Newsletter

Respect, Compassion, Responsibility, Courage

Be the best you can be, every

Term: Autumn 2026	Issue No: 1	Date: 4th September

Dear Parents, Carers and Children

Welcome Back!

I would like to begin by extending a very warm welcome back to all our children, families and staff and, of course, a special welcome to those joining the North Downs community for the very first time. One of the greatest joys of September is seeing our school come back to life after the summer break. Despite the rather grey weather on our first day, it was wonderful to see the children arrive full of smiles, excitement and enthusiasm for the year ahead. Walking around the classrooms over the last few days, I have been struck by how quickly the children have settled into their new routines, reconnected with friends and embraced the opportunities that a new school year brings.

The start of a new academic year is always a time of hope and possibility. There are new friendships to make, new experiences to enjoy and lots of exciting learning ahead. As a school, we are looking forward to continuing our journey together, building on our successes and ensuring that every child feels happy, supported and inspired to achieve their very best. As always, I would like to thank you for your continued support. North Downs is a very special community, and it is the strength of the partnership between home and school that helps our children thrive. I hope you enjoy reading this first newsletter of the year and learning more about some of the exciting priorities and opportunities that lie ahead.

During our assemblies this week, we reminded the children of our Whole School Values and our Values Awards. We are delighted that several children have already received awards in recognition of the positive behaviours and attitudes we are encouraging and celebrating across the school. Our **Whole School Values** are:

Respect:	Compassion:
Value everyone and everything - in how you listen, speak and in what you do	show care and understanding for everyone
Responsibility:	**Courage:**
Make good choices because your actions matter	be brave; believe you can

Remembering Annabel Woodham

As we begin the new school year, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the sad loss of Annabel Woodham during the summer holidays.

Annabel was far more than our swimming coach. For many years, she was a familiar and much-loved part of life at North Downs, helping generations of children gain confidence in the water and celebrating every achievement, no matter how big or small. Her kindness, warmth, encouragement and ability to put children at ease made her a very special person, and she touched the lives of countless pupils, families and staff.

Annabel's enthusiasm and dedication will be greatly missed, and I know many members of our community will continue to feel the loss of someone who played such an important role in their children's school experience. Our thoughts remain with Annabel's family, friends and all who knew and loved her.

We recognise that children may process bereavement in different ways and that some pupils may have questions or feelings they wish to share. Please remember that school is always here to offer support, advice and guidance to families. If you have any concerns about your child or would welcome support in helping them understand and cope with loss, please do speak to one of us or get in touch via ELSA@northdowns.surrey.sch.uk

Attendance Matters

One of our key whole-school priorities this year is improving attendance. Last year, our overall attendance was below the national average and we know that, together, we can make a real difference.

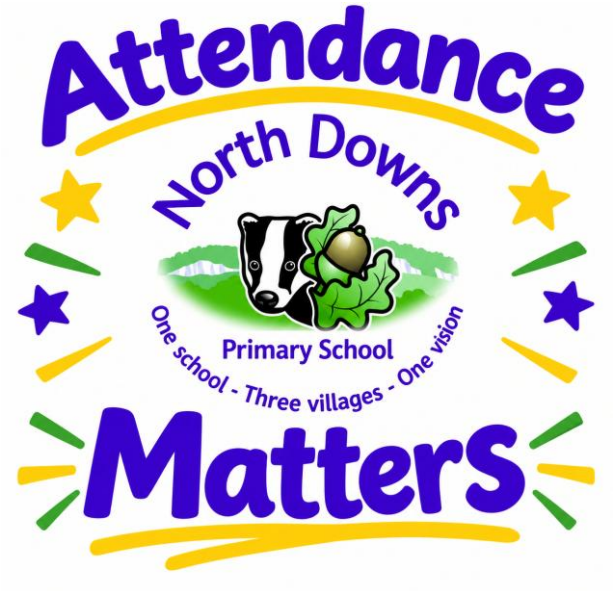
Every day in school counts. When children attend regularly, they benefit not only from their learning but also from the friendships, routines and sense of belonging that help them thrive. Even occasional absences can have a significant impact. Lessons build on previous learning and missing just a few days can make it harder for children to keep up and feel confident in class.

To help raise the profile of attendance across the school, each class will display its attendance percentage daily. We hope this will encourage conversations about the importance of being in school and celebrate the commitment shown by our pupils and families. We recognise that children will sometimes be unwell and should stay at home when necessary. However, where possible, we ask parents to prioritise attendance and avoid taking holidays during term time. Improving attendance is something we can only achieve through a strong partnership between school and home.

We need your support. Every school day matters and every parent can make a difference. By ensuring your child attends regularly and arrives on time, you are giving them the very best chance to succeed academically, socially and emotionally. Let's work together to make attendance everyone's priority this year. To keep attendance at the forefront of our work, I will share regular updates in future newsletters so that families can see the progress we are making together.

I am also pleased to share that **Mrs Harrison has taken on the role of Attendance Officer**. If your child is absent, please notify the school as soon as possible by emailing **attendance@northdowns.surrey.sch.uk** or by leaving a message on the absence line.

Thank you for your support in ensuring that every child has the best possible opportunity to learn, achieve and flourish.



Dates for the Diary

Tuesday 6th October - Parent Teacher Consultations
Thursday 8th October - Parent Teacher Consultations
Monday 12th October – Individual Photos at Brockham
Tuesday 13th October - Individual Photos Leigh & Betchworth
Wednesday 14th October - Year 4 Residential to High Ashurst
Friday 16th October - Year 4 Return from High Ashurst
Friday 16th October – Break up for Half Term
Monday 2nd November – Children return to school
Tuesday 8th December– Year 2 Nativity
Wednesday 9th December – Junior Christmas Carol Evening
Thursday 10th December – Year 1 Nativity
Friday 11th December – Year R Nativity
Tuesday 15th December – School Christmas Lunch
Friday 18th December – Break up for Christmas
Monday 4th January - INSET Day
Tuesday 5th January – Children return to school
Friday 12th February – Break up for Half Term
Monday 22nd February – Children return to school
Thursday 25th March – Children break up for Easter

Packed Lunches: Forgotten Lunch Arrangements

If your child forgets their packed lunch, don't worry, we can arrange a school lunch through the office. Please ensure there are sufficient funds in your child's lunch account to cover the cost, as we are unable to order a meal without payment being available.

Go Wilf and Charlie…

Wilf and Charlie in Year 2 are undertaking a 5k colour run in October to raise money for FONDs. Please do support them by following the link below:
https://www.justgiving.com/page/wilf-charlie5k?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL
Good luck boys...and thank you!

Kidz4™ YOGA

AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S YOGA PROVIDER

Kids Yoga Breakfast Club

A fun and calm, confidence-building yoga class for children — every week at Brockham Village Hall.



WHEN
Every Wednesday Morning, 08:00–08:45

AGES
6 – 11 years

WHERE
Brockham Village Hall (Old Snooker Room)

INCLUDED
A walking shuttle service to Brockham North Downs School

Book for a FREE taster class: Wednesday 9th or Wednesday 16th September

To reserve, WhatsApp Abi on 07399 648626
Or book via email: eastsurrey@kidz4.com

Wishing you all a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

JMDouglass