



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Sport Policy

Downsend School

UK

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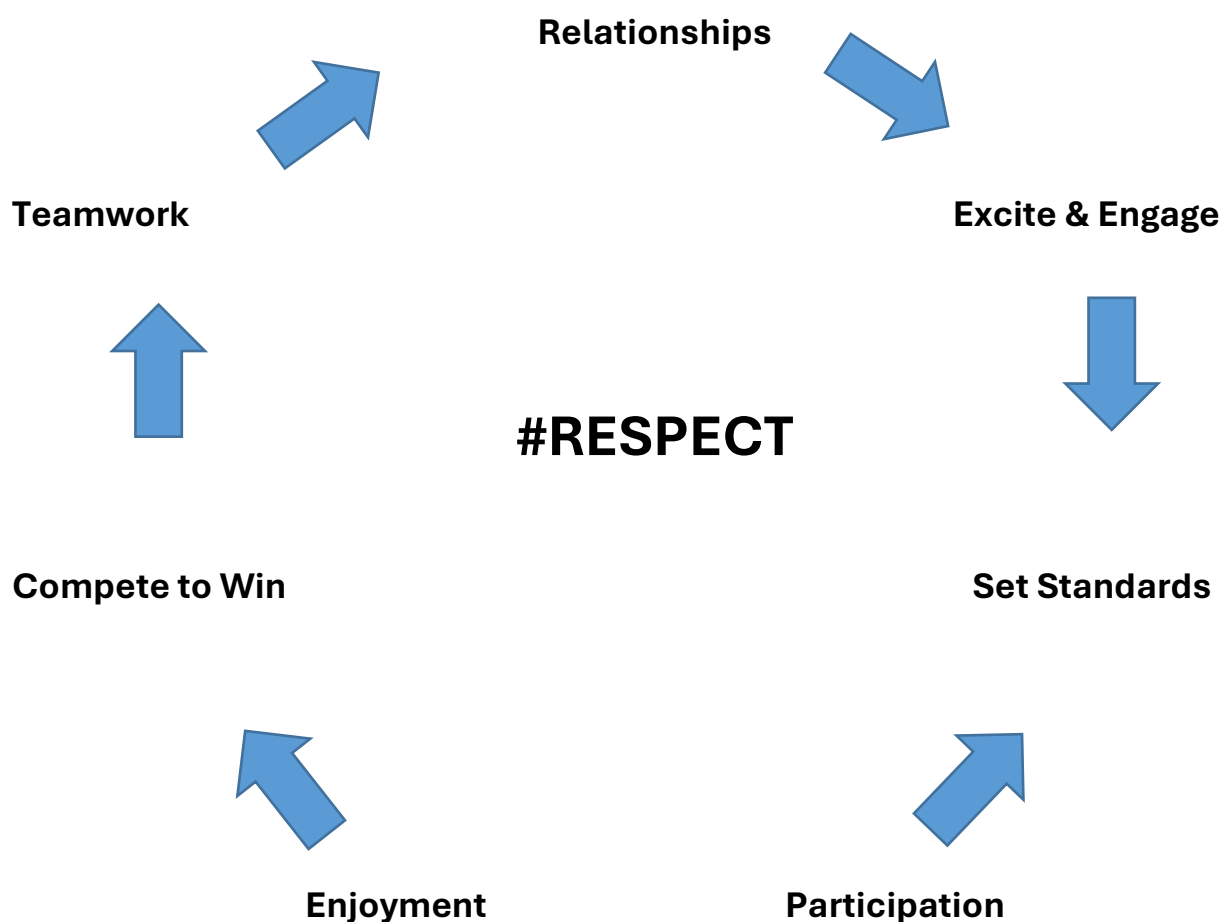
THRIVE IN A RAPIDLY EVOLVING WORLD

Downsend Sports Philosophy

‘Sport to be played with an attacking mindset that excites those playing it. An ethos where we play to compete; where calculated risk taking is rewarded and losing is not seen as a negative but something to learn from.’

For the elite; *‘to create an environment that nurtures and fosters their talents.’*

#TeamDownsend



1. #RESPECT

Relationships – *To create relationships between staff, pupils and parents where other schools look at us and say; I want what they have.*

For pupils – love; sometimes tough honest love, but to create a nurturing environment where all feel warmth, feel valued and feel appreciated.

