



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL



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

DOWNSEND TIMES

13 September 2019

**Downsend has a growth mindset.
Literally.**

We're investing £8m in brand new STEAM spaces,
Creative Arts Centre and GCSE programme.



A message from the Headmaster

The week has flown by and it is clear that everyone is already up to speed with the new facilities and timetable. We really are a most adaptable school! Our new teachers and new pupils already appear to be part of the furniture; thank you to everyone for making them feel so welcome. Practices for this term's production are well under way and we hope that our actors will start to see the Arts Centre going up in November, meaning that they will finally be able to perform in a space that befits their talents. It has been a very positive start on the sporting front – two tournaments played, two pieces of silverware earned; let's hope for more success tomorrow.

It has been lovely to see so many parents at the Year 3 and 4 Curriculum Evening this week. Establishing a firm partnership, with agreed expectations, is such a key element of helping pupils to achieve their potential and we are lucky to have such supportive parents. Please extend that same positivity in the Car Park and use the spaces to park and the drop-zone to drop. In that way, we keep the traffic moving and ensure that everyone is safe in this area of the school. Have a wonderful weekend, and good luck to all those representing the school tomorrow.

Ian Thorpe

Lower School Update

Now that the Lower School children have settled into their new schedule fully this week, the levels of maturity, exuberance and verve for learning in every year group and across the curriculum have been clear for all to see. From all quarters, achievements have flooded into my new office: from Annabel E's Distinction in her grade 2 violin exam to Charlie R's beautiful sketch of his kitten: from Sam D and Jack C's wonderful writing based on 'Katie in London' being studied in Year 2 to Ameenah's delightful story written to hopefully achieve her green Blue Peter badge this year in Year 3. It has been a pleasure to be able to reward these endeavours on our new 'Trackit Lights' system and to see the evident pride of the children at achieving points for their houses. I know that our newly elected Lower School House Representatives will also be delighted at the points being earned.

It has also been my pleasure to be able to see many of our Year 3 and 4 families at our curriculum events this week. I feel that these have provided a useful insight into the curriculum in these two year groups and am confident that parents have found them helpful in getting into the swing of the new academic year. I look forward to seeing many of our Year 5 parents next week and would welcome feedback on these events. All slideshows from these evenings will be available on the VLE next week.

Thank you to those parents and children who have taken on-board my reminder about earrings, watches and other jewellery this week, and also to those who are so brilliantly providing their children with a healthy snack at break-time. Please may I remind parents that these healthy snacks must not contain nuts. Great tips on some healthy snack ideas for children can be found at the Change4Life NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/healthier-snacks-for-kids> which may help with parental snack fatigue – I know I feel it!

I hope that you all have a wonderful weekend, enjoying the final flourish of lovely weather as we head into Autumn.

Clare Kirkham, Head of Lower School

Upper School Update

At the end of our first full week of lessons in the Upper School I am delighted to report that the pupils have continued to be outstanding ambassadors for their school in every respect. I commented last week on how smart and punctual they all look and am pleased to say that this has continued and in some places even improved, with excellent manners across the Upper School.

This morning I had the pleasure of taking whole school assembly, and found myself drawn to describing the fundamentals of what makes a 'Downsendian'! With the help of the Prefect team, who were fabulous, as well as Mary W and Ameena A from Year 3, we discussed the importance of 'Brilliant basics' in numeracy and literacy (in line with our whole school improvement targets this year) whilst Noah BW demonstrated his language skills regaling us in fluent French on the importance of academic focus and determination. However, a true Downsendian also shows great Leadership and Kindness, Physical strength and skill and a passion for the Creative Arts and Technology. All of these skills were demonstrated in our assembly; we even had a penalty shoot out between Oli F (our 1st team goalkeeper) and his younger brother Alex, with Alex scoring a superb goal despite Oli's undoubted goalkeeping skills! I must also take this opportunity to congratulate Octavia M who played the most beautiful rendition of Handel's Sonata in A minor, which is a grade 7 piece; amazing! Finally we had a glimpse into the future of the school with Chloe M and Amelie M presenting a sketch of the first ever Downsend Live Radio Breakfast Show, wishing all the Year 11 Downsendians to come the best of luck with their GCSE grades and end of year graduation ball!

So, what a fantastic way to start the year; we have smart, punctual pupils who are kind, hard working and talented. Long may that continue!

Have a good weekend everyone.

Karl Newland, Head of Upper School

House News

This morning in whole school assembly, we were delighted to announce the new House Captains for the Upper School and the Lower School.

