

WELCOME TO DOWNEND SCHOOL

Downend School

PARENT NEWSLETTER:

9th July, 2026

Head's Messages

This is an update regarding the school closure resulting from the strike action being taken by the NEU.

Thank you for your patience while you await further information regarding the planned strikes for Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th July. This newsletter is to confirm the arrangements for these dates.

The school will **open on Monday 13th July for Year 10 and 12 students only**. Please read the information below regarding the timings for each day if your child is in Year 10 or 12.

Years **7, 8 and 9** will remain at home on Monday and Tuesday returning to school on **Wednesday 15th July**, when the school will reopen fully.

As I explained in the communication last week, the structure of the timetable makes it extremely difficult to operate safely when staffing levels fall below what is required for normal lessons. Each year group has a separate timetabled rotation of lessons which present unique challenges when staffing levels are lower. All of the different possibilities have been worked through against the staffing levels we anticipate having across the school and in specific subjects and opening to Year 10 and 12 are the only viable options for next Monday and Tuesday.

Please be assured that keeping the school closed to specific year groups is not a decision we have taken lightly. Our priority is always the safety and wellbeing of your children, and we cannot guarantee this with significantly reduced staffing.

Year 12

Students should attend according to their usual timetable. Lessons will run where possible, and the independent study room will remain available should any lessons be disrupted. The Post-16 support team (Mrs Barrington and Mrs Budden) will be on hand throughout.

Year 12 Geography field work will go ahead as planned.

Please note that the main school canteen will be open at break and lunch on Monday and break only on Tuesday.

Year 10

The following applies to all Year 10 students. Students are expected to attend in normal uniform and prepared for the day. Please note the timings of opening are different to a normal school day and different on Monday and Tuesday.

Monday 13th July

Students are to arrive at **9.45am for registration**. They are to go to their normal registration room where a teacher will register them. This is essential to ensure we have accurate records of who is on the school site. Our normal procedures for following up on absence apply and if your child is unwell it is essential that you report their absence through the usual channels.

Lesson 2 and 3 all year 10 students will be involved in workshops with outside speakers from Solve. These are preplanned workshops and we are really pleased that they can continue to go ahead. Students will be involved in two workshops focusing on influence and ideology (with specific focus on online influences, online presence and safety) and the second focusing on mental health and well being.

Lesson 4 and 5 will be normal lessons as per the timetable for week A.

Tuesday 14th July

Tuesday will operate as a normal school day for Year 10 with the exception being that school will close at 12.25pm.

It is regrettable that we are not able to open all day for Year 10 but this is due to the availability of staff to teach in the timetabled subjects on that afternoon.

The canteen will be open as normal on Monday and open on Tuesday break time.

Years 7, 8 and 9

School will reopen to all students on **Wednesday 15th July**, following the normal timetable. This week is **Week A**, and the canteen will operate as usual.

I am sure that you appreciate the complexities of setting appropriate work for students as striking members of staff will not set work and colleagues in other unions can not be asked to set work for them. Students should continue to use Sparx, SENECA and Educake for work relating to subjects they would have had during the course of Monday and Tuesday.

Packed lunch will be available for any students in receipt of free school meals. This can be collected from main reception between 12-1pm on Monday and Tuesday.

We recognise that this situation is challenging and we appreciate your flexibility as we respond to the staffing constraints caused by the strike action. Please be assured that we are doing everything we can to minimise disruption and keep students safe. We appreciate everything you're doing to help manage this period of disruption.

Yours faithfully

Rachael Corns

Headteacher