For parents – to create positive relationships where honest communication is a two way process that is always pupil centred, with the pupils best interest being the most important thing.

Excite & Engage – *The things in life that excite and engage you are not random. They are connected to your purpose.*

To excite those playing, coaching and spectating.

To engage an entire school community (pupils, parents & staff).

Set Standards (don't follow) – *We make no apologies for setting high standards.*

To set *high* standards in all that we do. To not be swayed by what other schools are doing but to set standards that we believe in and stick to them.

Without standards, there can be no improvement.

Participation – *Don't let the fear of failing triumph over the joy of participating.*

It doesn't matter what team you or your child is in. Every single pupil is important to us and it is important that all take part, all enjoy taking part and all learn new skills in an environment that matches their capabilities.

Enjoyment – *School is a journey, with problems to solve, lessons to learn, but most important of all...experiences to enjoy.*

Our aim is to ensure that all involved in school sport, enjoy the experience.

Compete to win (not win at all costs) – *Don't fear losing.*

Every time a pupil walks onto the sports field it is important that they do so in the correct mindset - '*I'm here to compete*'. If we can achieve this, success will happen. If we play to the best of our abilities and don't get the result we desire, that is ok. Don't fear losing, see it as something to learn from.

#TeamDownsend – *Teamwork makes the dream work.*

We are all in this journey together; staff, pupils and parents. If we are all using the same language and working towards the same goals (#RESPECT) the future will be bright.

2. Sport Choices

In order to be competitive and to use our resources as effectively as possible, the school will focus on three selected seasonal sports which will be delivered through the Games programme at school, inclusive of fixtures/tournaments against other schools. The compulsory component of our programme will therefore ensure that pupils participate in the following sports –

Boys – Football, Rugby, Cricket

Girls – Hockey, Netball, Football, Cricket

In addition, there are a number of optional sports that will be available to pupils to participate and/or compete in should they wish to (*note; these sports will be delivered predominantly in the clubs/Stretch/Sports Practices programme and not in the Games operational programme*):

Boys - Hockey, Swimming, Athletics, Tennis, Badminton, Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Skiing & Golf.

Girls – Swimming, Athletics, Tennis, Badminton, Table Tennis, Gymnastics, Skiing & Golf.

3. PE & Games Uniform

It is the expectation of the school that all pupils wear the appropriate uniform to take part in school sport. Below outlines the uniform requirements –

Boys PE Kit – Downsend PE & Cricket polo shirt, Downsend black shorts, white socks, trainers (Downsend tracksuit top & bottoms if required).

Girls PE Kit – Downsend PE & Cricket polo shirt, Downsend black skort/shorts, white socks, trainers (Downsend tracksuit top & bottoms if required).

Boys Games Kit – Downsend reversible rugby/football shirt, Downsend black shorts, Downsend sports socks, boots, Downsend tracksuit top and bottoms. For the summer term cricket will be played in one day school colours; Downsend PE & Cricket polo, Downsend tracksuit top & bottoms, base layers (if required), white socks, trainers and/or cricket spikes.

Girls Games Kit – Downsend red games top, Downsend black skort/shorts, Downsend sports socks, trainers, Downsend tracksuit top and bottoms. For the summer term cricket will be played in one day school colours; Downsend PE & Cricket polo, Downsend tracksuit top & bottoms, base layers (if required), white socks, trainers and/or cricket spikes.

4. Sports Practices

It is the schools hope that all pupils participate in school practices. We strongly believe in sport for all and know the benefits of attending practices, and therefore work hard to staff these accordingly. On the occasions where pupils are unavailable to attend a practice, the sports department must be informed of their absence to assist with the planning and organisation of these practices.

The school will do all that they can to ensure that practices run as planned. In the event of poor weather, the school will send out a Cognita Connect message by midday, where possible, to inform parents of any change. In the event of a cancelled practice, the school will supervise the children who are unable to be collected either at extended day or where required in a classroom offering suitable provision until the time of collection.

5. Team Selection

The sports department do all that they can to ensure that team selection is fair and just. Numerous hours are dedicated to make sure that pupils get every opportunity to demonstrate the skill set required to take part in certain teams. Pupils are regularly assessed to ensure fairness in team selection. A thorough selection meeting takes place at the beginning of each season and after each individual fixture, to ensure that our teams are fluid and pupils are competing at the correct level. It is also important to understand that team selection is not just based on performance but also on both attitude and behaviour in matches, lessons and at training. Ultimately, the final decision rests with the sports department and as parents we appreciate your support with this matter, however uncomfortable it may be at times.