In the Lower School:

- Headley – Henry J
- Ranmore – Archie D
- Wisley – Bella T

- Norbury – Maria B

In the Upper School:

- Headley – Evie S & Ryan T
- Ranmore - Aniyah G & Jacob S
- Wisley – Harry H & Mia K
- Norbury - Harry Mc & Natasha C

These are sought after positions within the school, and children thoroughly enjoy this leadership opportunity, and working with other members of the House community. As role models to their peers, these pupils will assist staff in leading assemblies and events. We wish them the best of luck for the year.



Helen Black & Jon Albert

Firefly (VLE) Parent Portal Instructions

As part of our ongoing commitment to improving communication we are pleased to be able to offer you access to the school's VLE (Firefly) Parent Portal where you will be able to see up-to-date information about your child (or children) and also be kept informed of relevant school information that we hope you will find useful. You can access the Parent Portal from your PC, Mac, tablet or smartphone. Over the coming months, you will be able to see your child's:

- Timetable
- Attendance
- Homework and marks

- Online trip forms
- Specific Year group information (trips, meetings)
- Access to key websites
- Latest News
- Photo galleries

The web address you will need to log onto the Parent Portal is downsend.fireflycloud.net (when asked for it, please use the same email address as the one you have registered with the school). To activate your account for the first time, follow this link for [instructions for logging on](#). After activating your account, please download the 'Firefly for Parents' app from either the Google Play store or the Apple App store to make accessing the information more straightforward for you. Once logged on, you will be able to set your own notifications should you wish to.

I hope that you find access to the VLE a useful tool and that it improves communication as well as keeping you well-informed.

If you have any issues regarding logging on, please contact Firefly support on support@fireflylearning.com where they will be able to assist. Alternatively, please feel free to contact your child's form tutor or myself for further information.

Lee Silva, Head of Digital Learning

Year 8 Update

Year 8 pupils have made a brilliant start to the academic year, making themselves comfortable in their common room and making Howard House their base for the year. It's great to see them looking so smart, eager to learn and full of enthusiasm. The new spaces created in the school are impressive and have already been put to good use by the pupils in the year.



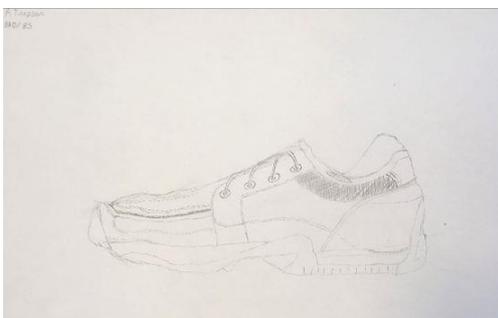
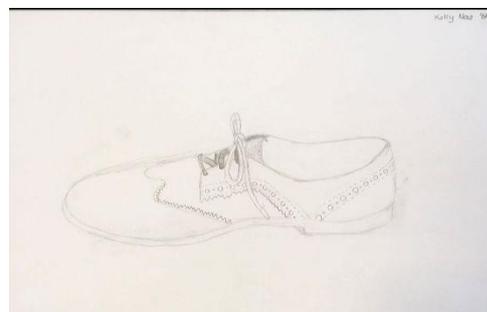


The Year 8 tutor team have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know their new tutees and are looking forward to a celebratory hot chocolate with them later on this morning. I would also like to warmly welcome our new pupils and staff in the year group who have all settled in superbly.

Lee Silva, Deputy Head of Upper School

Artist of the Week

After just over a week, there is already a creative buzz in the Art Department. Pupils have been busy making marks, exploring different drawing media and demonstrating their observational drawing skills. These studies of shoes by Year 8 are particularly impressive. Well done!



Julia Aylen

Music Update



Music Exam Successes

We are pleased to share these students' successes in their music practical exams taken during the summer term:

Piano: Jacob G - Grade 1 (Distinction), Rhianna D - Grade 2, Harrison J-H - Pre-prep, Isabella C - Pre-prep, Jessica R - Step 1, Jessica J L - Step 2, Sophie M - Step 2, Oscar R - Pre-prep

Trumpet: Natalia B - Grade 1, Toby T - Grade 2, George P - Grade 3

Percussion: James W - Grade 4 (Distinction)

Drums: Jack P - Grade 3

Guitar: James P - Grade 4, Daniel O - initial grade (Distinction), Niji S - Grade 2

Clarinet: James S - Grade 1, Amelie P - Grade 1

Singing: Lottie C - Prep Test, Roya M - Prep Test, Eleanor K - Grade 2 (Distinction), Jessica J L - Grade 2, Lauren M - Grade 1, Francesca W - Grade 1, Jamie S - Grade 1, Natalia T - Grade 2

Violin: Annabel E - Grade 2 (Distinction)

Well done to all of you!

