



## DOVER DOWN LOWER SCHOOL

### NEWS



**MARCH 2021**

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been wonderful to see all of the children back in school. They have been amazing and are really working well in all classes. The learning has been fun with lots of well-being activities – out in the woods, chicks hatching in reception, music lessons, lots of PE, and learning about our emotions and feelings, and how to talk about these alongside the English, Maths and topic lessons. All children are trying their very best and achieving well. It has been lovely to chat to many of you and I can relay that as a school community we are all doing well and are getting our lives back on track. The Government roadmap appears to be heading in the right direction – so we look forward to the summer of opportunities!

We celebrated World Book in style last Thursday – the children had a fabulous day focusing on books and stories. I am excited to let you know that the Easter Bunny will be bounding into action on the last day of term – with an Easter Egg hunt.

As we have missed most of the Spring Term we will not be sending any reports home next week, so the next reports will be the end of year reports. We will be holding telephone parent consultations the week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> May. Letters to be sent home after the Easter break.

We look forward to Comic Relief day in school on Monday to raise money for those in need, especially given the tough times some people are currently experiencing.

Many thanks to Year 1 and 2 parents for their kind contributions of plants – our little area outside the classrooms is starting to take shape! This area is going to be opened up so that it can be used every playtime and lunchtime.

Summer Term will get off to a flying start with a reading enrichment week across the school. Children will focus on a range of reading activities including comprehension, favourite books, learning about an author, reading all sorts – such as packaging and advertising.

Warmest wishes  
Mrs Debra Brewster

*Our value for March 2021 is*  
***Responsibility***

Ways in which children can show responsibility:

- Looking after themselves and each other.
- Taking care of younger brothers and sisters.
- Looking after your pets.
- Tidying up at home.

*When we return to school after the Easter holidays our Value will be Acceptance – very appropriate for getting us through the current times!*

**Staff News**

We have said farewell to Mrs Duffy this term who worked as a mid-day supervisor. We wish her luck in her new role and thank her for her contributions on the lunchtime team.

We welcome Mrs Nourse to the Lunchtime team as a mid-day supervisor and Miss Darabi as a casual teaching assistant in our Year 1 class.



On Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March we will be celebrating and having fun on Dover Down Red Nose Day. Children can come into school wearing Superhero costumes or as much red as they can, or at least a token gesture. Don't forget a spoon and something round e.g. new potato or ping pong ball, for the races on the field!

If you are able to send in a voluntary donation to support the charity it would be much appreciated. Thank you.

## ***Big Easter Egg Drop***



*This year we are taking part in the Big Easter Egg Drop in support of Leighton-Linslade Helpers and would love to have donations of Easter Eggs brought into school **no later than Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**. These will be distributed to bring a smile to those families in crisis! Thank you for your support.*

## ***Happy Chicks in school***



**We have been lucky enough to have chicks again in our Reception Class recently. The children loved seeing all the eggs hatch into beautiful, fluffy chicks.**

## ***Doverly Down World Book Day Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021***

This was a super success – all the children and staff looked fantastic dressed up as book characters. A huge thank you to all the parents/carers for making the effort and providing such amazing costumes.





## Music in school

**Year 3 started their ukulele sessions last week with Natasha Thompson from Inspiring Music. It was great to have organised music back in school and Year 3 really enjoyed their first lesson. Mr Squires took part as well!**



**Mr Finch (guitar) and Mrs Stanbridge (piano) have also resumed their visits for individual lessons and Rocksteady are back in again on Friday afternoons; it's lovely to see them all in school.**

## PE Days after the Easter break

**Please can children come to school wearing their PE kit on the following days:**

**Monday – all year groups for Dance sessions**

**Weds – Year 1 and Year 2**

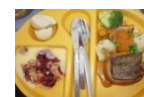
**Friday – Year 3 and Year 4**



## **DINNER MONEY UPDATE**



*Year 3 and Year 4: £2.00 daily and £10.00 weekly*



***After Easter this will increase to £2.30 daily (£11.50 weekly) in line with increased costs.***

*Please pay on the day or in advance for all meals – payment should be made on-line via SchoolMoney.*

*Please check your SchoolMoney account regularly – any accounts with an outstanding balance of over £20 will receive a letter from the Headteacher.*

## PTA UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure you will all agree that it is fantastic to have the children back in school. Well done to all parents for surviving the home schooling and to all the children for working hard!

While Christmas this year was a little different, one thing that did not change was **your fantastic generosity**. Donations to the PTA along with the hugely successful raffle raised well in excess of £1,000 for Dover. We also received a donation from the Leighton Buzzard Rotary Club so while we didn't have the fun of joining Santa on his tour around Leighton Buzzard, the PTA saw the benefits.

As you know the PTA was able to bring Magic Dave to the school and bring some Christmas cheer for the children. The PTA have also donated funds to provide playground equipment for the children such as skipping ropes, walk-on-stilts and hula-hoops. Finally, we have funded the replacement of a second screen in the Year 4 classroom. Now the Year 4s are back, Mrs Brewster is working with suppliers to bring this online.