We pride ourselves on our inclusivity and are proud that every pupil in the school will get the opportunity to represent the school in our three major Games. On top of our block fixtures, tournaments and cup competitions are entered. Tournament and cup selection is different to block fixtures where our intention is to '*compete to win*'. As a result of this, we select the most competitive teams possible. Although we will do our best to use subs at tournaments and cup fixtures, depending on the situations, subs will often have more limited game time in accordance with our policy of '*compete to win*' at these events. On occasions, this could mean that pupils from different age groups are selected, and although we appreciate this can cause frustrations for older pupils, it fulfils our gifted and talented policy.

6. Fixtures and Tournaments

Each season the sports department make every effort to take part in as many meaningful fixtures and tournaments as possible, whilst at the same time taking into consideration the national governing bodies recommendations around competition and training. As with all sporting events, fixtures and tournaments are planned meticulously to ensure a balance between fixtures (competition) and training (development). We work exceptionally hard to organise these fixtures and therefore expect parents and pupils to support us, particularly on weekend fixtures. We try our best to organise weekday fixtures, however this is not always

possible as other schools have different Games afternoons to us. On occasions, this causes us challenges with the number of fixtures we can organise and therefore look to utilise Saturdays.

We understand that pupils take part in sport outside of school and we strongly encourage all to do this. Where there is a clash, we expect communication between parents and the sports department as early as possible and where possible a compromise will be made. However, it is the school's expectation that school sport takes priority over external sport.

For our weekly fixtures, years 2-8 will play on site as we have adequate space and facilities to accommodate this. Years 9-13 will play the majority of fixtures off site at our new partnership sites. These are:

Football – Leatherhead Football Club (3G & Grass) & Cobham Football Club (3G & Grass)

Hockey – Epsom Sports Club (Old School Lane)

Rugby – Dorking Rugby Club

Netball – School Site

Cricket – Leatherhead & North Holmwood Cricket Club

7. Transport

For fixtures during the week, the school will provide transport to and from fixtures. On the very rare occasion where this isn't possible, the sports department will send a Cognita Connect message to request your assistance.

For fixtures on the weekend, the school expects parents to help with transportation. We understand this isn't always possible and when the situation arises, if a parent can't find alternative transport (for example, another parent) the school, when requested, will supply transport to the fixture.

8. Match Tea

After each fixture match tea is provided and it is the schools expectation that pupils attend this important part of the fixture. Not only is it polite but it allows the pupils to create bonds with pupils from other schools who they will play year on year as they progress through the school.

9. Communication

The sports department will do all that they can to ensure communication is on time and accurate. For all fixtures, team sheets will be published on schools sports 48 hours in advance. A Cognita Connect message will be sent for weekend fixtures and for fixtures that take place outside of scheduled Games afternoons. It is the school's expectation that parents regularly check Schools Sports (SOCS) website for fixture information. In the event of a cancellation, a decision will be made as early as possible and communicated to parents; please be mindful that due to poor weather this could be on the day of the fixture/club.

Your support with this communication is greatly appreciated. We are a very busy school that offers an enormous programme of sport and therefore we do our best to ensure communication is efficient and on time. However, we also do everything we can to balance the 48 hours premise with ensuring possible changes to team selection can be made if appropriate. Please be mindful that communicating with a school community of over 700 people creates challenges. We will do our absolute best to ensure timely and accurate communication but we are only human.

10. Code of Conduct

Pupils:

It is the school's expectation that pupils follow the school behaviour code at all times, in line with our RESPECT philosophy. We understand that mistakes will happen and when poor behaviour is demonstrated appropriate sanctions will be given in line with the school behaviour code. If the school behaviour sanctions make no improvement on the pupil's behaviour, then temporary removal from school sport is a possibility. This decision is not taken lightly but is used to support the school and its staff.

Parents:

When observing your child it is important that you uphold the high standards that the school expects from its pupils and staff. Please refrain from making judgmental or negative comments that might cause offense. Please allow the staff to coach the team and support your child. Positive reinforcement is encouraged, and we hope that you will help the staff in creating a positive environment, in line with our RESPECT philosophy, for the pupils to participate in.

