



# Downham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Church Road, Ramsden Heath, Billericay, Essex CM11 1NU

Telephone: 01268 710387 Fax: 01268 711405

e-mail: [admin@downham-ceap.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@downham-ceap.essex.sch.uk)

[www.downhamschool.org](http://www.downhamschool.org)

Headteachers: Mrs H. Craig B.Ed. (Hons). N.P.Q.H. Mrs S. Wilson B.Ed. (Hons). N.P.Q.H.

**6<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

Dear Parents

Welcome back to the new school year. We extend a warm welcome to Mrs Kim Newhouse who is joining the team and will be teaching Foundation stage and Year 1. We also welcome 3 new teaching assistants, Mrs Mizen, Mrs Flood and Mrs Stewart and 2 new midday assistants, Mrs Hills and Mrs Green. We also extend a special welcome to all the new children in the Foundation Stage and other year groups who are new to us this year. We hope they will settle in quickly and enjoy their time here at Downham.

## **Communication with parents**

We have lots planned already for the school year and there are exciting times ahead. Please see the attached information on school priorities for the coming year for more in depth information. One of our priorities is to enable you as parents to feel both welcome and fully informed about what is happening in your child's education. We will be inviting parents to a variety of events and opportunities throughout the year including parent information sessions, services, concerts, sports events and open days. We value all parental support whether it be on the PTA, helping in classrooms or individual support for your child at home. We do welcome classroom support from parents and grandparents. This can include anything from hearing children read, supporting groups or individual children or helping with display and more practical tasks. If you would like to become a regular parent helper please let us know via the office and we will be in touch with you.

## **Paperless Communication**

As you are aware communication with parents will be mainly through e-mail and text. Please be patient with us as we set the new systems up. The majority of letters will be e-mailed out to parents and a reminder of all letters that have gone out that week will be placed on the Friday newsletter. Where permission slips are required there will be an opportunity to print these at home and send them to the office or alternatively there will be a supply of blank slips in the school entrance area. We hope this system will help to reduce costs whilst ensuring that all parents have received important information even when children are absent.

## **Stationery Equipment**

This year there will be a big focus on encouraging children to be organised and responsible for their own equipment. Children in KS2 will all be given a labelled pencil, (pen from year 4) ruler and eraser by the school at the start of the year and they will be expected to look after this equipment. Should their equipment run out they will be provided with another from the school. If a child loses a pen or pencil more than once in any term we will be requesting a voluntary contribution of 50p per item to replace it from the school office. We would like to ask parents to support us on this, perhaps requesting that the child uses their pocket money to pay for this in order to encourage a sense of responsibility. Children in year 3 will work towards a "pen licence" in Year 3 which will be awarded once the child can produce clear, legible, neat joined writing consistently. Children will be able to bring in pens from

home provided they are black fibre tips or rollerballs and are also labelled. Writing homework should be completed in black pen by children in year 4 and above and any children in year 3 with a pen licence. Maths homework should be completed in sharp pencil.

### **Learning Times Tables**

We will be placing a big focus on learning tables this year. Your child's class teacher will be telling your child more about this over the next couple of weeks. There are 2 display boards in the school which will celebrate the children's success in this. Please practise tables at home with your child as it is an integral part of the maths curriculum and a way you can support this at home. Children in key stage 2 will continue to have or be given a times table award card. This card remains with the child as they move through the school and replacements will be charged at 75p.

### **ICT**

We are in the process of using a new provider called IT's Learning for our ICT internet based work. For this reason e-folio is no longer accessible to children and parents. We will inform you when this becomes available later in the term and how it can be accessed from home.

### **Holidays during Term Time**

We cannot stress enough how important it is to avoid taking holiday during term time. Whilst we are aware of the financial implications of this, there is no doubt that this is detrimental to your child's academic and social progress in school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Helen Craig / Sue Wilson

Headteachers

### **Dates for your diaries this half term:**

#### **September:**

Wed 14<sup>th</sup> – Swimming starts for children in year 3.

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> – 2.30. Parent meeting for parents of children in Year 1 and 2. (Phonics and spelling)

Mon 19<sup>th</sup> – Clubs start this week.

Tues 27<sup>th</sup> – PTA AGM

Fri 30<sup>th</sup> – 7pm. Wine tasting event for parents. More details to follow.

#### **October**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October –Hayling Island Residential Trip for Year 6. Meeting for parents and children. 6pm in School Hall.

Tues 4<sup>th</sup> / Wed 5<sup>th</sup> – 2.30pm. Harvest Festival in the Hall More details to follow.

Wed 19<sup>th</sup> – Individual photographs

Fri 21<sup>st</sup> – Non pupil day

Mon 24<sup>th</sup> – Half term week



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE