training schedules dictate. The school will send out any revisions as soon as we get them.

Yours faithfully

Niall W. Stevenson

Principal

**COVID19 – We will let parents know of any further changes to the school calendar as soon as we can.**

## August 2020

Thursday- Wed	17-21	'Baker Days' Staff Only (5 days)	
Monday	24-28	School starts at 9am for P2-P7 children (Half Day to 12pm)	<b>NO EA BUS this week</b>
Monday	31	Bank Holiday	

## September 2020

Tuesday 1 New P1 intake will have phased start as usual

## October 2020

Monday	5	School Closed for pupils - Staff training (SDD 1)*
Friday	23	School closes for all pupils at 1pm (No After School Club)
Monday	26	School Closed for pupils - Staff training (SDD 2)*
Tuesday-Friday	27-30	Hallowe'en Holidays

## November 2020

Monday 2 School starts back at 9am

## December 2020

Friday 18 School closes at 12.10pm (No After School Club)

## January 2021

Monday	4	School Closed for pupils – Staff Training (SDD 3) *
Tuesday	5	Easter Term begins at 9am

## February 2021

Monday - Friday	15 - 19	Half Term Holiday (One Week)
Monday	22	Schools starts back at 9am

## March 2021

Wednesday	17	St Patrick's Day – School Closed
Friday	26	School closes at 1pm for Easter Holidays (No After School Club)
Monday	29-31	Easter Holidays

## April 2021

Tuesday	1-9	Easter Holidays
Monday	12	School closed for pupils - Staff training (SDD4) *
Tuesday	13	Summer Term begins at 9am

## May 2021

Monday	3	May Day Holiday
Friday	28	School Closed for pupils – Staff Training (SDD 5) *
Monday	31	Bank Holiday

## June 2021

Wednesday 30 Last Day – Finish at 12.10pm (No After School Club)