



**DOWNSEND  
SCHOOL**



Proud to be nominated in the  
**Independent Schools of  
the Year 2019 Awards**

# DOWNSEND TIMES

**06 September 2019**

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## **A message from the Headmaster**

The start of an academic year is always characterised by smiling pupils and energised staff. This year has been no different but there can be little doubt that the response to the recent improvement works have added a sense of amazement to those attributes. We have been overwhelmed by the response of pupils and parents alike and would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your positive words of encouragement and support. The children have their own favourite spaces, whether the Learning Support Centre or the Junior Star, the Food Technology Room or the STEAM spaces. Collectively, they will allow staff and pupils to develop those skills of problem-solving, creativity and adaptability that will ensure their success in the future, including in the exam halls. The spaces are bright and open, much like our approach in general, and we look forward to sharing our exciting journey with you. There is no respite, with the process

of tendering for the Arts Centre underway and it will be a matter of weeks before you see progress in this area too, and all to the same high standard. These are exciting times!



Over the next few weeks, we hope you enjoy your chance to see the spaces for yourselves at our various Curriculum and Welcome Evenings. If they are as well supported as last night's Sports Information Evening, we will be fortunate indeed. Well done to Mr Lawrence for his inspirational delivery and common sense, and thank you to those parents who attended and are as committed as we are to ensuring that RESPECT underpins our excellent sporting provision. We hope that this might catapult us to the Independent School of the Year Award next month – fingers crossed!

## DOWNSEND SPORT | #RESPECT



<b>Relationships</b>	To create positive relationships between staff parents & pupils.
<b>Excite &amp; Engage</b>	To excite those playing, coaching and spectating and to engage an entire school community.
<b>Set Standards</b>	To set our own standards that all abide by in all that we do.
<b>Participation</b>	For all to take part in an environment that matches their level of ability.
<b>Enjoyment</b>	For all involved to enjoy the experience and the journey of school sport.
<b>Compete to Win</b>	To have the mindset of 'compete to win'. To not fear losing but see it as something to learn from.
<b>Teamwork</b>	Teamwork makes the dreamwork.

#TeamDownsend



[www.downsend.co.uk](http://www.downsend.co.uk)

*Ian Thorpe*

## Lower School Update

The Turret was a lovely place to be this week as we opened the doors again to our Lower School children and welcomed them into our new and improved facilities. The gasps of amazement were wonderful to hear and were only bettered by seeing so many children using the new spaces over the past few days. From 2CW exploring the Junior Library and Miss Coates teaching Drama in the STEAM Breakout, to Year 2 and 3 climbing the new playground equipment and various activities happening in our new STAR area, it was exciting to see these changes already enriching the children's learning.

With over 100 children new to the Lower School this term, the attitude of our existing pupils was also inspiring to see. Children came in confidently and smartly and our Buddies took on their roles with a great sense of responsibility and care. Smiling faces abounded. Well done to everyone acting as a Buddy this term; this is an important role and you have made an excellent start.

I look forward to seeing many of our Year 3 to 5 parents over the next two weeks at our curriculum evenings to welcome parents too to what I am certain will be a fantastic year.

As always, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me. My temporary office can be found above the Turret.

Have a wonderful weekend.

*Clare Kirkham, Head of Lower School*

## Upper School Update

I do hope all our Upper School families and pupils had a wonderful and, hopefully, warm summer. It was a joy to welcome you all back on Wednesday, and this year in particular to see the looks of wonder and awe at the redesign of the Upper School following the summer works programme. As you will know, due to the changing shape of the school we have lots of new pupils starting with us this term, including 14 new starters in Year 7 embarking on their 5 year GCSE journeys, and it was lovely to see how warmly welcomed they were by our existing buddies and pupils; truly a heart-warming morning.

I would also like to welcome our new Senior School staff: Mrs Stack (Head of Maths), Mr Duffield (Head of English), Dr Kirby (Head of Science) and Mr Moore (Head of Boys Games and PE. They have all told me how impressed they are with our children this week and I hope they will be very happy here at Downsend. On my learning walks this week I am delighted to report that lessons have been prompt and proactive and well done to most of the pupils for looking so smart. On that note, there are a couple of haircuts that need tidying up after the summer, so I would remind parents that boys haircuts are to be off the collar and ears, and the girls hair is to be neat and tied back where necessary; thank you for your support in this regard.

Our sporting programme starts this year with a football tournament at Shrewsbury House on Saturday morning so good luck to the U11 A team in that event!

So, we have had fantastic start to the term, and I look forwards to what I know will be a busy but highly successful year for all our Upper School families. Please do contact me if you have any questions at all and, in the meantime, I trust you all have a brilliant weekend and look forward to seeing parents at the 'Meet the tutors' evening on 17<sup>th</sup> September, or at the multitude of school events coming up in the next few weeks.

*Karl Newland, Head of Upper School*

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## Massive Thank You to the DPA

Over the Summer holidays some wonderful new equipment was put into the playgrounds. In the Fort Playground, we now have an exciting new 'woodland climber' where the sandpit used to be and I was delighted to see so many of the Lower School children clambering over it each playtime. There are also three new targets added to the tennis courts, so we now have two in each playground (adding to the one we already had). This new equipment was the direct result of a meeting Mrs Kirkham and I had with the Lower School Council last year, about what they would like to see in their playgrounds. As you can see from the photographs below, they are really enjoying this new equipment. The Lower School wanted to say a massive thank you to the DPA who have funded this new playground equipment and a plaque will be going up to commemorate their generosity.

*Helen Black*





very busy September, and to help you keep track we have outlined key details below so you know how to get involved.

As always, DPA activities can't be successful without support from our parents, children and staff and we are really lucky at Downsend to have an active and involved community. Thank you in advance for getting involved in attending, volunteering or supporting the work of the DPA over the course of this coming academic year, it makes all our hard work worth it!

If you have any questions, or want to learn more about the work of the DPA – get in touch with us at [downsendPA@gmail.com](mailto:downsendPA@gmail.com)

Warm wishes

*Leanne and Lou, Co-Chairs of the DPA*

### Dates for the diary:

Date	Event	Time	Location	Comments
Sunday 22 September	First Ever Downsend Festival	11am-3pm	Main site sports field	The event is free and all are welcome, see Class List for registration details
Wednesday 25 September	DPA Annual General Meeting	From 7.30pm	Pavilion	All are welcome to attend the DPA AGM where wine & nibbles will be served.  We are always looking for new members to join and support the DPA activity – so if you would like to get involved let us know - <a href="mailto:DownsendPA@gmail.com">DownsendPA@gmail.com</a>
Friday 27 September	McMillan Coffee Morning	8.30am	Pavilion	Our annual McMillan Coffee Morning is a great opportunity to meet friends old and new, whilst raising money for a brilliant charity.  All cake contributions gratefully received! Let us know if you can help - <a href="mailto:DownsendPA@gmail.com">DownsendPA@gmail.com</a>
Sunday 01 December	DPA Christmas Fair	11am – 3pm	Main site	A wonderful event to get you in the Christmas spirit. More info on this cheery event to follow....

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## INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS

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