



# WELCOME TO DOWNEND SCHOOL

*Downend School*

## PARENT NEWSLETTER: End of term and start of term arrangements

10th July, 2026

### Head's Messages

Thank you for your patience during the recent hot-weather closures, the strike action this week, and the further planned strikes next week. We are working hard to keep our communication both timely and informative, while recognising that in busy family life it can be challenging to keep up with regular updates from school.

We genuinely appreciate you taking the time to read and engage with these messages so that we can all move through the remainder of this term — and into the new school year in September — with a shared understanding of the arrangements in place.

### End of Term Arrangements

The last few weeks have been filled with many wonderful events. We have welcomed new students for their induction days for year 7, year 12 and our new staff, as well as Enrichment Week. The summer concert and Art exhibition were absolute treats on Wednesday evening and this was followed by the Downend awards ceremony last night. More on these on the final celebratory newsletter of the year.

A reminder that the last day of term is **Tuesday 21st July** and school finishes for students at **12.25pm** on that day. Normal lessons will take place during periods 1 and 2, with period 3 taking place in tutor bases for their end of year celebrations.

There is a significant amount of lost property and students can come to the student support centre and speak to one of them if they have an item missing. Any uncollected **lost property** will be donated or recycled if not collected by the end of term 6.

### Start of Term Arrangements

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The **first day** for incoming year 7 and 12 will be on Friday 4th September. These year groups will have received separate communication regarding their first day. For years 8 - 11, the first day will be Monday 7th September. Students should arrive promptly, ready for an 8.45 start to tutor time in full school uniform. Period 1 will be with their tutor group and lessons will begin period 2.

High standards of **attendance**, **punctuality** and **uniform** remain priorities into term 1. We hugely appreciate your support in maintaining our high expectations in all areas of school life.

## Open Evening and INSET Day: Early Closures in Term 1

The school's open evening will take place on Thursday 10th September and therefore **school for the students will finish at 12:25pm**. Any students who can volunteer to act as guides during the evening would be greatly appreciated as ticket bookings suggest it's going to be another busy evening!

## Uniform

In preparation for September we ask all families to ensure that your child has the required uniform for school. The full details can be found in the uniform booklet on the website. In summary the uniform should include:

- White shirt - long or short sleeve
- House tie
- Grey trousers, grey tailored shorts or grey skirt of the appropriate style and length
- Downend School jumper or blazer
- All leather look black polishable footwear

The Downend uniform is designed to be gender-neutral and suitable for the whole school year. We do not have a separate summer uniform. Over recent weeks, we have received several enquiries about students wearing PE kit during very warm weather.

To ensure clarity and consistency, PE kit will only be permitted as an alternative uniform when an official amber or red weather warning is issued by the Met Office for our area. We understand that families may hold differing views on this, and that other schools may take different approaches. However, we kindly ask that you respect this decision and avoid contacting the school to request changes.

Sadly, our reception team and student support team has experienced some unpleasantness from callers this week. This is not okay, and we ask our whole community to continue showing kindness and respect.

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If any adjustment to uniform is required, such as moving to PE kit, we will communicate this to all parents through our official channels so that students and families can prepare for the following day.

## Staffing

Across terms 5 and 6, schools throughout the country begin preparing for September by interviewing and appointing new staff. As you may have seen nationally, fewer teachers are entering the profession, and staffing has become a real challenge for many schools.

With that in mind, we're very pleased to share that only five members of staff will be moving on at the end of this academic year, including two colleagues who are retiring. We're incredibly proud that, even in a challenging national picture, we have been able to recruit and retain such fantastic staff - a reflection of the wonderful community your children help create.

We know you will join us in offering our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to those leaving Downend School, and in wishing them every happiness as they begin their next chapters and new adventures. The staff leaving us are:

- Tina Hanks - HLTA
- Stephanie Payne - Data Officer
- Sumbul Rafik-Hussaini - Maths teacher
- Talal Khan - Mentor
- Jacey Shortt - ESA

## Term time dates for 2026/2027 and Inset dates

This is just a reminder of the term dates and inset dates for next academic year.

The term dates for **2026/2027** are:

|                           |                            |                          |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Term 1: 3/9/26 - 23/10/26 | Term 2: 2/11/26 - 18/12/26 | Term 3: 4/1/27 - 12/2/27 |
| Term 4: 22/2/27 - 25/3/27 | Term 5: 12/4/27 - 28/5/27  | Term 6: 7/6/27 - 23/7/27 |

It is important to highlight that the term dates **do not** align 100% with South Glos Local Authority dates (start of term 1 and end of term 6 are different) and therefore if you have a child in another school which is not within the CSET academy, these dates will be different.

**The INSET Days for 2026-27 are as follows:**

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Thursday 3rd September\*  
2026

Friday 2nd October 2026

Monday 2nd November

Monday 4th January 2027

Monday 12th **and** Tuesday 13th April 2027

Monday 5th July 2027

Last year we trialled some half INSET days. We can confirm that all INSET days this year are full days and there are no half INSET days.

## Next Term's Key Dates

|           |                                                           |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 3rd Sept  | First day of term for staff: INSET Day (1)                |
| 4th Sept  | First day of term for year 7 and 12 (Induction day)       |
| 7th Sept  | First day of term for whole school                        |
| 10th Sept | Open Evening -Early Closure for all Students (at 12.25pm) |
| 15th Sept | Community Council Meeting (1)                             |
| 17th Sept | Year 12 Information Evening                               |
| 24th Sept | Year 7 and 13 Tutor Evening                               |
| 1st Oct   | INSET day (2)                                             |
| 22nd Oct  | Post 16 Open Evening                                      |
| 23rd Oct  | Last day of term 1                                        |