Music Ensembles

All Ensembles start next week. Please take note of the following:

Year 2 & 3 Choir – Friday morning break

Year 4 & 5 Choir – Monday morning break

Upper School Choir (years 6, 7 and 8) - Monday 1:45 pm (have your lunch first and then come along)

Chamber Choir

- **Lower School pupils** - Wednesday morning break
- **Upper School pupils** - Friday 1:45 pm (have your lunch first and then come along)
- **ALL** - Tuesday 8:00 am

Lower School Orchestra – Tuesday 12:45 pm (have your lunch first and then come along)

Whole School Orchestra

- **Lower School pupils** - Monday 12:45 pm
- **Upper School pupils** - Thursday 1:45 pm
- **ALL** - Friday 8:00 am

Brass Group – Wednesday 8:00 am

Lower School Guitar Ensemble - Thursday 12:20 pm

Lower School String Ensemble – Thursday 12:50 pm (have your lunch first and then come along)

Pupils should see Mrs Allison if they have any questions.

Downsend Rock Band Auditions 2019 (Years 4-8)



Lower School Auditions, year 4 and 5

Wednesday 18th September - Lunch Break 12:20 - 1:20pm

Upper School Auditions, year 6, 7 and 8

Tuesday 17th September & Wednesday 18th September - 8:00am.

- Auditions are open to year 4 and above for Singers, Drummers, Pianists, Guitarists, Bass Players, Trumpeters, Saxophonists and Trombonists.
- Please sign up in the Music Department.
- Students should prepare a short audition piece, this can be either an example of a current exam piece or a favourite song.
- Places are very limited, successful applicants will be required to commit to a weekly rehearsal at break time or before school and to perform as a band in concerts and assemblies during the school year.

No need to re-audition if you were in a band last year

Nicole Allison

Instrumental Lessons at Downsend

We Have Vacancies!!

If your child would like to learn an instrument at Downsend with one of our tutors then please email the Head of Music at nicole.allison@downsend.co.uk

We have tutors for the following instruments:

Flute, Recorder, Oboe, Clarinet, Cello, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, French Horn, Tuba, Electric Guitar, Acoustic Guitar, Mandolin, Bass Guitar, Drum Kit, Percussion, Ukulele, Violin, Viola, Cello, Piano and Voice.

If your child would like to play an instrument that is not listed above, please let me know and I will try to source a tutor for you.

Nicole Allison

Downsend Parents Association



DOWNSEND FESTIVAL – 8 SLEEPS TO GO!



Dust off your festi-chic outfits and pray for good weather, it is only 8 sleeps until the very first Downsend Festival comes to Main site on Sunday 22 September!

What is there to look forward to you might ask, and why should we come? Well, apart from being free entry, which is an exceptionally good reason to come... you could enjoy the following:

1. Big Top fun with Circus Sensible – who will put on a show and then run circus workshops throughout the day
2. The inaugural Downsend Dog Show – bring your well behaved pooch to compete for the Top Dog position! Look out for an alert on Class List on how to enter!
3. Forest School demonstrations by Jay Bristow
4. Glitter face painting and space hair by our glitter-tastic Downsend Mums
5. Downsend Dawg stall by our very own Dougie
6. Ice Cream van (the amazing one from Epsom Downs)
7. Festi-bar run by Downsend Dads!

We will be announcing the Festival Schedule at the start of next week, and in the meantime Class List is your go-to place for all the information about the event and how to register for the Dog Show.

The DPA are really excited to host this event, and looking forward to seeing all the happy, glittery faces on the day!

Is there anything you need to do to prepare? We thought a little FAQ might help you answer all of those burning questions....

Q: Do I need to register myself and my family to attend?

A: If you are thinking of coming, it would be brilliant if you could register on Class List so that we can get an idea of numbers.... But if you are waiting to see what the weather is like before committing, that's fine, you can turn up on the day

Q: Can I bring my friends with me?

A: Of course, we are a community and all are welcome just do us a favour and register the numbers of people attending on Class List so we can make sure we have enough catering....

Q: My kids are in Upper School.... Can they attend?

A: Of course, unlike previous years where we were focussed on Lower School Family Fun, this event is open to children of all ages and their parents. The Circus Skills Workshop and the Dog Show might be of particular interest, in addition of course to sitting in the field texting friends, whilst having a hot dog and a can of fizzy pop 😊

Q: How much will it cost?

