

Downey 411

The **MOST** valuable school information at your fingertips

For more complete details, explanations and procedures please refer to your

Downey School Handbook available on the school website

1. **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:** Is located in the Aspen system. Please go in and ensure that your information is updated. To be sent user id and password, contact aspen@westwood.k12.ma.us
2. **Attendance:** All absence must be entered into School Dismissal Manager before school starts. Please contact the office for your user id and password.
3. **Accident, Illness, and Injury:** Parents notified by the nurse any time a child receives an injury to the head, regardless of its severity; when a student's temp is above 100° and/or the Nurse determines parental notification is needed. If your child has a temp greater than 100°, has mono, strep throat etc, keep them at home and contact the school nurse.
4. **Arrival Time 8:30 a.m.** on the playground. In bad weather, students come in the front doors. **Students CANNOT be dropped off on the playground before 8:30 a.m.** There is no supervision on the playground until 8:30 a.m.
5. **Official Start Time for School 8:50 a.m.:** Attendance taken at this time. Students arriving after 8:50 will be marked tardy. Please check in with the school secretary before going to class.
6. **School Dismissal:** Official time is 3:10, **EXCEPT ON Early Release Wednesdays** when all students are released at 11:50.
7. **Early Release Wednesdays:** All students dismissed at 11:50 a.m. Check school calendar on Downey website for pre determined dates as they change month to month.
8. **Parking Area:** Two parking areas on Downey Street, 1st directly in front of the school and the 2nd in front of the soccer field. You can park here anytime and walk your children to school.
9. **School Drop – Off At Arrival:** You do have the option of parking on Downey Street and walking your child up to the arrival area. **If you choose to do this, DO NOT walk up the front hill and walk between moving vehicles in the front circle to get to the other side.** If you choose to opt for the drop-off line, please wait in line in your car to drive through the front circle. Please do not make a u-turn in the middle of Downey Street or at the entrance/exit of the front circle. **When in the drop off line, DO NOT pass any vehicles in front of you.** Your child should be in the back seat, passenger side with back pack available. A staff member will open the door, so you should not get out of the car.
10. **No U-Turn Areas:** **No U-turns are allowed near Putting Drive or next to the driveway to the Downey school at anytime. The turn-around area is at the end of Downey Street/Hawktree Drive.**
11. **Safety To and From School:** Students should always walk on the sidewalks and cross in the crosswalks.
12. **Review Pickup-Drop-off Procedure:** Please review all above drop off, pickup and parking procedures with ALL family members who may be responsible for driving to and from school.
13. **Kindergarten Arrival and Dismissal Time:** 1st day of school Open House, parents can go to school with their child between 9:00 & 11:00. 2nd day of school, Kindergartners go to school without their parents and stay until 11:50.
14. **Welcome Back Coffee:** All families are welcome on the 2nd day of school to attend a morning coffee hosted by the PTO from 8:50-9:30AM. It's a great time to meet new parents.
15. **Kindergarten Bus Stops:** Parents or authorized persons must be present before a Kindergartner is allowed off the school bus.
16. **Walkers:** All walking students are dismissed via the gym door. If you are picking your child up after school and choose to park on Downey Street, please be sure to park in one spot. If you are taking up one and a half spots, it does limit the amount of parking spaces. We suggest waiting for your child on the sidewalk near the front circle exit. We have a crossing guard at that end and plenty of staff to supervise students as they walk down the sidewalk of Downey Street, there is no need for all parents to be waiting by the tennis courts. .
17. **Departure Changes/ Bus Changes:** Students are not permitted to take an unassigned bus home. If your child's dismissal routine **must** be changed please update School Dismissal Manager by 10:00 a.m. We understand that emergencies do arise, which could require a change in the dismissal plan, but other than that there should be no reason to change your child's plan. Please keep your child's dismissal plan as consistent as possible. As always, safety is our main concern, and it is critical that ALL children arrive at their after school destination safely.
18. **Visiting the School:** All parents visiting the school must enter through the front door and sign in at the office in the Visitors' Log. **Due to confidentiality please have a seat in the lobby. All visitors must wait in the lobby UNLESS the teacher has requested you to go directly to the classroom.**
19. **Bicycles and Scooters:** Students are encouraged to ride them to school. Once on school property students must walk their bike/scooter the remaining way to the bike racks.
20. **Downey Communications:** Please check our website for updates <http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/downey-school/>
21. **Communication To and From the Teachers:** Notes can be sent in the student folder or by email. Response time to emails depends on the classroom day and may not be read until the school day is over.
22. **Student Folder:** All students will need a folder for communication between the teacher and the parent. This folder is kept in the students backpack and should be checked every day.
23. **Recess:** 30 minute recess daily. If raining, students go to classrooms and play board games and/or read. There is no recess or lunch on early release Wednesdays.