Staff:

As staff we are a reflection of our school. All our staff are passionate about sport and strive for it to be played in the right way. On the side-lines some staff are more vocal than others, however as pupils progress throughout the school, independence and decision making by the pupils themselves is encouraged and rewarded. Staff will make every effort to create an environment

where pupils feel comfortable to express themselves, regardless of the situation they are in. Positive praise should far outweigh points for development, in line with our RESPECT philosophy.

11. Injury

All sports staff have up to date first aid qualifications and regularly take part in refresher courses to ensure they are up to date with current injury protocols. Injury prevention is taken very seriously, and staff will do all that they can to minimise the risk of injuries occurring. In the event of an injury, staff will comply with the school procedures and parents will be notified (if deemed necessary).

We have joined teams with Return 2 Play to ensure your child's safety is at the forefront of everything we do in school sport. Whilst there is a minimal cost to this, £30, the cost far outweighs the benefits that you and your child will receive if a head injury occurs. This service can be used both in and out of school for any head injuries.

The Return 2 Play Injury Management System has been specifically designed by doctors who have extensive experience in managing sports injuries and concussions at some of the country's top schools. These doctors have unrivalled experience in the management of child concussions and a proven track record in providing expert care.

We also encourage all parents and pupils to visit Headcase - <https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/playing/headcase> to help raise awareness and understanding of concussion.

12. Awards and Recognition

The sports department are very proud of the pupil's achievements in sport, both in and out of school. Awards are regularly given out to celebrate the success of our pupils. Please continue to share your child's successes outside of school.

Elite sporting performance is rewarded with trials for county and/or academies and the possibility of gaining a sports scholarship at school.

At the end of each season awards are given out in recognition for outstanding sports performance, progress made and attitude to performance/development.

13. Sports Scholarships

Downsend School offers a breadth of sporting activities whereby the school competes locally and nationally in the following areas: Football, Hockey, Rugby, Netball, Cricket, Tennis, Swimming & Athletics.

Candidates who excel in at least one, preferably two, of the sports listed above to at minimum 'A' team standard, will be invited to apply for a sports scholarship. It will also be beneficial to candidates' applications if they can demonstrate that they represent at district/county level or above in one of our major sports (football, hockey, rugby, netball, cricket).

Alongside this we are looking for the following individual characteristics:

- Be coachable and willing to quickly implement given feedback.
- Have excellent attitude towards learning both in PE and Sport lessons.
- Demonstrate ambition and drive towards achieving a personal or team goal.
- Be able to make calculated decisions when under pressure.
- Be physically resilient and robust.
- Have positive emotional intelligence and are able to bounce back from setbacks.
- Be willing to take the lead and set an example to their peers.
- Have good communication skills.
- Have met the academic requirements of the school.

Holders of Sports Scholarship are expected to make a significant contribution to the sporting calendar, both in and out of school time.

14. Sports Tours

Pupils are given the opportunity to take part in sports tours in both the Junior School (Cardiff) and Senior School (Dubai & Abu Dhabi). The sports department are always looking at ways in which we can enrich the lives of our pupils and when appropriate additional sports tours may be introduced.

15. Sick or Fit, Bring Your Kit

Pupils are expected to bring their PE/Games kit to every single lesson, even if they are not able to physically take part. If a pupil is unable to take part, a note or email must be sent explaining

the reasons why. The expectation is that pupils will be involved in the learning that is taking place at all times.

16. Sports Day

We politely remind all parents and pupils that Sports Day is a compulsory part of the academic year. It is the schools expectation that all pupils take part and remain at school for the duration of the event. Not only does this create a supportive environment for all who take part, it also demonstrates the togetherness that we are striving to create as a school community.

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#RESPECT

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Relationships
To create positive relationships between staff parents & pupils.

Excite & Engage
To excite those playing, coaching and spectating and to engage an entire school community.

Set Standards
To set our own standards that all abide by in all that we do.

Participation
For all to take part in an environment that matches their level of ability.

Enjoyment
For all involved to enjoy the experience and the journey of school sport.

Compete to Win
To have the mindset of 'compete to win'. To not fear losing but see it as something to learn from.

Teamwork
Teamwork makes the dreamwork.

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