A: Nothing, it is free to get in, it is free to watch the Circus show and take part in circus skills and Forest School workshops.... However you might want to bring your card, or cash to buy a hot dog or ice cream,

get glittered up or have a refreshing drink. Also if you want to enter the Downsend Dog Show, there is an entry fee.

Q: Can we get anything to eat there?

A: Absolutely! Dougie will be running his famous Downsend Dawgs stall and offering meat, vege and gluten free hot dogs. We also have the Ice Cream man coming to visit as well as some naughty but nice sweet treats on offer. Don't forget to bring some cash for these!

Q: Where can we park?

A: Please feel free to use all available parking spaces at Mainsite, and if we get full don't worry, our excellent Chief Parking Marshall Paul will be on hand to direct you to St Andrews School where we will have over flow parking facilities. We encourage all our drivers to be patient and polite in case it is busy in the car park, we will squeeze you in where we can.

Q: What will happen if it rains?

A: Well, like all good British Festivals, we have a back-up plan. Depending on how bad the weather is, we may move into the Sports Hall for the event but we will let you know via Class List if plans change. If the weather is really bad, we will cancel the Dog Show and run it another time

Q: I am thinking of waiting to decide and then turning up on the day – is that ok?

A: Of course, we are hoping as many people attend as possible – so if you prefer to go with the flow, that's no problem at all

Q: I have more questions – can I get in touch with someone?

A: Sure, email your questions through to Leanne and Lou at downsendPA@gmail.com

IMPORTANT UNIFORM SALE UPDATES:



Payments to Parents for Items Sold:

Did you know that it is nearly time for the DPA to issue the annual cheques to parents for items sold at the Uniform Sales? Lynn is working hard to write the cheques to parents whose items we sold during our

Uniform Sales this year. If you are one of the lucky parents whose uniform items were sold, you can expect to receive your cheque over the next couple of months.

A reminder that not all items sell straight away, so don't worry if you don't receive a cheque this time round, your item(s) will still be on the racks available to purchase at the next sale.

Uniform Sale Intake of Clothing:

Are you thinking of donating or selling uniform items via the DPA uniform shop? We have some important updates for you to bear in mind

- The next uniform intake will take place in December 2019, date to be announced
- Due to extremely limited storage space, and the ongoing building works at school, we cannot take any uniform donations until the December intake. Please **do not** leave donations at the Admin Office as they will be returned to you.

Date of the Next Uniform Sale:

- The next uniform sale will take place in January 2020, date to be announced.
- Note that we are unable to arrange 'one off' visits during this term due to the ongoing building works.

DOWNSEND PARENTS ASSOCIATION AGM WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER @ 7.30PM

Ever wondered what the Downsend Parents Association (DPA) have been up to over the last year? How have we spent all the money we raised and what are the plans for the coming year? Or perhaps you have a little time on your hands and would like to get involved in some way? How about a free glass of wine or a beer and some nibbles have we convinced you yet?

The DPA would like to invite you to attend our **AGM taking place at the Pavilion from 7.30pm on Wednesday 25 September** where we will share our successes from the last year, our focus for 2019/2020 and also ratify the shape of the Committee for this coming year.

Forget what you may have seen on Bad Mom's, the DPA Committee breaks the mould and is a fun, inclusive and thoughtful team who would love you to join us if you are interested. We promise to be nice to all the mums and dads who attend the AGM, or volunteer time to the DPA, and not force you to do bake sales and sell cookies door to door 😊. Did we mention... free wine/ beer?

If you would like to attend the AGM or can't make it that night but would love to volunteer – get in touch with our Secretary Jo Lloyd Aziz at downsendPA@gmail.com

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING – FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER @ 08.30AM IN THE PAVILLION



Save the date for one of our most popular coffee morning events, the McMillan Coffee Morning which is scheduled for Friday 27th September from 08.30am in the Pavilion. We invite you all to pop in, grab a drink and a cake and raise money for this amazing charity.

If you love to bake, or would like to donate a bought cake – we very much welcome your contribution. Get in touch with Charlotte at downsendPA@gmail.com for more information.

We look forward to seeing as many people there as possible!

Leanne and Lou, Co-Chairs of the DPA

Ballet Club



Ballet club starts back up again this Saturday 14th September at Downsend main site. 9.10am – 9.55am for FS and RR and 10.10am – 10.50am for Reception and Year 1. For all details please email jenni@jhballet.co.uk

We hope to see you there.

New joiners welcome!

INSPIRING YOUNG MINDS

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