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24. **Outside Play vs. Inside Play:** Students play outside on days that the wind chill is above 20° and not raining. If below 20° or raining, students play games or read in the classrooms.
25. **Shoes:** No flip-flops, backless sandals, open toe shoes. Sneakers are the best!
26. **Winter Clothes:** Students should come to school with snow pants, hat, gloves and boots everyday during the winter. If the wind chill is 20° outside or more, the students will play outside. Students who do not have snow pants and boots play on the blacktop only during recess. **Label, label, label all clothing!**
27. **Music, Art, Library and P.E.:** AKA “specials”. All students at Downey participate in Music, Art, Library and P.E. The exact number of days per week is determined by grade curriculum.
28. **4th- 5th Band:** Students choose which instrument they would like to play.
29. **Library:** Students go to library at least once a week and will check out books. Books are due back the following week, if not returned, students can only checkout one book until all returned. The Librarian also needs support in the room, contact them if interested in helping out.
30. **Downey “Lingo”:** The following “lingo” is used by teachers throughout the day. This is a great way to ask questions about what happened at school: Morning Messenger, Just Right Book or Work, 5th Grade Reading Buddy, Buddy Work, Choice Time, Line Leader, Inside Voice, Word of the Day, Circle Time, Technology Time, Brain Frames, Lexia, Brainpop, Morning Meeting, Community Share, Writing Notebook, Expected Behavior
31. **Safety Procedures: Shelter in Place** - Teaching and learning continues, no one allowed in hallways. Most often used when an ambulance is called. **Lockdown** (Practiced 2-3 times a year. Students and staff remain in classroom with doors locked and no noise) **Fire Drills** (Practiced 4 times a year, students and staff exit building to a designated safe location, such as the field)
32. **Math League:** Offered to grades 3 to 5. Meets weekly before school for 45 min. Sign-up sheet is in October.
33. **Report Card Distribution:** Nov, Jan, June
34. **Parent -Teacher Conferences:** November & April, Teachers will communicate times.
35. **Curriculum Night:** For parents only, sometime in mid September, parents visit classrooms for about 30 minutes and meet with principal in an all school assembly. Teacher discusses curriculum and answers questions.
36. **Room Parent:** Each classroom has at least one, recruited by the teacher at the start of school.
37. **Parent Volunteers:** Parents are welcome in the school to help in the library and in classrooms working with children under a teacher’s direction. If you have an interest in volunteering, contact your child’s teacher and/or librarian.
38. **Birthday Celebrations: *No food.*** A great way to celebrate your child’s birthday in class is to have your child donate a board game or book to their classroom.
39. **Food:** In an effort to keep children healthy and protect children with food allergies, Most celebrations do not include food. If the teacher chooses to have a celebration with food, students will bring a “party in a bag” from home, prepared by their parents.
40. **Snack:** All students have snack time in the morning. Most if not all classrooms are nut free. Your teacher will inform you if you have a nut free classroom.
41. **Lunch:** Students can buy their lunch using their lunch card or bring their own. Nuts, peanut butter etc. are allowed in the lunchroom. There is a designated Nut Free Table in the lunchroom.
42. **Lunch Card:** Each student receives a school issued lunch card automatically. Their card is kept in the classroom. It is a prepaid card. Parents prepay using the electronic system myschoolbucks.com OR send a check made out to “Westwood Food Service” and drop the payment in the District Mailbox located at the High School, green mailbox in the driveway.
43. **Extras for Lunch, Cash Only:** Students can buy extras after they have eaten their lunch. These extras cost \$.50 and are cash only (frozen yogurt, ice cream etc.) This option is for students in Grades 1 -5.
44. **Student Council:** For grades 3 - 5. Two students (boy and girl) from each class represented. Students are voted on by their peers to represent their class starting sometime in September.
45. **Spelling Bee:** Offered for grades 3 to 5.
46. **Geography Bee:** Offered for grades 4 and 5.
47. **Gift Book Program:** An exciting way to make a contribution to the library. Order form sent home in September.
48. **Lost and Found:** Located in the lobby. Please label all belongings.
49. **PTO:** The Downey Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is a very important association that depends largely on the financial generosity of the Downey Parents. *****All Downey parents are asked to support the PTO as much as they financially can, through PTO Dues, Fundraisers and Appeals**.*** The Downey PTO is responsible for funding: transportation field trips, visiting author, and class enrichment programs which compliments and expands the current curriculum.
50. **Volunteers for PTO:** The PTO is always looking for assistance on committees, events, fundraisers, PTO board positions etc. Contact the PTO.
51. **SE PAC:** Special Education Parent Advisory Council, a district wide parent organization supporting parents with students with disabilities. Westwoodsepac.org
52. **FOUNDATION FOR WESTWOOD EDUCATION:** This group fundraises for all of Westwood. Money raised from residents, sponsors, events and donations are then placed into a Grant Fund. Grant ideas are then written by residents and sent to the foundation requesting Grant Funds. Depending of the grant amount and the grant idea, the Grant Funds may be awarded to that resident for their grant idea.

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53. **Downey Directory:** Lists names, phone #s, addresses, emails of students by class. Parent authorization needed for students to be published. Your yearly PTO dues pay for a copy of this.