As for what's happening next. Well, we had a word in the Easter Bunny's floppy ear so hopefully she can surprise the children before the holiday! With things improving in the spring it is our sincere hope that we will be able to organise a summer fayre. For now, we continue to run some socially distanced fundraising. This includes the lottery with the first prize of £25k, you can buy tickets at the link below:

Join the lottery to support Dover and maybe win big!

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/dover-down-lower-school>

Make buying insurance more rewarding! Get up to £12.50 using a price comparison site!

Booking a holiday (finally)? Booking.com will bag us 4% donation at no cost to you.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/doverdownpa>

Buy Name badges through Stikins

<https://www.stikins.co.uk> - please use Dover Down PTA quote number 6066 when ordering and PTA will get 30% commission.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Tim Machin**  
**PTA Chair**



## GOVERNOR'S UPDATE

Dear Parents, Carers and Families

In what has been a challenging year for all, both in school-life and at home, the Doverly Down Governing Board has been inspired by the resilience and cheerful spirits of the Doverly Down staff, pupils and parents. As a Governing Board, we are grateful to Mrs Brewster and all the staff at Doverly Down for the time and dedication they have displayed in keeping the school running. Their passion and innovative approach have really shone through during this time. From navigating online learning using Google Classrooms, to all-new experiences in the return to school - the past twelve months have been a real learning curve for all.

Pupils, staff and parents have had to work together to keep the school environment as normal and stable as possible and we've seen how the school has seamlessly pivoted its approach to online activities. We have been particularly impressed by the live-streamed lessons that children have received. This could not have been achieved without the on-going support from you, the parents and carers. We thank you for playing your part in following the new guidance, be it the controlled drop off and pick-up times, or helping your children understand the new behaviours at school. Although this has been a very different end of term to usual, it has been a pleasure to see the whole community pull together.

The members of the Governing Board have also had a busy spring term, the Management & Resources Committee has met and we have also had a Full Governing Board meeting in January to monitor the curriculum and school data, finances, and looked at pupil, parent and community issues.

The Governing Board has increased its numbers with the appointment of **Poppy Sands** as our new parent governor, **Natalya Walker** as our new staff governor, both Mrs Blessing and I have been voted on as community governors, with hopefully two more community governors being appointed at our next Full Governing Board meeting in April.

If you have a concern or a point of view to share, please let us know. We can be contacted via the School Office.

Best Wishes,

**Ian Haynes**

**Chair of Governors on behalf of the Governing Board**

## Safeguarding

If your child is being collected by another adult you must inform his/her class teacher or telephone the school before the end of the school day and give the person's name and, where applicable, relationship to the child being collected. We cannot release children unless we have parent/carer permission. This includes school activities/trips picking up and dropping off.

If you have a regular arrangement for another adult to collect your child please send an email into school with the details.

Please can you also ensure that your children are supervised as they leave school.

The School Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website or from the school office.  
Our Safeguarding Governor is Mr Ian Haynes.

Thank you for your co-operation.

### KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE – IN/OUT of THE CAR

When parking on the school site we do not recommend that any child, no matter what age is left in the car for any duration. A child left unsupervised is at risk in terms of being harmed by injury, choking or vehicle collision. We also want to emphasise that anyone could attempt to take your child from the car.

Bring your child with you when you drop off or collect – it only takes an extra few minutes.

Please keep all children safe from harm!

## **Reporting absence**

If your child is unable to come to school please contact the school via telephone or email by 9.15 am on the first day of absence. For safeguarding reasons this initial contact should come via the parent/carer rather than a childminder or friend, unless in exceptional circumstances.

If there has been no communication the school office will send a text to parents/carers after registers have closed asking the parent to contact the school within the next 30 minutes to confirm the reason for the absence.

If there is no response to the text after 30 minutes the office will telephone the primary contact first and then other contacts in order (using details held on the student update sheets).

***If your child is having a Covid 19 test at a Test Centre, please let us know and inform us of the results once received.***

Please keep the school informed of any on-going absence. Thank you for your help.



## Dates for the diary



### 2021 Dates for the diary

<b>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021</b>	<b>Doverly Down Red Nose Day (non-uniform: children can dress as Superheroes or in red)</b>
Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Last day of Spring Term <b>PTA Easter Egg Hunt in the morning in class bubbles including Pre-School</b>
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Inset Day
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	First day of Summer Term
<b>Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b>	<b>Tempest Class Photos (YR – Y4)</b>
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2021	May Day Bank Holiday
<b>Week Beginning 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021</b>	<b>Parent telephone consultations (more details to follow)</b>
Monday 3 <sup>1<sup>st</sup></sup> May – Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Half Term week including Bank Holiday Monday
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Inset Day
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2021	End of Summer Term